

Summarised inspection findings

Machanhill Primary School and Nursery Class

South Lanarkshire Council

25 February 2020

Key contextual information

Machanhill Primary School is a non-denominational school situated in the town of Larkhall. At the time of inspection, there are 302 children on the school roll. There are 11 classes, three of which are multi-stage. Approximately 24% of children in P4-P7 are registered for free school meals, which is above the national average. The majority of the school roll lives in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data zones one to three.

1.3 Leadership of change

good

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- The headteacher took up post in February 2018 and has worked very well to establish and build trust across the school community. She is deeply committed to inclusion for all children and the whole staff team shares this commitment. She is providing effective leadership and direction, supported well by the depute headteacher. As a leadership team, they have a sound knowledge and understanding of children's social and economic backgrounds and use this well to plan interventions and improve children's progress. Both the headteacher and depute headteacher are very well respected by children, staff, parents and the school's partners.
- The school community have a continued commitment to, and shared understanding of, the school's vision, values and aims. During the opening of the new school building in 2016, senior leaders involved children, staff and parents appropriately in the consultation and in agreeing a final selection of values. The children understand well the chosen values of happiness, achievement, respect and knowledge and use the acronym 'HARK' regularly to remember these. Staff and children model these values well throughout their daily interactions. Through regular discussions centred on the values, children recognise these qualities when displayed and nominate peers for 'HARK' certificates. Children relate well to the school's aspirational vision 'be the best you can be' which is displayed prominently throughout the school. Senior leaders should regularly review the school's vision, values and aims to ensure their continued relevance.
- The school has effective quality assurance arrangements, with well-planned evaluation activities in place across the school year. For example, senior leaders sample children's work, carry out lesson observations and have group sessions with parents and children. Senior leaders ensure the school improvement plan has a clear focus on actions to raise children's attainment in literacy and English, numeracy and mathematics and develop further their health and wellbeing. Working closely together, senior leaders have correctly identified and prioritised appropriate improvements. Senior leaders consider carefully and manage the pace of change well. They are in the early stages of working with staff to evaluate the work of the school using 'How good is our school? 4th Edition' (HGIOS4). All staff need to be involved in the improvement planning process and in agreeing priorities going forward. The school seeks regularly views and ideas from children, parents, visitors and partners. Senior leaders should

explore ways to engage parents meaningfully in planning improvement activities and in evaluating the work of the school.

- The school's involvement in a 'North Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire Self-Improving Attainment Family' is supporting the headteacher and a few teachers in looking outwards and sharing effective practice. This work has led to improvements in collegiate working and secured improved outcomes for learners.
- All staff are engaged appropriately in working parties taking forward areas for improvement across the school. They feel supported by the headteacher and depute headteacher's encouraging leadership. The staff welcome opportunities to enhance their professional learning. Last session, all staff participated in helpful peer visits, which resulted in positive impact by securing a number of consistent features in classroom practice. Staff's annual professional review and development links appropriately to the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) standards. Each teacher enjoys leading a particular area of responsibility, for example, as a literacy coach, supporting colleagues and enhancing school improvement. A number of staff are involved in a teacher learning community. A few teachers engage in practitioner enquiry and other certified further professional learning. Senior leaders should continue to support staff to take on leadership roles at all levels, empowering them to initiate and evaluate the impact for children on change for improvement.
- Senior leaders value children's participation in improvement work and are increasing their opportunities to do so. Children support enthusiastically the life of the school and currently, a number contribute well to groups such as Improvement Ambassadors. Staff should support children's increased ownership of these groups to provide real-life opportunities for them to participate meaningfully in school improvement.
- Senior leaders strategically plan how to use monies from the Pupil Equity Fund and target this appropriately to improve children's attainment and support their wellbeing. They have interventions in place where gaps in attainment have been identified, such as targeted support for children's writing and intensive literacy programmes. Senior leaders can evidence positive steps in reducing the attainment gap across aspects of numeracy and mathematics. Together staff should continue to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions in improving outcomes for children. Senior leaders need to give further consideration to developing strategies that do not solely rely on Pupil Equity Fund spending and build staff's skills and capacity in a sustainable way.
- Staff use the local authority monitoring and tracking system well to record a range of helpful information on children's progress in literacy and numeracy. All teachers understand well the attainment data and socio-economic context as it relates to children in their class. Senior leaders and teachers analyse data and review children's progress through regular meetings where they plan together any necessary interventions to support individual children's progress.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

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

- Across the school, children, staff and peers have positive relationships with each other. Each are respectful of one another and children talk about their school with pride. Teachers' high expectations and clear classroom routines support almost all children in engaging well during lessons. As they move through the school, almost all children develop their skills to work well individually, collaboratively in pairs and in small groups with peers. Older and younger children have helpful opportunities to learn together. P7 children support P1 as buddies and most children can talk about the benefits this brings to their learning.
- Overall, the quality of teaching across the school is good. In almost all lessons, questioning is effective and the purpose of learning is clear to children. Most teachers support children to identify how to be successful in their learning. Children reflect increasingly on the quality of their learning and, with support, most can set themselves weekly targets in their home link diaries. Teachers should continue to help children develop vocabulary as reflective learners to ensure target setting supports their progress. Most teachers provide children with a range of feedback and this is most successful when it helps children understand clearly next steps in their learning. Staff providing effective feedback should share their good practice to secure consistency across the school.
- In most lessons, teachers use a variety of teaching approaches well to motivate children. Overall, in most classes, teachers ensure that the content of tasks and activities are appropriate and matched well to children's needs. A few lessons are too teacher led. Across the school, children need increased opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning. Early level staff also need to plan together meaningful play contexts for children. Young children need to take further ownership of their own learning and influence what they will learn next.
- In a majority of lessons, children use tablets and laptops well. For example, they access online games to support their learning in literacy and numeracy. They use search engines effectively for research and use coding to develop their computational thinking. A few teachers use digital technology very well to enhance children's interdisciplinary learning (IDL), including the children's Machanhill newscast recording. Across the school, staff should extend their use of digital technologies further in a planned and progressive manner which enhances children's learning.
- Support staff assist skilfully a number of children across the school. Together with teaching staff they deliver a range of effective planned interventions which support children who face additional barriers to learning, such as structured literacy programmes and daily counting and calculating for numeracy support. Often, children's targeted support is delivered outwith the classroom. Senior leaders need to consider interventions and timetabling carefully to avoid children missing key aspects of learning.

- Teachers' planning ensures coverage of appropriate experiences and outcomes across all levels. Staff use agreed progression pathways for literacy and numeracy well. Across the school, teachers plan relevant interdisciplinary learning and children learn through shared contexts based on science, social studies and expressive arts. Children contribute their knowledge and suggest areas for exploration during the planning of each theme.
- Teachers know children well and create a 'data story' of their class, drawn from analysis of a range of assessment information. Children's strengths and needs are clear and the 'data story' provides a basis for regular, effective planning, tracking and monitoring. Teachers assess what children have achieved at planned times across the year. They use a range of standardised assessments including Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA) and National Benchmarks. They use this information well to support their robust professional judgement of children's progress and attainment. Staff are developing their use of day to day assessment. They need to ensure this is an integral feature of planning ongoing learning and teaching.
- Senior leaders track children's progress well through termly meetings with teachers, discussing planning, attainment, barriers to learning and any health and wellbeing concerns. Staff monitor effectively the progress of identified groups of learners, including those who face additional challenges. Senior leaders and teachers plan appropriate interventions using this knowledge to support children's progress in learning.
- To support teacher judgement and develop a shared standard in reading, writing and numeracy, teachers participate in helpful moderation activities in school and through Larkhall Learning Community. A few staff join a 'teacher learning community' with other schools and a partner local authority to develop further consistent assessment practice. Senior leaders should continue to provide moderation activities to support teachers to make confident judgements about children's achievement of a level.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Teachers' planning of pace and challenge in literacy and numeracy is supported well by strategic progressive planners. Staff are appropriately prioritising the creation of a skills-based health and wellbeing pathway this session. Teachers are streamlining forward planning formats to tackle bureaucracy. Senior leaders, in consultation with staff, should continue to create well-defined progression pathways for the remaining areas of the curriculum, providing regular opportunity for the essential practice of discrete skills. Teachers need clear structure and direction to help ensure children build on their prior learning across the school.
- Teachers are developing children's understanding of how knowledge and skills build over time. They should raise children's awareness of transferrable skills and support children to make meaningful links across their learning, in and out of school. Staff need to continue to work together to develop further the use of wider themes, including creativity and learning for sustainability, to provide rich, motivating contexts for children's personal achievement. In doing so, teachers should ensure these are embedded throughout the curriculum as part of children's learning entitlement.
- Teachers are beginning to link children's ongoing learning to the world of work. Most children, working towards first and second level, show an awareness of the importance of numeracy in everyday life and across a wide range of careers. Children take part in enterprise and finance activities during focus weeks developing skills that help prepare them for their future career pathways. Partners and parents support children's learning further through informative visits and talks. Staff should use the 'Developing the Young Workforce' and 'Career Education Standard (3-18)' to explore further development in this area.
- Children benefit from partnership with the local community and the involvement of a range of partners who work closely with school staff. These partnerships provide good opportunities for children to participate and achieve across a variety of activities, such as opera performance and sports festivals. The school should continue to build the profile of the school in the community and participate in local events to provide children with relevant and motivating opportunities to develop their skills.
- Staff are beginning to use the rich, outdoor learning environment to enhance and extend children's learning, including mathematics in real life contexts. Children speak enthusiastically about developing the use of the poly-tunnel to link with the school's focus on food and health. Staff need to develop further progressive outdoor learning to complement children's learning within the classroom.
- The school should continue to develop children's understanding of diversity and equality across all curriculum levels as part of planned and progressive curricular learning.
- The school is meeting the national expectation of two hours per week of quality physical education. The provision of religious observance is in line with statutory requirements.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- The Machanhill Parent Council works effectively in partnership with the school. They appreciate the caring and compassionate approach of senior leaders and staff. The parent council fundraise for the school and children benefit from the resources and events they provide.
- Parents are encouraged to involve themselves in the life of the school and this enhances children's experiences. A number of parents organise and run after school clubs, which children benefit greatly from.
- Parents appreciate the planned opportunities to meet teachers and be involved in their child's learning. They feel recently developed 'snapshot' jotters are helpful and supportive in understanding their child's progress in learning. High attendance at #MAC club and family cooking supports good relationships between school and families. Both parents and children talk positively about the benefits of learning together. A few parents say that homework is not at the right level for their child.
- Parents feel communications between home and school have improved, including the use of social media and a yearly calendar of events. The school's range of approaches to gather feedback and suggestions, such as the new parent forum, help parents to see that their views are important to staff.
- The school plays an active role in the community. Children across the school participate in a range of community activities, including the local Gala day and helping to take care of planters at the local railway station. Local businesses work well in partnership with the school to develop children's skills for life, learning and work during focus weeks and host excursions. The school should continue to develop their community links to enhance children's learning.

2.1 Safeguarding

- 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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- Senior leaders and staff at Machanhill Primary School know children and their families very well and take forward work aimed at improving outcomes for all children. The school has a welcoming, caring and inclusive ethos. As a result, almost all children feel safe in school and say they have someone to talk to if they have a concern or worry.
- Most children have a growing understanding of their rights. Senior leaders should increase the focus on the 'United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child' to enrich the children's experiences and support them to develop skills, such as debating, listening and empathy. This would link well with the school's plans to review its approaches to building children's resilience, self-regulation and promoting positive relationships.
- Senior leaders have a range of appropriate programmes and interventions in place to support the wellbeing needs of children who face challenges across the school. A few children who display challenging behaviour require ongoing targeted support and strategies to help them fully meet their potential. Staff should continue to develop further nurturing principles across the school to support the growth and development of all children's wellbeing.
- Most children have a good understanding of wellbeing indicators. Regularly, children measure their feelings of wellbeing and discuss this with their teacher. Staff should develop further the use of these wellbeing scales to support children to understand their own progress in wellbeing and how this may change at points in their lives.
- Children are increasing their interest, involvement in and awareness of the importance of an active lifestyle. They are taking part in effective physical education and a number of children enjoy physical activities during the school day, at lunchtime and after school. Over the year, a number of children are involved in a range of sports, including athletics, cross-country running, football and netball. Senior pupils support younger children at break-times helping to foster values of respect and care through play activities.
- Children can access a range of lunchtime and after school clubs which are on offer. In addition to sports, they can attend clubs for coding, brass band and choir. Senior leaders are beginning to track children's attendance and participation in activities through learning conversations with teachers. They need to develop the use of this data to help identify patterns and inform the planning of future work. There is potential for teachers to help children track their own participation in such activities. They should also support children to gain a greater insight into the skills they are developing to support and enhance their wellbeing.
- Children with additional responsibilities as house captains and buddies speak positively about their roles and the contributions they make to their school. Children involved in pupil committees feel listened to and are enthusiastic about their plans for school improvement. Staff

should continue to build confidence and participation involving more children across the school. Teachers should help children to recognise the contribution these experiences make to overall health and wellbeing.

- At all stages, children use the attractive school library space well for reading, relaxing and socialising. Children speak positively of enjoying spending time there. Children could be more involved in managing aspects of the library to give them more ownership and leadership responsibility.
- Senior leaders have identified the strategic development of a health and wellbeing progressive pathway as an area of priority. Teachers are beginning to track children's progress in health and wellbeing through discussions with senior leaders. They should continue, as planned, to develop how they assess and monitor children's learning in this area, using National Benchmarks.
- Senior leaders have a good understanding of statutory requirements in relation to wellbeing, equality and inclusion. Their well-managed staged intervention processes and procedures support children with barriers to their learning. They have appropriate additional support targets and plans (ASPs) in place for a number of children. They review regularly plans which are supporting children to progress in their learning. Their ASP planning meetings involve parents and children, taking into account their views. The school's strong collaborative partnership working identifies and supports effectively the needs of children.
- Children learn about equality and diversity appropriately through assemblies and religious and moral education (RME) lessons. The school celebrates cultural diversity, supporting children to reflect on their own values and develop an understanding of the beliefs of others. Staff help children to challenge discrimination through planned learning, for example, 'Divided City' transition work and a Holocaust project. Senior leaders encourage strong links with the local denominational school to support children's increased understanding of equality and diversity. They now need to extend this partnership further to include early and first levels.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

good

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

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- The school evaluates effectively children's progress in literacy and numeracy. The school's 2018-19 data on achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels shows by the end of P1, almost all children achieve early level in reading, listening and talking and numeracy and most achieve in writing. By the end of P4, almost all children achieve first level in listening and talking, most in numeracy and the majority of children achieve in reading and writing. By the end of P7, all children achieve second level in listening and talking, almost all in writing and most achieve in reading and numeracy. At all levels, in both literacy and numeracy, a few children are not attaining in line with their potential.
- Most children with additional barriers to their learning are making appropriate progress at their individual levels of attainment.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, most children are making good progress in literacy and English. Senior leaders and staff have identified attainment gaps in both reading and writing. They are developing a range of targeted interventions and whole school approaches to address these.

Listening and talking

- Almost all children listen well in class and are articulate in discussions. They respect the ideas of others and respond appropriately to peers and adults. At early level, almost all children listen attentively to their teacher and talk clearly to others, sharing feelings, ideas and thoughts. The majority of children are developing their skills in listening to one another and taking turns. At first level, most take turns in a group discussion and listen respectfully to their peers, contributing at the appropriate time. At second level, almost all children communicate clearly, audibly and with expression. They offer viewpoints, state preferences and justify their reasoning. Most children confidently ask questions of their peers and build on the answers of others during discussions. Children need to develop their skills in debating at this level. Across the school, children need to develop further their skills in presenting to larger audiences, for example, during class talks and at assemblies.

Reading

- Across early and second level, most children are making good progress in reading and the majority across first level. Across the school, children talk enthusiastically about enjoying reading. At early level, most children use their knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns to read words. They name a character in a known story and enjoy listening and responding to stories. The majority are beginning to develop their independent reading skills with short sentences. At first and second levels, children work collaboratively in groups with specific roles to analyse texts. At first level, the majority of children read aloud with fluency and expression. They explain their preferences for particular texts and authors. A few children are not yet

confident with the different features of fiction and non-fiction books. At second level, most children read with fluency, understanding and expression. They use punctuation effectively to aid their understanding of the text. Almost all children identify a wide range of authors and most can justify their opinions on preferred texts. A few children are not yet confident answering inferential questions about their texts. Children at all levels need to read and work with a wider range of genre.

Writing

- Across early and second level, most children are making good progress in writing and the majority within first level. At early level, most children are beginning to write independently and are developing their letter formation. By the end of first level, the majority of children use appropriate punctuation and spell correctly commonly used phonetic words. The majority write a range of texts appropriately, for example, personal recounts, imaginative stories and poems. Across this level, children need further practice using spelling strategies when writing less familiar words and vocabulary. By the end of second level, most children demonstrate their knowledge of language well in extended pieces of writing. Most use a range of punctuation accurately and use dictionaries well to check the spelling of unfamiliar words. Almost all children talk confidently about features of different types of writing, such as news reports, poems and persuasive texts. All children across second level need to develop their skills in note-taking.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, most children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measurement

- Across first and second level, children show good problem solving skills when exploring aspects of mathematics, which are unfamiliar, and when solving multi-step problems.
- At early level, most children count and sequence numbers to ten and a few children work beyond ten. They need to practise recognition of numbers beyond ten without counting and use this as the basis of simple estimation. By the end of first level, most children identify numbers missing from a simple sequence. Most show determination in finding the correct answer to mental calculations and work well with tasks involving time. Children working at first level need to develop further their understanding of equivalent fractions and of rounding to the nearest number. By the end of second level, most children identify quickly number patterns. Most are skilled at calculating change in questions about shopping and budgeting. Most children are beginning to calculate relationships between speed, time and distance. Most understand the links between fractions, decimals and percentages. Children need to develop a deeper understanding of perimeter, area and volume across second level. At all levels, children's capacity in quick mental agility needs to improve.

Shape position and movement

- At early level, almost all children sort and describe simple shapes and can use them to be creative. They need to develop and further explore the language associated with flat shapes, for example, flat and curved. By the end of first level, most children name an increasing range of 2D shapes and identify these in the environment. Most children use an appropriate vocabulary of position and movement when describing the location of items in relation to one another. Children working at first level require further practice in exploring shape, position and movement through tiling and symmetry. Across second level, most children show good knowledge of a wide range of 2D shapes and 3D objects. Children need to develop further their understanding of the properties of 3D objects.

Information handling

- At early level, most children sort correctly according to shape, colour and size and create their own classifications. Across first and second level, most children use key skills in information handling, for example, the use of simple graphs and pie charts to present and interpret information. Most recall techniques used to gather and classify information. At all levels, children need to develop stage-appropriate digital technology skills for collecting and displaying information, including databases at second level.

Attainment over time

- The school has robust attainment data for literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics for the past four years. This data shows an overall improving trend. Following a dip in attainment in writing in 2017-18, a school focus on improving approaches to the teaching of writing resulted in increased attainment in 2018-19, particularly at second level. Children's progress in listening and talking has remained stable, with almost all children attaining appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels during this time. The school are not yet tracking attainment in other curricular areas.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Children talk with pride of their achievements, the school's successes and their contribution to the life and work of the school. Children develop skills and confidence, including leading and teamwork, through experiences, such as pupil council, Junior Road Safety Officers and sports leaders. Older children speak enthusiastically about attributes they develop through wider school responsibilities. Captains are proud to represent their house for the school and talk positively about developing in confidence. Using skills of creativity and enterprise, children raise money for a number of local and national charities, for example, through a coffee morning. Children also achieve considerable success through a wide range of sports activities, in school and the local community. To ensure all children achieve success, staff should develop a systematic approach to planning and recording how children's skills progress across the school. Teachers should support children to identify the attributes and capabilities they develop through participation in wider achievement activities.
- The school records and celebrates children's achievements through assemblies, wall displays, certificates and regular use of social media. Staff monitor children's attendance at clubs. This allows staff to identify and support children who may be at risk of missing out.

Equity for all learners

- The school's Pupil Equity Fund allocation is used appropriately to support the raising attainment strategy for literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders collate robust evidence which shows between 2015/16 and 2018/19 the gap in attainment for numeracy and mathematics has reduced. Staff have arrangements in place to ensure that financial constraints do not prevent children from taking part in opportunities for wider achievement. The school community should continue to explore further ways to address cost of the school day.

Choice of QI: 2.5 Family Learning

- Engaging families in learning
- Early intervention and prevention
- Quality of family learning programmes

- The school staff are proactive in identifying and minimising potential barriers to parents' participation in their children's learning. The school's close partnerships with local organisations help to signpost and put in place useful support for parents.
- Teachers are sharing 'snapshot' jotters and homework diaries to provide parents with information on what and how their child is learning. Parents can record a response in these helping to encourage an ongoing conversation between teacher and family. School staff provide well-organised curriculum events to highlight practical strategies for parents to support children's learning at home. Senior leaders, with staff, should continue to explore ways to reach parents unable to attend sessions in person, for example, through online presentations.
- Staff recognise the positive impact that effective approaches to family learning can have on children's learning in school. They provide a well-planned range of strategies to engage parents and wider families in joint learning activities, such as intergenerational cooking. Parents feel these events help to build their confidence and encourage healthy eating. Senior leaders recognise clear measures of success need to be developed in order to understand the impact of the work on children's progress in learning and inform future direction.
- Building on the positive parental engagement in children's learning the school community need to develop their own shared definition of what family learning will look like at Machanhill. Following on from the interest shown by parents, the school should create further programmes of family learning, including a focus on parents developing their own skills, to encourage a community culture of lifelong learning.

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.