

Summarised inspection findings

Moniaive Primary School

Dumfries and Galloway Council

25 June 2019

Key contextual information

Moniaive Primary School is a non-denominational primary school. It is situated in Moniaive, Dumfries and Galloway. The school's associated secondary school is Wallace Hall Academy in Thornhill. In April 2019, the school role was 62, divided between 3 classes.

The headteacher of Moniaive Primary School is also the headteacher of another two partnership schools, Duncow Primary School and Dunscore Primary School.

The senior leadership team consists of the headteacher and a principal teacher.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- The quality of climate and relationships is a clear strength of the school. Staff work hard with children, parents and partners on an ongoing basis to build a positive and inclusive climate for learning that is characterised by mutual respect. Children benefit from being nurtured within this community. Almost all children work well together most of the time.
- There are examples of good teaching and learning across the school. However, overall learning experiences are variable. Children have too few opportunities to lead their learning.
- In almost all lessons, staff begin by sharing learning intentions and success criteria with children. This is beginning to help the children know themselves as learners and what they need to do to succeed. There is scope for children to be involved in the creation of their own success criteria. The newly developed learning conversations between children, staff and parents are also helping children to understand themselves better as learners and demonstrate increased confidence in talking about their learning and their successes. Staff continue to develop ways to provide feedback consistently to children. In writing, this is leading to a few children being able to articulate well what they need to do to improve and their next steps.
- In a few lessons, teachers use questioning effectively to explore children's explanations and strategies. Children respond well to this by considering and developing their answers more fully. Staff should continue to work on ways to develop children's higher-order thinking skills more consistently throughout the school. Children also respond well when lessons engage creatively their thinking. In the best examples, teachers enable children to work together and to explore their thinking with peers.
- Given the nature of the composite classes, teachers need to ensure that tasks, activities and resources are always well-matched to the needs of individual children and groups. There are too many whole-class lessons, and the pace of learning is too slow for a few children. Senior leaders and teachers recognise that improvements are required to provide more effective

support and challenge for all children. They should work together now to develop a shared understanding of what they would like highly effective learning and teaching to look like across the school.

- Teachers are developing the use of digital technology across the school. Children use power point presentations and are extending appropriately their word-processing skills. Children enjoy doing this and would value being given more opportunities to use a range of digital technologies to support their learning.
- Teachers use a variety of assessments, including standardised assessments, to monitor children's progress in literacy and numeracy. They are an early stage of using the national assessment benchmarks to support their judgements. Teachers need to work together now to develop a clear understanding of why and how they are using assessment to support children's learning. Teachers need to adopt a proportionate and structured approach to using assessment across the school.
- Senior leaders and teachers have worked enthusiastically with colleagues in partnership schools to moderate standards in writing. They should now develop this work to include the moderation of standards in reading, listening and talking, and numeracy. This will help them to develop a clear understanding of national standards and progression.
- Planning is currently under review. Teachers use long-term plans to outline the structure of the year and the way in which learning is organised. They recognise that their next step in planning is to bundle Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes together. This will provide more varied and motivating learning and teaching experiences for children and allow teachers to begin to assess children's learning holistically.
- The recently introduced electronic tracking system is providing staff with useful data on progress. As planned, a next step for the school will be to link this more closely to the school's developing assessment evidence. This will help to ensure that children's learning and needs are monitored regularly, enabling them to receive appropriate support to make good and sustained progress. The headteacher meets regularly with teachers to track and monitor the progress of children. This is a positive intervention which is beginning to lead to rich discussion between the headteacher and teachers. There is scope for the meetings to focus more on raising attainment, based on the collation of sound assessment information.

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

- The attainment in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. Overall, the majority of children achieve appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels. A few children exceed these levels. There is headroom for improvement in children's attainment across the school. This includes those children who are already achieving very successfully who could be making better progress.
- Teachers are engaging well in moderation activities in the school, with partner schools, in the cluster and in the local authority. Much of this work is still at an early stage. However, it is beginning to have a positive impact on teachers' confidence, helping them to assess children's progress more effectively in relation to the national assessment benchmarks

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, children are making satisfactory progress in literacy and English.

Listening and talking

- Most children are making satisfactory progress in listening and talking. At the early level, children need to develop their skills more, for example, through role-play and retelling stories. At the first and second levels, only a few children demonstrate effective listening skills with each other. Their skills need to be developed. A few can recognise non-verbal cues during discussion. Most children give simple responses to questions and willingly share their experiences, views and opinions. By the second level, not all children are contributing their views, ideas, information and opinions on a regular basis. Most children feel that they need to practise their skills in giving presentations and debating.

Reading

- Most children are making good progress in reading. The recent change to the school's approach to the teaching of reading is increasing children's motivation and enthusiasm at first and second levels. As a result, most children across the school read fluently and with expression. At the early stages, most children use phonics to decode common words in texts. At first and second level, most children can identify their favourite authors and identify their style of writing. They are able to discuss some aspects of the writers' craft and can answer questions about the text. Most can discuss characters and settings as well as the main ideas in a book. The majority of children can articulate good reading habits which they have adopted. By the second level, most children are able to define different reading skills. Across the school, children are able to select from a wide range of books including non-fiction. Commendably children at second level have been involved in selecting and purchasing digital books for the school. This has extended children's knowledge about authors.

Writing

- Overall, children are making satisfactory progress in writing. However, most children do not write at length. Their work is not always well-presented and the quality of their handwriting is too variable across classes. At the early level, children are developing their skills in letter formation and most are able to write simple sentences. At first and second levels most children are able to write across a range of genres. They use punctuation appropriately. This is not always the case in other writing tasks. Children can recall only a few occasions when they have been able to develop their skills in note taking.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, most children are making satisfactory progress in numeracy and mathematics. Senior leaders and teachers should continue to develop ways to plan the learning, teaching and assessment of numeracy and mathematics more consistently across the school. There is scope for them to track and monitor children's progress more robustly, taking account of a range of well-planned assessments, as well as evidence, which is based on teachers' professional judgement. This would help them to support all children make ongoing and coherent progress more easily, based on their prior learning.

Number, money and measurement

- Children at all levels have a good understanding of basic numerical calculations.
- The majority of children working at early level can count forward and backwards from zero to 20, and can identify the number before and the number after from zero to ten. They are also able to add to ten. Most children at first level are developing skills in calculating change from a given sum of money. They need to do this more quickly and consistently. Children at this level are not yet confident in identifying the sizes of fractions. Most children at second level demonstrate a good understanding of money. They also demonstrate good skills in using and converting fractions, percentages and decimals.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, the majority of children can recognise 2D shapes. They are also developing an understanding of 3D objects. At first level and second level, most children are able to speak confidently about a range of 2D Shapes and 3D objects, and use mathematical language appropriately to describe the properties. Most children at second level can also name and describe a range of angles well. The majority of children show developing skills in calculating perimeter and area.

Information Handling

- At early level, most children are learning how to collect and organise objects. They also show a good knowledge of colour, shape and size which is helping them to match and sort objects. At first level, the majority of children are learning how to display and interpret data using a limited number of graphs. At second level, most children are developing a good understanding of a range of graphs and can explain the different ways in which they can be used.

Attainment over time

- Attainment data was provided by the school for literacy and numeracy for 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18. As a result of considerable variation in the school's data, including sizeable improvements in a number of measures, and teachers still developing their understanding of achievement of a level the inspection team is not confident in the accuracy and reliability of the school's data over time.
- The school's predicted data for 2018/19 also appears to be inflated in a few areas, for example listening and talking. The school predicts that all children at early level, first level and second

level will achieve appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels. However, teachers have not yet developed processes for assessing and tracking and monitoring children's progress in listening and talking effectively. They should take this forward as a matter of priority to ensure that children's learning is progressive, and to help all stakeholders understand children's progress more effectively.

- The school is not yet in a position to be able to provide data on how well children have attained across the curriculum.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Children participate in a limited range of school opportunities which are helping them to achieve. This includes them taking part in music activities, such as a guitar and ukulele group, and sports activities led by the Active Schools co-ordinator. Children also participate in activities related to the Eco Schools Scotland programme and a school council. Although these groups are in an early stage of development, they are helping children to develop skills in team work and becoming more responsible. There is scope for the school to offer increased and sustained opportunities for children to achieve.
- Staff celebrate children's achievements well through school assemblies. They also highlight children's achievements regularly through electronic platforms and ongoing dialogue with members of the local community.
- Staff should continue with their plans to help children begin to understand the skills they are developing through their participation in school activities. This will help children to develop a more comprehensive picture of their learning. It will also help staff to identify any gaps in children's learning. Staff should begin to consider how to record the skills which children are developing. This will help them to ensure that no child is at risk of missing out. There is scope for staff to link more closely the health and wellbeing work which children are engaging in on a weekly basis with the development of appropriate and progressive learning and skills.

Equity for all learners

- There is scope for the school to develop its tracking and monitoring system to highlight and take full account of all children's needs. This will ensure that the needs of individual and groups of children can be evaluated and met regularly, through appropriate interventions.
- With financial support from the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) the school has purchased additional resources to assist children in their learning. This includes resources linked to the development of children's numeracy skills. These are beginning to have a positive impact on raising the attainment of individual children. Resources have also been provided to support the development of nurture practices. A breakfast club and a nurture room have been set up to support children's health and wellbeing. Additionally, the school has also used its PEF allocation to increase staffing. This is leading to the provision of focused additional support for identified groups of learners. This work is at an early stage of development and will be evaluated in due course.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.