

Summarised inspection findings

St Catherine's Primary School

Renfrewshire Council

26 February 2019

Key contextual information

St Catherine's Primary School is a Catholic Primary School in the Gallowhill area of Paisley. At the time of inspection, the roll was 174. The headteacher has been in post since January 2018. Seventy four per cent of children who attend the school live at addresses designated as SIMD deciles 1 and 2.

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

- Across the school, there is a purposeful and supportive climate for learning. Relationships between children and staff are very positive. As a result, children are motivated, engaged in their learning and demonstrate pride in their school. Children interact very well with each other in their learning and play.
- Across all classes, children participate in appropriately challenging activities. They are developing a good awareness of their strengths and what they need to do to improve. Staff are supporting children well to assess their own progress through very good use of learning intentions and co-created success criteria. Children use feedback in jotters and learning conversations very well to help them identify learning targets. They value this information provided by teachers and use it to identify next steps in learning. Children identify how success criteria in lessons enable them to know if they have achieved success in their learning.
- Staff across the school demonstrate appropriately high aspirations for all children. The school motto of 'attain, achieve, aspire', underpins teaching and learning approaches. Lessons are well planned and take very good account of the range of needs of children. Staff demonstrate in-depth knowledge of children's socio-economic context and use this information well to plan high quality learning. Staff should continue to monitor teaching approaches to ensure they all lead to consistently high quality learning experiences. In almost all classes, learning is very well matched to the needs of children and activities are appropriately differentiated.
- Staff across the school are committed to ensuring children's views are taken into account as they plan learning experiences. There are opportunities for children to make decisions about their topics and they are routinely asked to identify what they would like to learn. Staff seek children's views on a range of issues such as how motivated they are in their learning and the quality of opportunities they have for decision making. Almost all children make positive responses to school surveys. The pupil council collect and analyse data from children's questionnaires and identify actions to ensure children's views are taken forward.
- Children benefit from participating in a wide range of learning opportunities that contribute to the wider life of the school and local community. All children are involved in a range of citizenship groups such as Charity Champions, Pride in the Community and STEM. All groups

have clear aims as to what they will achieve and children participate in activities that support them in understanding the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence.

- Staff are helping children understand the skills they are developing through a well-planned skills progression framework. As children move through the school, learning opportunities include a focus in specific skills for life, learning and work. Children in P6 and P7 attend masterclasses at the local college to help apply their skills in relevant and meaningful contexts. The school should now continue with this valuable work and link it to national guidance such as the Career Education Standards.
- Children have opportunities to learn in a range of meaningful and relevant contexts such as in the outdoor classroom and in the local community. Digital technology is used very well to enhance learning. Children use tablets to record evidence of achievements and to display their learning through ibooks. Staff should continue to ensure children have opportunities to apply their learning in varied contexts and in problem solving activities.
- Staff and children use a range of approaches to assess progress and attainment. Staff use assessment information well. Planning documentation has a clear focus on how learning is assessed. Periodic assessments enable staff to identify progress and next steps at specific times throughout the term. Standardised assessments are used at key times to confirm professional judgements. Information from the range of assessments is used very well by the senior leadership team and teachers to identify next steps in learning. Staff are making increasing use of children's views about their own learning to contribute to assessment information.
- Staff are working very well together to develop a shared understanding of expectations and standards. Staff work within Curriculum for Excellence levels to plan learning and assessment. Their participation in moderation activities in reading and writing ensures a shared understanding of standards. Moderation activities are to be extended to allow staff to work with other schools across the education authority. Staff are confident in their professional judgements through quality opportunities for professional learning and planned moderation activities.
- The school uses a range of reliable data and has very effective tracking systems and procedures in place. Termly conversations with the senior leadership team focus on recent attainment data and from this information, appropriate actions and interventions are agreed and monitored.
- Planning approaches take very good account of the needs of all learners. Individual educational plans are in place for those children who face additional challenges. The senior leadership team works collaboratively with teaching staff to monitor and track the progress and attainment of all children across the school. Children who are not making expected progress are supported very well using appropriate interventions. The senior leadership team and staff use their knowledge of children's strengths, needs and socio economic context to monitor the progress of specific children. All staff have a clear focus on ensuring children are attaining as highly as possible. The robust approaches to tracking and monitoring, including the recent tracking of children's progress in wellbeing, is resulting in improved attainment and outcomes for almost all learners.

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

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

- Across the school, attainment in literacy and numeracy is very good. Teacher professional judgement of Curriculum for Excellence levels is based on a range of evidence from day-to-day learning and teaching, assessment and analysis of standardised assessments. Evidence from teacher professional judgement indicates that almost all children in P1 are achieving early level in listening and talking, reading, writing, and numeracy. At P4, most children are achieving first level in all aspects of literacy and all children are achieving first level in numeracy. At P7, most children are achieving second level in literacy and numeracy. Data provided by the school accurately reflects children's attainment.

Literacy and English

- Overall, most children are making very good progress in literacy and English.

Reading

- Overall, attainment in reading across the school is very good. Reading is well taught through a structured whole school reading strategy which is engaging children and impacting positively on their progress. Across the school, children are confident reading aloud and do so with increasing fluency and expression. At early level, children are using their knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns to read words and are building a good sight vocabulary. A range of games and play activities, as well as focused teaching, is supporting this development. At first level, children can engage with a wide range of texts, distinguish well between fiction and non-fiction and use increasingly sophisticated strategies to decode and show their understanding. By second level, children show confidence in their ability to analyse texts and make connections to authors, books and their own perspectives and knowledge. They discuss structure and the writer's style. Within the first and second level focus groups, children explain why they prefer a particular author. They share their thoughts about characters, setting and the main ideas.

Writing

- Overall, attainment in writing across the school is very good and most children are making very good progress. Across the school, there are opportunities to write for a range of purposes and audiences. At early level, almost all children can form letters legibly and use capital letters and full stops. At first level, most write about events and characters in stories. They write very well about their feelings through a personal response. Children have opportunities to write with well-structured support such as story maps and boards. By second level, most children use ambitious language, metaphors and similes to make their extended writing engaging. They use paragraphs and complex punctuation accurately. They present relevant ideas and information to convey viewpoints and create balanced arguments. Children self-assess their writing based on co-created success criteria and they act on feedback given to them by their teacher and peers.

Listening and talking

- Overall, almost all children are making very good progress in listening and talking. They are developing and applying their skills in listening and talking across their learning very well. They interact very positively with their teacher and each other. Almost all children demonstrate an ability to listen to each other and offer considered opinions in a very respectful manner. They talk confidently in pairs and small groups. At early level, almost all children listen and respond appropriately when following instructions about their learning. At first and second levels, children contribute ideas and opinions well and are increasingly able to respond to non-verbal cues. They build on the ideas of their peers with confidence.

Number, money and measurement

- At early level, almost all children count forward and back to 20. They sequence number and add two numbers together up to 10. Children understand that they use coins to buy items and compare coins of different values. At first level, children apply a range of mental maths strategies to solve problems. They add and subtract four digit numbers and round numbers to the nearest 10. At second level, children work with six digit numbers. They round numbers and use mental maths strategies to add and subtract with confidence. The school should ensure that children have opportunities to apply their learning in a range of different contexts and problem solving activities.

Shape position and movement

- At early level, children name two-dimensional shapes and identify a range of shapes within their environment. At first level, almost all children identify symmetrical patterns and use their knowledge to create symmetrical portraits. Children identify three-dimensional objects and identify some of their properties. They use their knowledge to make three-dimensional cubes for their time capsule. Children identify right angles in everyday objects. At second level, children identify acute, obtuse and complimentary angles. They use measuring devices to identify different types of angles in two-dimensional shapes.

Information handling

- At early level, children use block graphs to sort information. They use their graphs well to find the answers to questions such as the most or least common item. At first level, children use tally marks to record information. They understand how Venn diagrams are used to sort information and extract relevant data from their diagrams. At second level, children use digital technology to make pie charts and graphs. They draw accurate conclusions from their graphs and charts.

Attainment over time

- There is clear evidence of the school improving attainment year on year with particularly significant improvement from 2016/2017. Staff are able to provide attainment data over a number of years showing improvements in attainment in literacy and numeracy. They identify and implement effective interventions to support cohorts of children. These interventions begin at early level and include a strong focus on shared pedagogy, transition, transfer of learning across the curriculum and target setting. A holistic approach to improving attainment includes a strong emphasis on improving wellbeing. From tracking meetings, actions are agreed which include literacy, numeracy or well-being interventions. Staff have high expectations and aspirations for all children.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Across the school, children demonstrate their skills as successful, confident learners. Every child contributes to the life of their school and community through participation in a wide range

of citizenship groups including a Pupil Council, Pride in our Community group, Fairtrade group, Faith in Action and a STEM group.

- School and home achievements are celebrated through the awarding of class certificates and head teacher certificates at assemblies. Children have very good opportunities to lead assemblies. Achievements are also celebrated and displayed within the context of the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence. Children talk confidently about their achievements. Staff track achievements to identify children who may be at risk of missing out. Children are asked about the activities they would like to take part in and opportunities are found or created.
- Children track their achievements through 'My Learning Journey' files. They share their home and school achievements and their success towards personal learning targets. Children at P3 are currently piloting digital profiles which give increased responsibilities to children to track their own achievements.
- Children have a very good understanding about the skills they are developing. The skills progression framework supports children at each stage to think about skills across a range of areas. Staff use the framework to help children understand how skills can be used in other contexts. Children who attend masterclasses at the local college are very positive about being able to attend college and understand learning in a different context.

Equity for all learners

- The school has a very clear strategy for achieving excellence and equity for all learners. This is built on a strong research base and knowledge of the local community. Feedback from all stakeholders is used to build on and enhance school priorities. Staff and children created The Reading Café which developed in to a Tech Lit Café following a reflection from parents. This café now offers increased access and use of digital technologies and literacy.
- Senior leaders have a clear overview of those children who require additional support to overcome barriers to their learning. All staff have a very good knowledge of individual children within the school and have a clear focus on improving equity for all. Children with additional barriers to learning are making appropriate progress in achievements. PEF interventions, which include early intervention, targeted support and transition are leading to improved outcomes for children

Practice worth sharing more widely

- The skills progression framework is used very well to help children focus on the skills they are developing. Staff refer to skills in the course of learning and teaching. Children can talk about skills, why they are important and give examples of how they will use these skills beyond school.
- There are a range of ways in which children can share their views and participate in wider school or community activities. All children participate in citizenship groups. Children are asked for their views about the school and their learning. These views and suggestions are valued and are taken forward by staff and children.

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.