

# Summarised inspection findings

**Buchlyie Primary School**

Stirling Council

31 October 2023

## Key contextual information

Buchlyvie Primary School is situated in the village of Buchlyvie in Stirling Council. There are 37 children in the school, working across two multi-stage composite classes. The headteacher has been in post for eleven years. She is also the headteacher of Fintry Primary School and Arnprior Nursery in Stirling Council. The headteacher is supported by a principal teacher who works 0.8 full-time equivalent (FTE) and a class teacher who is acting principal teacher 0.2 FTE. There is also 1.6 FTE teaching staff. The school has three Support for Learning Assistants who work a total of 1.5 FTE per week.

For session 2022-2023, the school received £2,160 of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). Almost all children live in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data zone 9. School attendance is above the National average.

### 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very 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

- There is a highly positive ethos within Buchlyvie Primary School. Children and adults have friendly and warm relationships across the school community. Children reflect the school values of honesty, courage, respect, confidence and kindness very well. All staff link children's learning effectively to the school charter, children's rights and global goals to provide a rights-based education.
- All staff create very calm and purposeful learning environments. Children independently access calm areas within classrooms or the school 'Snug', which helps them to be ready to learn. All children are members of the 'Pupil Parliament' and contribute meaningfully to the life and work of the school. Children use How Good is OUR School (HGIOURS) to evaluate and influence the quality of their learning. Last session, they expressed that they would like more opportunities for outdoor learning. In response, teachers recently undertook useful professional learning in orienteering and den building. This is helping teachers to improve approaches to outdoor learning. As planned, teachers should continue to develop further their approaches to outdoor learning and support children to talk about the skills they are developing.
- All teachers take effective account of children's views about what they would like to learn. They use children's 'big questions' to plan learning that is meaningful and relevant. For example, older children chose to learn about fast fashion as part of their sustainability topic. Children use digital devices frequently to enhance and extend their learning. Teachers provide children with valuable opportunities to apply their learning in different contexts. As a result, almost all children are highly engaged and motivated in learning.

- Almost all children listen attentively during lessons and interact well with each other during group tasks and activities. All teachers provide children with frequent opportunities to work collaboratively, assuming roles such as presenter or group leader. All teachers set tasks and activities to take account of children working at different stages within classes. They match teaching to the learning needs of most children well. A few children would benefit from greater challenge in their learning. This will help them to achieve their full potential.
- The headteacher worked successfully with teachers to develop the Buchlyvie Lesson Evaluation Toolkit. They have a strong understanding of the features of high-quality learning and teaching. All staff should continue to work together to embed these approaches across the school. All teachers share the purpose of learning with children and co-create measures of success with them during lessons. This helps children to be clear about what they need to do to be successful learners. All teachers provide children with clear explanations and instructions during lessons. They intervene quickly to support children's understanding. They ask a wide range of considered open-ended questions to deepen children's thinking. Support for learning assistants provide children with valuable support which is helping them to achieve success in learning.
- Teachers use play-pedagogy approaches with younger children and creative inquiry-based approaches with older children. They support children well to be curious learners. Teachers engaged in professional learning to support their understanding of play-pedagogy. They create well-designed classroom environments which enable children to explore independently. They provide children with an appropriate balance of child-led and teacher directed experiences. They observe children as they play and interact well with them, using effective questioning to move their learning forward.
- Staff participate in worthwhile professional learning to improve the quality of their teaching. Last session, teachers developed their approach to the teaching of numeracy which is raising attainment in this area. Teachers are now implementing new approaches to raise attainment further in writing. As planned, all staff should continue to embed approaches to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy.
- The headteacher worked with teachers to develop a highly comprehensive assessment protocol. This supports all teachers successfully to be clear about the purpose and range of all assessment activities. Teachers plan assessment as an integral part of the planning of learning and teaching. They use a range of formative and summative approaches, well-designed challenges and the National Benchmarks effectively to assess children's attainment across all curricular areas. These approaches help teachers to measure children's progress clearly as they move through Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. Teachers use diagnostic summative assessments to pinpoint children's individual strengths and areas of need in their learning. Teachers identify children who are not on track with their learning based on their assessment evidence. They plan interventions carefully and implement them quickly.
- The headteacher is a trained quality assurance and moderation support officer (QAMSO). She provides teachers with useful opportunities to moderate standards of children's work with colleagues in the Balfron Learning Community. This is helping to ensure that teachers' professional judgements about children's levels of attainment are reliable.
- Children have valuable opportunities to self- and peer-assess their work which enables them to reflect on their learning. All teachers use a consistent approach to written feedback. As a result, children are clear about where they are in their learning and what they need to do to improve.

- Teachers plan learning for children, including those requiring additional support, across all curricular areas using progression pathways. They plan learning in collaboration with children. This enables children to be leaders of their learning and to learn at a brisk pace across all areas of the curriculum. This is a strength of the school. Teachers take very good account of the multi-stage composite classes using a yearly rolling planning format. They develop children's skills progressively, taking account of prior learning and children's interests. This ensures that children receive breadth and depth of learning as they move through CfE levels.
- The headteacher has robust processes to track children's progress. She meets termly with teachers to plan learning and discuss the impact of their work on children's attainment. They review assessment evidence during these meetings to ensure it is valid. The headteacher should continue to work with all teachers to build on this good practice. The headteacher and teachers identify children who require further support during planning and tracking meetings. They plan and put interventions, with clear measures of success, in place timeously. They plan targeted support for children who require additional support with their learning. They carefully review their progress on an on-going basis to ensure they meet children's learning needs well.
- The headteacher uses PEF well to provide effective targeted support for children who are affected by socio-economic factors. This support is closing gaps in children's learning successfully.

## 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

very 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

- Buchlyvie Primary School is a small school with multi-stage composite classes. Due to this, attainment and progress will be expressed in overall statements, rather than for specific year groups or CfE levels.
- Overall, attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is very good. Data provided by the school shows that for session 2022-2023, most children achieved national standards in literacy and English, and numeracy and mathematics.
- Children who require additional support with their learning or health and wellbeing, make very good progress towards their individual targets.

#### Attainment in literacy and English

- Most children make very good progress from prior levels of attainment in reading, writing and listening and talking.

#### Listening and talking

- Across the school, almost all children are very confident and articulate when talking to each other and adults. They use a wide range of age-appropriate vocabulary. Younger children follow and give simple instructions successfully during group tasks. Children at the middle and upper stages, lead and reflect on discussions very well when discussing their learning. Older children summarise succinctly the key aspects of plot and character in books they are reading. Older children recognise the features of oral talks and presentations correctly. They enjoy participating in debates to persuade others to their viewpoint. They would benefit from opportunities to develop their skills further by speaking to a wider range of audiences beyond the local community.

#### Reading

- Across the school, children are keen readers. They access a wide range of reading material in well-stocked class libraries. Younger children use their knowledge of letters and sounds very well to read new words and stories. They enjoy learning about characters in their reading books. Children at the middle and upper stages talk confidently about their favourite books, expressing their preferences for different genres. They use context clues accurately to find the meaning of new words and develop their vocabulary. Older children use their reading skills such as prediction and summarising successfully and use literal, inferential and evaluative questions to deepen their understanding of texts. Across the school, most children are highly fluent readers for their age and stage. Older children use their detailed knowledge of punctuation to add expression when reading aloud. Older children would benefit from further opportunities to study the features of non-fiction texts.

## Writing

- Across the school, children write for a range of purposes. All staff have a continued focus on raising attainment in writing. Younger children use their knowledge of letter sounds and spelling strategies to spell words. They would benefit from regular handwriting practice in forming lower and uppercase letters. Children at the middle stages write independently using capital letters, full stops and question marks accurately. Older children write for a range of reasons. They apply the features of genre successfully in personal recounts, imaginative texts, script writing and poetry. They use features of figurative language and grammar accurately to enhance their writing.

## Numeracy and mathematics

- Across the school, children make very good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Last session, staff focused on improving children's understanding of number processes.

## Number, money and measure

- Across the school, children understand the concept of place value well. They identify the value of a digit in numbers up to one million appropriate to their age and stage. They understand the concept of zero as a place holder. Children at the middle stages use taught strategies to add and subtract numbers in calculations. All children use digital technologies successfully to develop their understanding of number processes. Teachers should continue to provide children with regular opportunities to record number calculations in the appropriate way. Children use the correct mathematical vocabulary when discussing units of length, weight and capacity. Children understand concepts of time well for the CfE level they are working at.

## Shape, position and movement

- Across the school, children identify accurately a range of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. They use accurate mathematical language, such as corner, edge and face to identify the properties of shapes in an age-appropriate way. Older children identify and illustrate lines of symmetry in a range of shapes. They use their knowledge of angles and compass points successfully to give and follow directions.

## Information handling

- Across the school, children handle information in a range of meaningful ways. Younger children collect and organise objects according to specific criteria. Older children sort information successfully according to their own criteria. They display their findings accurately within Venn diagrams. As children progress through the school, they use digital technologies successfully to gather, collate and display information in bar graphs and charts.

## Attainment over time

- The headteacher and teachers have a clear strategy to raise attainment over time focusing rightly on literacy and numeracy and health and wellbeing. This is a key feature in raising attainment for all. Overall, children's attainment improves as they move through the school. Children apply their literacy and numeracy skills very well across the curriculum.
- Teachers track children's progress carefully. They implement effective universal and targeted interventions quickly and evaluate them regularly. As a result, children make very good progress towards closing identified gaps or dips in attainment.
- Teachers use the National Benchmarks and a range of highly effective summative and formative assessment approaches to assess children's progress. Moderation with colleagues from other schools supports teachers well to make reliable professional judgements about children's attainment.



## Overall quality of learner's achievements

- Children's achievements in school are shared and celebrated in assemblies and classroom displays. Children enjoy receiving certificates for their achievements during assemblies. A whole school points system encourages children to demonstrate the school values. The headteacher tracks children's achievements out of school. Almost all children demonstrate that they are effective contributors, responsible citizens and are highly confident.
- Children grow and harvest fruit and vegetables in the school garden which they share with the local community. Children have a very good understanding of sustainability and are clear about the role they play in promoting this. They compost waste from the school kitchen and upcycle clothes as part of their fast fashion topic. As a result, children are growing to become responsible citizens.
- Older children adopt leadership roles such as the Restorative Buddies who support their friends to resolve playground disagreements amiably. House Captains and P1 Buddies roles build children's confidence well. Children participate in enterprise events such as hosting tea parties for parents. They listen and talk to parents and members of the community who act as 'industry experts'. They are developing their skills for learning life and work well. Children participate in a parent led bouldering club which encourages them to be resilient and assess risk. They enjoy learning the new skill of knitting taught by a parent. As planned, staff should continue to develop further the range of clubs, committees and partnerships to enable all children to develop a range of skills.
- Children develop their team-working skills in a range of sports activities such as football, netball and a track and field event at Stirling University. The Primary Engineers group recognised children's science and technology skills. Children from P4 can access instrumental tuition should they wish to, and all children participate in school shows and assemblies. All children learn tuned percussion, and the ukulele and recorder with the peripatetic music teacher. This is developing their skills in performance and playing instruments. Last session, children were creative in demonstrating their leadership and organisational skills by running their own assault course to subsidise the cost of school trips. P7 children enjoy a residential experience which helps them to prepare for the move to secondary school and be more independent. Children understand the needs of others well. They take part in fundraising events such as the Christmas Shoe Box Appeal.

## Equity for all learners

- All staff have a very clear understanding of the socio-economic factors that affect children and their families. The headteacher worked with children, staff and parents to undertake a review of the cost of the school day. Staff provide a uniform shop and access to a food sharing scheme which supports children and their families well. They ensure that no child misses out.
- Parents and the local community are highly supportive. Parents contribute actively to the school funds to buy resources and materials. They subsidise the cost of school trips to ensure that all children are involved. These activities ensure that all children have equity of opportunities for achievement.
- The headteacher uses PEF to implement targeted interventions to support children with their health and wellbeing and raise attainment in literacy and numeracy. These interventions are accelerating children's progress and closing gaps in their learning.



## Other relevant evidence

- Buchlyvie Primary School receives a small amount of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). The headteacher uses this funding to provide interventions in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. The headteacher consults with the Parent Council on the use of funding as part of the school improvement consultation process.

## 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.