Summarised inspection findings

Lochnell Primary School and Pre Five Nursery Unit

Argyll and Bute Council

29 October 2019

Key contextual information

Lochnell Primary School is situated in the village of Benderloch on the Argyll coast. At the time of the inspection, the school roll was 114 children. They are taught in five class, four of which are composite classes. Almost all of the children reside at addresses in SIMD deciles six to eight.

The school is going through a significant change in leadership this year. At the time of the inspection, an acting headteacher was leading the school.

1.3 Leadership of change	weak
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	

■ Lochnell Primary School has a warm and welcoming ethos. The school's vision, values and aims were developed with children, staff and the Parent Council in 2017. The school's aims encourage children to be happy, safe and fulfil their potential. A few children can confidently articulate what the school values mean to them and their engagement in the life of the school. It is now time to consider refreshing the vision, values and aims to ensure that the whole school community, including partners, have a clear understanding of these and how they reflect the unique context of the school. It is also necessary for the school to create a rationale for its curriculum. This should be created in conjunction with all stakeholders so that everyone is clear about the purpose and design of the curriculum.

■ The staff know the children and their families well. Overall, staff have an awareness of the social, economic and cultural context of the school community. Staff should build on their knowledge by engaging in wider locality data. The school is in receipt of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). The school need to develop a clear rationale for the use of PEF. Processes need to be in place to measure the impact of new resources and interventions supported by PEF in order that they have the maximum benefit for the appropriate children.

■ The current school improvement plan is linked to key local and national improvement priorities. These include developing approaches to moderation and assessment and improving parental engagement. The school has in place a few arrangements to evaluate its work, including aspects of learning and teaching. However, self-evaluation approaches are not yet leading to change and improvement. The school does not have in place sufficiently robust or embedded strategies to raise attainment, develop the curriculum or improve children's wellbeing.

■ The school requires to improve strategic planning for improvement and increase the pace of change. To ensure improvement, more rigorous approaches to self-evaluation need to be introduced and developed. The involvement of children, staff and parents in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school needs significantly increased. Developing the use of 'How good is our school? 4th Edition' (HGIOS?4) and 'How good is OUR school?' (HGIOURS?) will help staff and children reflect on what is going well and what needs to improve. Moving

forward, all staff need to reflect continually on the impact of any new initiatives to ensure they are leading to positive outcomes for children.

- Teamwork amongst staff is effective. In creating a strong sense of community within the school. Teaching staff engage in regular professional reviews. This should be more closely linked to the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) standards. Teachers engage in professional learning opportunities and visits to other schools to support the school's improvement work and their own professional development. It is now necessary for all staff to take increased roles in leading change throughout the school. The school should develop a culture of empowerment where staff are confident to lead improvements in aspects of the school's work identified through robust self-evaluation. The acting headteacher and staff should work in collaboration with the school community to develop approaches to learning and teaching.

- Children engage in a variety of leadership opportunities including the pupil council, eco group and as 'buddies'. They are encouraged to share their views about aspects of the schools work through the pupil council or the suggestion box. However, approaches to gathering children's views requires further development. At present, children have insufficient opportunities to be involved in leading change within the school.

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 school has a nurturing ethos. Positive and caring relationships are evident, as is a calm, purposeful learning environment. Children listen well to their teachers and to one another. Most children are attentive and are happy to work collaboratively. They are polite and respectful in their interactions with their peers and with school staff and visitors.

- Most children are engaged in their learning and focus well on tasks. In a few lessons, children are not actively involved in their learning and activities are overly teacher directed. Children would benefit from more opportunities to take increasing responsibility for their learning and to lead their learning. In most lessons, children need increased challenge in their learning. Teachers should ensure they take better account of children's prior learning and continue to build on this.

- Children contribute well to the life of the school through a range of activities. Older children take responsibility for lunchtime activities and lead after school clubs. They participate in community events such as public speaking, a local horticultural show and music and dance festivals. Children talk proudly of their contributions to these events.

- Intended learning and steps to success are shared in most classes. In a few classes, children participate well in dialogue reflecting on their learning at the end of a lesson. However, this is not consistent across the school. The pace of lessons should be increased. Currently, children spend too much time as passive listeners in too many lessons. They need to be more actively engaged in their learning. Staff should now work together to establish a shared understanding of high quality learning and teaching to improve consistency across the school.

- Children have too few opportunities to develop digital literacy skills. Teachers should use digital technology more regularly and effectively to support learning and enhance teaching.

- In the majority of lessons, explanations and instructions are clear and the majority of children understand the purpose of their learning. They are less confident when discussing personal learning targets or their next steps in learning. Across the school, feedback to children is too variable in quality. In a few lessons, children are invited to evaluate each other's work and to provide feedback related to agreed successful outcomes. Teachers should develop further the range and type of questioning to promote higher order thinking skills. This will support children to develop depth of understanding across learning. Most children are confident in the use of techniques to self and peer assess. During lessons, most teachers use formative assessment strategies to check for understanding.

- Teachers use a range of assessment approaches, including standardised assessments, to support their professional judgements. The school's framework for assessment requires revision to better support teachers and learners in planning next steps in learning. Staff should

review approaches to planning to ensure assessment is an integral part of this process. The school's plan to implement holistic assessments is at an early stage and needs to be developed further.

■ Staff are beginning to participate in moderation activities within the school and with colleagues in the cluster. These moderation activities are focused appropriately on aspects of literacy. This work should continue to be developed to support a shared understanding of standards resulting in raised expectations and children being challenged more in their learning.

■ 'Planning for Progress' consultations take place to discuss children's progress three times a year. These provide a useful opportunity for teachers, children and their parents to engage in dialogue about children's progress. After these meetings, children receive homework folders with tasks linked to their targets. However, these are not supporting children spoken to during the inspection in identifying their targets and next steps in learning. The school should review the 'Planning for Progress' consultation meetings to ensure they make clear for everyone, what the next learning targets are and how they can be achieved.

■ Children are involved in planning a few aspects of their learning. They devise key questions to research through interdisciplinary learning (IDL). The school has correctly identified that involving children in planning their learning more meaningfully is an area to develop further. Staff should plan holistic assessment activities within planned IDL topics in order to assess application of learning and to bring greater rigour to assessment processes across the curriculum.

■ In a few lessons, children are not sufficiently challenged in their learning. Teachers now need to plan differentiated or personalised learning activities which meets the needs of all children. Teachers should also ensure they provide further and appropriate challenge to support and enhance the learning of those children who are capable of more demanding work.

■ Teachers gather progress and attainment information in literacy and numeracy. They should streamline this practice to ensure it is meaningful and manageable. Current approaches to gathering information is unhelpful to staff when trying to identify patterns or trends in attainment over time. Creating a simplified and well-focused approach to tracking, monitoring and assessment will help staff to identify gaps or patterns in attainment more effectively.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

■ See choice QI.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

■ The school has developed effective partnership working with the local community. This includes links with the local Hope Kitchen and Bookends charities and also with local professionals. All partners speak very positively about their involvement in the work of the school. They value the opportunity to engage in joint evaluations of the work they do to help improve experiences for children.

■ The school is supported well by parents. Parents have many opportunities to be involved in the life of the school, however, they have too few opportunities to learn together with their child. The school should consider organising events to inform parents about the work of the school. The school is aware of the need to develop approaches to digital communication and the school website.

■ The school is supported well by an active Parent Council. The Parent Council supports the school through fundraising events and in consultation with the school on key developments. The wider parent body should be involved further in evaluating the work of the school.

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. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	satisfactory

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

- ■ Staff are committed to providing a calm and nurturing learning environment. The school has recently introduced wellbeing indicators to children. A few staff encourage children to develop an understanding of what the wellbeing indicators mean to them. All staff need to use wellbeing indicators effectively to support children to understand their own progress in wellbeing. This should include linking the wellbeing indicators to children's rights as described in the United Nations Charter on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The school should establish systems for tracking and monitoring wellbeing, ensuring staff and children evaluate progress over time.

- ■ The school's strategic development of health and wellbeing is at an early stage. Staff are aware of the need to develop a pathway for health and wellbeing that supports progression and ensures children are learning and achieving across all areas of the health and wellbeing curriculum. Children, parents and partners should be involved in the planning of the health and wellbeing curriculum to ensure plans take account of and reflect the needs of children and the community.

- ■ Children are happy, polite and express their views with confidence. Most children feel safe and enjoy positive, nurturing and respectful relationships with staff. Children enjoy positive relationships with each other, demonstrating respect and care for all. P7 'buddies' support P1 children well. They encourage younger children to develop their independence and make healthy food choices at lunch.

- ■ Almost all children feel they are treated fairly and know how to get help if they need it. Most children say the school is helping them become confident and lead healthy lifestyles. They appreciate participating in regular exercise and activities beyond the school day.

- ■ The school's approach to active lifestyles is having a positive impact on children. Children reflect on their physical activity levels and can describe steps taken to increase fitness. An increasing number of children take routes to school that encourage walking and cycling. Most children are active in their opportunities to play at breaktimes.

- ■ Children feel included in the life of the school and their attendance levels are high. They report everyone is treated fairly and have equal opportunities. The school has correctly identified the need to update its anti-bullying policy in line with national guidance.

- ■ The school needs to ensure that the most up-to-date policies and procedures are in place to support the safeguarding of children and that all staff are fully aware of these.

- ■ Staff are effective in identifying children who require additional support. Processes are in place to help plan and track support for these learners. The school demonstrates targeted interventions for a few children who require support in literacy and numeracy are effective. The

school is aware of the need to develop approaches to tracking and monitoring the progress of all identified groups of children.

■ The school should review its approaches to children being supported by staff out with classrooms and ensure children feel more included. Children should be more involved in making decisions about their learning. All staff need to plan more effectively together and develop consistency in the strategies used to support children who have additional support needs. Parents should be involved further in decision making about their child's learning needs.

■ Children do not yet have a broad enough understanding of equality and diversity. They do not understand aspects of global citizenship and protected characteristics. The school should ensure children develop the skills necessary to play their full part as citizens.

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

Overall attainment in literacy and numeracy

■ The overall quality of children's attainment in literacy and English language and numeracy and mathematics is good.

■ Data provided by the school from session 2018/19 shows accurately that all children in P1 achieved early level in literacy and numeracy. Almost all children in P4 and the majority of children in P7 achieved the appropriate Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) level in literacy. Almost all children in P4 and the most of children in P7 achieved the appropriate CfE level in numeracy.

Literacy and English

■ Overall attainment in literacy is good. Most children are making progress to achieve the appropriate level of Curriculum for Excellence.

Listening and talking

■ Across the school, almost all children are articulate, polite and courteous in their interactions. At early level, the majority of children listen attentively to instructions. They are developing their skills in taking turns to speak in a group. At first level, most children listen well to one another and take turns when speaking in a group. Most children speak confidently when contributing to class discussions. At second level, most children are confident and speak with clarity when discussing aspects of school life. They listen attentively to one another in discussions, building on responses appropriately. Children at first and second level are developing skills in presenting to a larger audience at assemblies and sharing learning events.

Reading

■ At early level, children are gaining confidence in identifying sounds and letters. Most children talk about favourite stories from books they share together in class. The majority of children at first level read confidently, making use of punctuation when reading aloud. They are less confident in identifying strategies they use to read and understand unfamiliar words. At first level, most children name one or two authors and discuss a favourite book. They identify different genres and author styles. Most identify main characters and events. They make use of the school library and enjoy reading. Most children understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction texts, although they are less confident in identifying the features of non-fiction texts. At second level, most children read with fluency and expression. They are aware of genre in texts and can name a number of authors and their works with confidence. Most children offer reasons for liking a particular text or author. They are less confident in answering inferential questions about texts.

Writing

■ At early level, all children are developing their letter formation through a range of activities. At first level, most children write in sentences using appropriate punctuation. At first level, all children write interesting stories, poems and letters linked well to interdisciplinary learning. At second level, most children write well-crafted letters, imaginative stories, persuasive essays and reports on a number of topics. Teachers provide meaningful contexts for writing across the curriculum. They should raise standards through effective feedback to children about how they can improve their writing further.

Numeracy and mathematics

■ Overall, children's attainment in numeracy is good. Most children are making appropriate progress.

Number, money, measure

■ At early level, most children identify the number before, the number after and missing numbers in a sequence within 20. Children at the early stages of primary identify a range of coins and use them to find simple amounts. At first level, most children explain the link between a digit, its place and its value and are developing their confidence in multiplication facts. They would benefit from more work in finding the change from £10.00. At second level, children calculate time durations and convert between common units of measurement. They need more opportunities to reason algebraically and complete calculations with fractions and percentages. Children need to become more skilled in applying learning to everyday contexts.

Shape, position and movement

■ At early level, most children name, identify and classify a range of simple two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects and recognise these shapes in different orientations and sizes. At first and second level, most children identify the properties of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects as appropriate to their age and stage. At first level, children are confident in identifying right angles and know they measure 90 degrees. They are confident creating pictures with one line of symmetry. At second level, most children know the properties of a circle and are confident with a range of angles. Their progress in drawing and measuring angles to the required degree of accuracy requires further development.

Information handling

■ At early and first levels, children create bar graphs as part of their daily routines. At first level, children sort data for real purposes using group tallies and digital technologies. They display this data accurately as bar graphs. At second level, most children are confident in interpreting a range of graphs including bar graphs and pie charts. However, they are less confident in their understanding of Venn and Carroll diagrams. Children working at first and second level have a good understanding of uncertainty and chance.

Attainment over time

■ The school can provide historical data showing achievement of CfE levels over a three-year period. These show good levels of attainment with children are making good progress over time. The strong partnership working between staff, parents and the wider community is helping to support this.

■ The school has correctly identified the need to implement more robust tracking and monitoring arrangements. This should include ensuring staff have a clear understanding of how all children are progressing in their learning, including those who have barriers to their learning. Improved tracking and monitoring will help staff identify children who are capable of increased challenge.

Overall quality of children's achievements

- Children are developing a broad range of skills through opportunities within and outwith school. Children talk well about their achievements when learning outdoors and the importance of learning for sustainability. They are particularly enthusiastic about their work on Eco Schools and are proud of the seven green flags they have been awarded. They talk confidently about their knowledge of recycling, caring for the environment and the impact of the work of the eco group. Children are learning valuable skills in teamwork, leadership and communication. They reflect on these skills well through their 'proud cloud'. Older children gain accreditation through their individual achievements such as a junior award scheme and cycling proficiency. Children have increased confidence from representing the school in public speaking and choir competitions where they are gaining valuable skills in communication and perseverance.

- Staff acknowledge the successes and achievements of children through 'proud cloud' and assemblies. The school should now systematically record and track learners' achievements and skills development to ensure that opportunities for achievement are progressive. Introducing regular reviews of children's achievements should also identify those who may be at risk of missing out.

Equity for all learners

- Staff have articulated an understanding of the socio-economic background of all children. The school uses PEF to support developments in health and wellbeing, literacy and numeracy. The school should devise and implement a clear action plan for PEF and carefully monitor the impact of targeted interventions. Further professional discussion and research would ensure that interventions are appropriate, targeted well and have a clear rationale.

- Staff know their children well. The school should continue to monitor participation levels and identify any possible gaps in opportunities for children. This will help ensure that no child is disadvantaged due to their personal needs or aspirations.

Choice of QI: 2.1 Curriculum
■ Rationale and design ■ Development of the curriculum ■ Learning pathways ■ Skills for learning, life and work

■ Children experience learning across all eight areas of the curriculum. The school needs to develop a curriculum rationale which takes account of the individual characteristics of the school and reflects its setting in the local community and wider world. Consultation with staff, children, parents and partners should ensure that the curriculum reflects the shared values of the school community. The school should illustrate how the four contexts of the curriculum and cross cutting themes integrate to ensure children receive their entitlement to a broad general education within the school's unique context.

■ The school works well with a wide range of partners to provide creative approaches to delivering the curriculum. Children participate in a variety of outdoor education activities which support the development of skills for life, learning and work. Classes work with a local company to learn more about their local environment and create films to showcase their learning. Children at P7, apply their talking skills through participation in an annual public speaking competition. Staff report that these experiences have resulted in increased confidence for children.

■ Pathways for literacy and numeracy are based on local authority frameworks. The school requires to develop its pathways for health and wellbeing and children's progression in their learning. These should include experiences for children to develop their knowledge of the wellbeing indicators and how these impact on them.

■ The school has positive examples of children having an element of choice and contributing to planning themes for IDL. A more strategic overview of approaches to IDL, in line with the developing of pathways for all curriculum areas, will ensure progression in learning.

■ The school should continue to develop the use of digital technology to enhance teaching and support learning. Staff should have an increased focus on developing digital literacy skills across the school.

■ Recent involvement with the Scottish Schools Education Research Centre (SSERC) has resulted in teachers having access to training and resources to support the delivery of science lessons. Staff are more confident in providing practical learning experiences for children, allowing them to develop skills in investigation.

■ The school delivers 1+2 languages. Children learn French from P1. Everyday French language is incorporated effectively into classroom routines to support the acquisition of vocabulary. Children at early level are learning basic instructions in French, while children at second level carry out their morning routine in French. Children at second level are also learning Gaelic.

■ Regular visits within the local area and the use of the community enrich children's experiences. Children visit the local beach, Oban Airport and Cruachan Power Station. They have positive experiences to be creative, develop resilience and apply skills outside the classroom environment.

■ Children learn more about the world of work through the involvement of parents and partners who regularly visit classes to talk about their jobs and the skills they need. They identify possible job opportunities and find out more about each role through IDL. Children at second level research jobs associated with the space industry and identify skills they need for each role. Teachers should increase their awareness of the Career Education Standards (3-18) to develop progression in children's skills for life, learning and work.

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.