

Summarised inspection findings

Murray Primary School

South Lanarkshire Council

27 June 2023

Key contextual information

Murray Primary School is located in East Kilbride, near the town centre. The headteacher has been in post since 2015. She is supported by a deputy headteacher, an acting deputy headteacher and an acting principal teacher. The school has experienced a number of staff changes over the past few years.

The school roll in April 2023 is 213 children with 36 pupils attending the base for children with additional support needs (ASN). Most children live in SIMD datazones 3 to 5. Attendance is in line with the national average. There have been no exclusions over the past six years.

During COVID-19 lockdown the school provided helpful 'how to' guides for parents on digital skills. This supported parents with home learning, including, for example, accessing Google classrooms.

Murray Primary School nursery class was inspected by the Care Inspectorate within the past 18 months, therefore, the local authority and headteacher had the option to include the nursery class as part of this inspection. We have agreed with the local authority and school that the nursery class is not part of this inspection. The findings set out below are for the primary school stages.

1.3 Leadership of change

very 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 has led the school highly effectively through significant change in recent years. Her inspirational and understated leadership has created a supportive, collaborative and empowering culture at Murray Primary School. This is leading to continuous school improvement and improved outcomes for all children across the school. The headteacher is ably supported by a skilled leadership team and teachers who are committed to delivering positive outcomes for all children across the school.
- The shared vision and values underpin all aspects of school life at Murray Primary School. Staff and children's behaviours and interactions clearly show their understanding and commitment to the school's well-established values. They were created with parents, partners and staff and are highly visible across classes. Children and staff are 'Learning Together and Achieving Forever' and this is embedded across the school. The values are reinforced in lessons, assemblies and in daily school life. Staff and pupils at Murray Primary School are very welcoming, inclusive and rightly proud of their school. All staff and children are ambitious and have high expectations of themselves and others. Children's wellbeing and achievement are central to the school ethos. Children benefit from a nurturing culture of mutual respect where learning experiences are high quality, meaningful, challenging and

fun. The school community plans to review the vision and values next session to ensure they continue to reflect the learning ethos.

- The headteacher and staff know the children and families very well. This includes the socio-economic factors affecting families and the challenges caused by increasing financial pressures. As a result, staff use this knowledge very well to meet the needs of children. All staff are highly respected in the local community. Their strong commitment to drive the school forward, with improving outcomes for all learners, is evident to parents and partners who work closely with the school.
- The headteacher has established a strong staff team. Her highly effective strategic leadership nurtures a dynamic learning environment, where children, staff and senior leaders are inspired to learn and develop their knowledge and skills. Her aspirations for children and staff are supporting them to challenge themselves and contribute effectively to school life. The headteacher manages the pace of change skilfully and includes all stakeholders in 'Making Murray Marvellous.' This is ensuring all staff understand the 'Murray Way' including the expectations and the nurturing approaches that permeate the school. This is leading to successful school improvement, achievement and attainment for learners at Murray Primary School.
- The senior leadership team have created a comprehensive quality assurance calendar which includes observations of learning, pupil work, professional dialogue, tracking and attainment meetings and moderation. The staff team reflect regularly on the progress of the school. They refine their practice as a result of feedback. The results of self-evaluation and the use of an effective range of data inform the school's ongoing improvement priorities and ensures they continually review and improve. Senior leaders can evidence the progress towards planned improvements, for example they recently implemented a new writing programme and Augmentative Alternative Communication (ACC).
- The headteacher shares her considerable experience by supporting and mentoring her senior leadership team and staff to lead effectively aspects of school improvement. Staff are committed to ensuring children experience a rich and varied curriculum, with high-quality learning experiences. Teachers take on leadership roles confidently and thrive in this learning environment. Teachers feel empowered and trusted to undertake leadership roles including curriculum development, pupil leadership groups, clubs and expressive arts. Teachers value professional development in literacy and numeracy. They work collegiately with partners in local schools to share and develop good practice in writing. A few support staff are beginning to take on leadership roles such as school clubs and interventions. They value opportunities for training and leading roles. Support staff are highly valued in their roles in school. This distributive leadership culture ensures the varied skills of all members of staff are utilised effectively. Children are thriving on these progressive learning experiences, particularly in expressive arts.
- Pupil leadership groups involve children in important decisions which affect school life. There are many opportunities for children to develop leadership skills at Murray Primary School including pupil council, eco group, reading leaders, reading buddies, leading their own lunchtime clubs and as digital leaders. The pupil council led the participatory budget process to decide how these funds were spent. They shared information and gathered views before a decision was made to spend this money on school trips. Children feel trusted in these roles

and are consulted in aspects of school life. As a result, children gain confidence, are effective contributors and are developing their leadership, thinking and organisational skills. Senior leaders and teachers should now consider how more children across the school, particularly younger children, can participate in these leadership opportunities. This could include engaging with 'How good is OUR school?'

- All teachers are supported by senior leaders to engage meaningfully with annual staff professional reviews. Staff development plans are linked effectively to the General Teaching Council for Scotland standards and the school improvement plan. All staff demonstrate a strong commitment to self-reflection and improving their practice. A few staff share and lead learning beyond the school, including senior leaders.

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 relationships between and among adults and children are very positive. Children benefit from a very calm, purposeful nurturing ethos. All staff and children demonstrate school values in their daily interactions. This promotes a positive and inclusive learning environment where children take responsibility for their own learning.
- Children respond very well to the high levels of enthusiasm of teachers. As a result, almost all children demonstrate very high levels of engagement with and for learning. Almost all children are supportive of each other and work well as individuals, in pairs and in groups. Children are motivated to make the best possible progress and demonstrate considerable pride in their work. This is a major strength of the school.
- Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. Approaches to teaching are underpinned by the school vision and values. All teachers create positive and nurturing learning environments. All teachers use agreed approaches and standards which are leading to consistently high-quality learning and teaching across the school. Staff across the school work very well together to provide effective support for all children.
- All teachers share the purpose of lessons and support children very effectively to understand how to be successful in their learning. Teachers consistently deliver well-structured lessons, providing a range of instruction and activities that meet the needs of all learners. Teachers' explanations are clear and they use different ways to check children's understanding throughout lessons. Learning is well-paced and builds very well on children's prior learning. Teachers use very effective questioning to help children develop higher order thinking skills. They use plenary sessions with children to evaluate successes and discuss next steps in learning.
- Teachers use a range of motivating contexts, including outdoor spaces and local woodland areas, very effectively to support engaging learning activities. They use digital resources successfully to support learning across all areas of the curriculum. Children take part enthusiastically in educational outings to enrich learning in interdisciplinary learning, for example to places of historical interest.
- All teachers know the children in their classes very well and have a strong understanding of the barriers children face in their learning. Senior leaders and teachers work closely together to ensure that children with barriers to learning are supported very effectively. Teachers adapt skillfully planning and teaching, responding very well to children's needs and interests.

- Teachers discuss progress with children regularly. They provide useful written and verbal feedback which helps children to have a clear understanding of their progress and next steps. Most children use self and peer assessment confidently to identify next steps in learning and set targets. This ensures children can share their views about how they learn and helps them to take increasing responsibility for their learning.
- Senior leaders and staff have developed the 'Murray Primary Play Pedagogy Road Map' which is supporting the implementation of a play-based approach to learning at early level. As a result, play is being integrated well into the school day at P1. Learning spaces are used effectively to motivate children and to encourage play and quality interactions. As planned, teachers should continue to engage with national practice guidance to develop further their understanding of play pedagogy.
- All teaching staff are members of collaborative working groups. Teachers feel empowered to develop new approaches, for example in the creation and use of numeracy assessments. This supports sharing of best practice and the promotion of continuity of learning across the school. Teachers make very effective use of their areas of expertise and interests to provide rich learning experiences for children, for example in relation to music, dance, drama and science.
- Teachers plan rich and interesting learning experiences over different timescales across all curricular areas using the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). Teachers adapt planning in line with observations and assessments. Consistent approaches to planning are supporting continuity of learning across stages, including at points of transition. Teachers should now explore how learners can be more involved in the planning of learning across all curriculum areas.
- Teachers carry out a range of assessments in literacy and numeracy at key points throughout the year. They work together effectively with senior leaders to analyse information and data gathered from a range of formative, summative and standardised assessments. This is supporting teachers and senior leaders to have a comprehensive knowledge of individual children's learning and progress. Senior leaders target resources and deploy support staff very effectively to support the needs of individuals and groups. Staff work together to evaluate the impact of targeted interventions, making adaptations as appropriate.
- Teachers have engaged in a range of formal and informal moderation activities. As planned, teachers should continue to work with colleagues in and beyond the school to moderate children's work to support their shared understanding of standards.
- Senior leaders use quality assurance processes to monitor the quality of children's learning experiences and the progress learners are making. They provide high-quality feedback to teachers. This supports a culture of high aspirations and continuous improvement. Senior leaders meet with teachers termly to discuss progress and attainment of children in literacy and numeracy. This supports identification of approaches and interventions to support children who require additional support or whose learning could be extended further. Senior leaders and teachers discuss progress and adapt planning or support as required to maximise children's progress. Senior leaders and staff use the National Benchmarks during tracking discussions about children's progress. This is helping to support a shared understanding of progression within and across CfE levels and improving teacher confidence in their professional judgement. As planned, this approach should now be developed to include tracking children's progress in other areas of the curriculum.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Progression frameworks take good account of the experiences and outcomes. These frameworks support teachers to plan very effective learning experiences that build on prior learning and skills. They successfully ensure all children's learning is progressive. Purposefully planned flexible learning pathways meet the needs of individual learners.
- The school's work with partners enriches the curriculum successfully through a range of visiting specialists and educational outings. Opportunities such as children speaking to a scientist in Norway, working with The Dog's Trust and visiting The Museum of Rural Life are impacting positively on learners' understanding of skills needed in the world of work.
- Children access a range of fiction and non-fiction books through their class and whole school libraries. All children are encouraged to read for pleasure and speak very positively about sharing their book reviews with other classes to celebrate World Book Day.
- Children receive their entitlement to Religious and Moral Education (RME). RME and Religious Observance are used creatively to reinforce the school's values and support its work on inclusion. Children learn French and Spanish as part of their modern language programme. They apply learning effectively in Scots language to write poems for Burn's Day.
- All children receive their entitlement to two hours of quality physical education (PE) per week. Physical activity through outdoor learning and additional opportunities for wider achievement are impacting positively on children's wellbeing. For example, children enjoy participating in a range of lunchtime and after school clubs.
- Children have regular, well-planned opportunities for outdoor learning in the Forest Area. This natural environment enhances engagement in learning and supports application of skills in a real-life context, such as information handling and line drawing.
- A highly effective transition programme is in place from early years to P1 and from P7 to secondary school. Staff, parents and partners work well together to ensure all children are effectively supported during periods of transition. The needs of individual children are carefully considered and effectively supported through bespoke transition planning.
- The school has taken significant steps towards improving the Expressive Arts curriculum. This has resulted in well planned improvements in the quality of children's learning in music, drama, dance and art. As a result, children are effectively developing a range of creative skills which they apply within the ethos and life of the school, for example, performing at assemblies and in the school show.
- Children have regular opportunities for purposeful interdisciplinary learning (IDL). This is supporting breadth and depth of learning across the curriculum as children make links between knowledge and skills.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Senior leaders and teachers are visible in the playground before and after school. Parents appreciate this informal opportunity to speak to school staff should the need arise. Parents value the regular communication from the school which includes social media posts, school website and emails. Children's learning experiences are shared on social media to include parents in their child's learning journey. There are many opportunities for parents to be involved in the life of the school. One example is the weekly 'Parent Patter' which is enabling parents to be included in school planning about aspects of school life, such as school trips, events and improvement priorities.
- Parents have regular opportunities to visit Murray Primary School. Assemblies, school shows and family learning opportunities are planned for the year and are well attended. A few parents support children in school through volunteer groups. Parents comment very positively on the staff team's commitment to the local community and their support for children and families. These positive relationships between parents and school staff ensure that information is shared in a timely way between home and school. Parents and school staff work in partnership to support children. A few parents feel the school supports them as individuals, as well as their children, when they need extra advice or support.
- The school has an active Parent Council and a fundraising committee which work in partnership with the school. They provide financial support towards school trips and events. A consultation about how best to spend the current budget is about to take place, providing an opportunity for the school community to have a say in how fundraising is used.

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

very 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

- Ensuring that all children understand their own importance and worth as members of the school community lies at the heart of the school's work. The headteacher, senior leaders, teachers and support staff all work successfully together with energy to meet the wellbeing needs of all children and families. This engenders very high levels of trust among all members of the school community and supports the development of happy confident children. They know their wellbeing is of the utmost importance. Children are highly nurtured and respected by staff who model consistently warm, respectful and caring relationships. This promotes and supports the wellbeing of all members of the school community. Children know that staff are there to support them to reflect on their own wellbeing and learning. These reflections are exceptionally well supported through discussions in class and at assemblies. As a result, children understand the link between their wellbeing and achieving success.
- Children cooperate very well together in their learning and through the life of the school. They are resilient and show high levels of respect and kindness toward each other. Children include each other across the whole school and look out for one another. Children thrive on the level of trust adults place in them. Staff encourage children to talk about their feelings or worries and use emotional literacy programmes to improve children's self-awareness. These approaches help children to develop empathy. They are improving communication and strengthening relationships still further. Children are empowered to share worries and concerns and have many opportunities to share successes. Children demonstrate consideration of each other's feelings, as well as an awareness of the impact their own words and actions can have on their peers. Older children provide helpful and very effective support to younger children in roles such as reading buddies and peer mediators. This strengthens the warm and caring relationships between children at all stages, while also helping children improve their reading and communication skills.
- Almost all children feel that school staff teach them to have a healthy lifestyle. They benefit from a broad and responsive health and wellbeing curriculum and frequent planned opportunities to learn outdoors. They have well-developed skills and understanding in areas such as the importance of physical exercise and healthy eating. Children benefit from being active through a wide range of additional physical activities provided by school staff and Active Schools. Groups of targeted children are increasing their participation in sport with community partners.
- Senior leaders organise regular training for staff on nurturing approaches, how to manage anxiety and trauma and attachment informed practice. Support staff and teachers are highly skilled in their use of de-escalation techniques and calm interactions for children who require this support. This is helping to improve children's ability to moderate their behaviours and emotions when upset.

- There is a clear and highly effective staged intervention process in place for children who require additional support with their learning. Staff provide very effective support for children who are care experienced or have specific barriers to their learning. Senior leaders arrange meetings with parents, partners and school staff to ensure children's needs are met. Children are clear about the support that is in place for them and know how to access additional support if required. Senior leaders and teachers review children's progress and what interventions are in use and importantly, when particular interventions are no longer relevant to the needs of the child. They meet on a planned and very regular basis to ensure outcomes are met by making effective use of a range of assessments. Children experience success and are improving their progress in learning as a result of these well-considered interventions.
- Across the school, staff meet children's needs very effectively through collaborative work with other agencies, such as educational psychology and speech and language therapy. Teachers and support staff work well with partners to support transitions. This partnership work provides extra support to children who are at risk of disengagement from education. Parents report that this is helping to relieve children's worries and is improving motivation to attend their new school. Partners speak very highly of the work school staff engage in to ensure high quality and consistent support for children. Children who have experience of living in other countries are well-supported by staff and a specialist teacher. As a result, they are able to participate more fully in class.
- Staff help children recognise and celebrate diversity through lessons and school assemblies. Children across the school are improving their understanding of equality and diversity through their experiences in health and wellbeing and religious and moral education.
- All staff ensure inclusion and tackling inequality are at the heart of everything that happens at Murray Primary School. As a result, all children feel valued and included. Staff are sensitive to the unique needs of children and families and alert to changes in children's personal circumstances. They address any concerns swiftly and sensitively. As a team, they work highly effectively together to help families overcome any barriers they may face. This encourages strong supportive links between home and school. Staff promote inclusion by providing many opportunities for children from the mainstream and the ASN classes to learn together through IDL, PE and clubs. Children and families benefit from the strong focus on equality and a determination to translate this into enabling all children to experience success. One example of this is the recently refreshed reading programme which provides a wide range of books that support diversity, inclusion and equality. They provide a range of contexts that encourage children to challenge stereotypes they may encounter. All children believe strongly in the value that each person brings to the school community and celebrate the diverse contributions they all make.

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

- Overall, most children in the mainstream setting across P1, P4 and P7 achieved expected CfE levels in literacy and in numeracy in session 2021/22. A few children are working beyond expected levels of attainment.

Attainment in literacy and English

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

Listening and talking

- Across the school almost all children listen well during lessons and follow instructions. Most children show their understanding by answering questions and sharing their views. Most children talk confidently to adults and each other. They enjoy opportunities to talk about their learning and learning targets.
- At early level, most children can hear and say patterns in words, including rhyme. They can retell a story they know and answer simple questions on texts. At first level, most children understand the features of factual texts and are beginning to take notes under headings. They can share their ideas in class and group discussions and listen to the views of others. At second level almost all children enjoy regular opportunities to discuss their views and share their ideas, for example in debates on the pros and cons of dogs in school or violence on television. Most children at second level have opportunities to develop their skills at presenting information through leadership groups, poetry competitions and their role as buddies to younger children. Most children at second level confidently share their views and make notes on texts heard to extend their learning. Across the school, a few children would benefit from more opportunities to present and share their learning with different audiences.

Reading

- A positive reading culture has been established at Murray Primary School, through new reading books and new reading approaches. These include reading buddies and a reading leaders' group. This is leading to children who are enthusiastic readers and talk confidently about books and authors they enjoy.
- At early level, most children use known sounds to blend and read simple words and sentences. They are developing their fluency. At first and second level most children read fluently. They use a range of reading skills to answer questions to show their understanding. At first level, children would benefit from further opportunities to answer increasingly complex questions on texts read. At second level most children can answer inferential and evaluative questions and explain reasons for their views. They consider why the author used specific

vocabulary and phrases and can discuss the key themes in a novel. At first and second level, most children understand the features of non-fiction texts, including subheadings and glossaries. They use their reading skills when researching contexts for learning across the curriculum. At first and second level, children would benefit from opportunities to use digital apps to extend their reading choices.

Writing

- A new writing programme is leading to a consistent and successful approach to teaching writing across the school. Children have regular opportunities to write in a range of genres such as imaginative, personal, poetry and discursive writing. In all classes, there is evidence of the positive impact of this well-considered and shared approach on children's writing skills.
- At early level, most children can write simple words. They are beginning to form simple sentences. They now need to add a range of connectives to their writing to extend their writing. They would benefit from more regular opportunities to write through play. At first level most children can write clear instructions for making pizza. They use tools for writing to check over their work and include punctuation. At second level, most children write extended texts and include increasingly complex sentences and vocabulary. Their writing includes opportunities to write in Scots, linked to Scottish poetry and children's rhymes and imaginative stories. They use teacher feedback to improve writing. Children need more practice at adding an increasing range of punctuation and reviewing their writing.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Children have opportunities to develop numeracy and mathematical skills in different aspects of the curriculum. Children display confidence and enthusiasm in numeracy and mathematics as a result of the positive mindset and aspirational learning culture created by staff. As a result most children are making very good progress in numeracy and mathematics from prior levels of attainment. Children respond very well to teachers' encouragement and are prepared to challenge themselves and 'have a go'. Children are proud of their work displayed on the school's numeracy and mathematics 'wow' wall.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, most children are developing their understanding of numbers to 20 well. Most are developing confidence adding and subtracting to 10. Most children can read analogue o'clock times and identify a range of coins. At first level, most children identify correctly the value of three-digit numbers and apply a range of multiplication strategies. Most children can tell the time using 15 minute intervals. At first level, children are less confident identifying and using units of measure. At second level most children can use number skills to solve two-step problems. The majority can convert fractions into percentages and calculate the fraction of a quantity. Most children understand profit and loss and the benefits and risks of using bank cards.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level children recognise and name simple two-dimensional shapes. At first level, most children can identify and describe three-dimensional shapes. Most can identify lines of symmetry in two-dimensional shapes. Most children working within second level can use mathematical language including acute, obtuse, straight and reflex to describe and classify a range of angles.

Information handling

- At early level, most children can use tally marks and record information on simple bar charts. At first level, children gather, record and analyse information on bar graphs. At second level, children interpret information and draw accurate conclusions from a range of charts and

graphs. They know to include a suitable title, labelling on both axes and an appropriate scale where one unit represents more than one data value in graphs.

Attainment over time

- Senior leaders track attainment and progress in literacy and numeracy over time for cohorts and groups of children. Attainment was negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic particularly at first level. Senior leaders are aware of the underlying reasons for this and have made effective strategic and resourcing decisions to support identified needs. This has included introducing new approaches to reading and writing. These are having a very positive impact on progress and attainment. Attainment data provided by senior leaders shows that most children in the mainstream setting are predicted to achieve appropriate levels for literacy and numeracy in June 2023.
- Senior leaders meet formally with teachers three times a year to discuss progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. As planned, senior leaders and teachers should now develop tracking of children's progress across all areas of the curriculum.

Overall quality of learner's achievements

- Staff celebrate children's achievements using social media feeds and school values awards. Children recognise the skills and qualities of their peers and champion each other. They are very proud of the role they have in recognising and celebrating the success of others.
- Children participate in a wide range of clubs and activities before school, after school and at lunchtime. These are providing children with rich opportunities to develop their skills and talents. Senior leaders monitor participation and identify children who are not attending any of the activities on offer. They are proactive in addressing barriers to participation, including by extending the range of clubs. Children believe their needs and views are valued and acted upon by staff. A few older children lead clubs for younger children. This is developing their confidence, leadership and communication skills.
- Children enjoy a range of leadership and school committee roles and participate in after school clubs and competitions. This is developing their skills for learning, life and work well. A next step is to develop a progression of skills framework which will help children to articulate the many and valuable skills they are currently developing.

Equity for all learners

- The headteacher and staff team have a very clear knowledge of the social and economic contexts of their children and families, including increased hardship and financial pressures. They use this knowledge very effectively to work towards ensuring that all children have equity of opportunity and achievement. Senior leaders identify poverty-related and other attainment gaps and monitor progress towards closing these gaps. They do this effectively by checking attendance, free school meal entitlement, additional support for learning, care experience and under-performance data. Senior leaders and teachers monitor the progress of individuals and groups of children. This includes those who require additional support, those who are care experienced or face poverty-related barriers to their learning and wellbeing. As a result, staff are able to identify children who are not making suitable progress and provide appropriate interventions. Staff work together highly effectively to reduce identified attainment gaps. The headteacher and staff should continue to review and monitor the impact of additional support and interventions on raising attainment and closing identified gaps.
- Senior leaders prioritise the importance of attendance and punctuality as part of children's learning and track children's attendance carefully. The headteacher has used Pupil Equity Funding to appoint an acting principal teacher (APT) whose remit is to support children who

arrive persistently late in school, or whose attendance is less than 85%. The APT has developed effective approaches to support improved attendance for a few children, by working closely in conjunction with the children and their families to explain the impact of missing learning time on children's progress. The APT has developed an effective early warning system which allows her to explore reasons for increases in late coming. Through regular contact with families she explores the best way to support their child and provides in-school support for these few children. As a result, data shows that both attendance and punctuality are improving and children are benefitting by maximising their time in school.

Quality of provision of Special Unit

Context

The additional support needs (ASN) base in the school supports 36 children with autism and communication difficulties from across the local authority. The children learn in four classes arranged throughout the building.

Leadership of change

- Senior leaders provide strong leadership based on the school's shared values. They have a clear vision for children's learning in the base. This promotes the high levels of inclusion which children experience. Staff are highly committed to ensuring all children make the best possible progress in their learning. They have embedded the school's vision and values very effectively in their work. As a result, the school's vision is evident throughout their daily practice. Children understand the school's values very well. This helps them to be considerate and aspire to achieve the best they can.
- Senior leaders have successfully created a climate of innovation and creativity. All staff are supported very effectively to contribute to the work of the school. Staff are leading a number of initiatives such as developing the use of alternative and augmentative tools to aid communication. Staff run a variety of lunchtime and after school clubs. This supports all children to enjoy a wide range of experiences beyond the classroom.
- Senior leaders manage change and improvement effectively. They ensure change is based on sound evidence and focusses on improving children's outcomes. Staff embrace opportunities to bring about change and reflect regularly on the impact of change. Staff seek constantly to improve how well they deliver learning, which engages children and meets their needs. Senior leaders have fostered a culture where staff are confident at trying out new ideas. This supports staff to commit to change, resulting in improved outcomes for children. Senior leaders should continue to support staff to foster innovation further, ensuring change continues to improve outcomes for children.

Learning, teaching and assessment

- All staff establish very positive relationships with children in the base. The nurturing ethos supports children to feel valued and cared for. As a result, children engage enthusiastically in their learning. Children clearly enjoy their learning and are highly motivated in their lessons. Children's learning experiences are appropriately challenging and matched very well to meet their needs. Children undertake roles of responsibility, such as house captain. These roles support them to contribute meaningfully to the life of the school.
- The school's values underpin learning and teaching very well. Staff treat children with the highest levels of kindness and respect. Teachers use digital technologies appropriately to support children's learning. They should continue to explore how digital technologies can be used more effectively to enrich children's learning. Staff explanations and questions are clear. This supports children to know what they are learning. The high expectations of staff for children's learning supports them to be appropriately challenged in their learning. Staff closely observe all children to ensure interventions are well timed and support children to make very good progress in their learning. Teachers use verbal and written feedback to praise children and to help them know when they have been successful. Teachers use outdoor spaces such as the forest next to the school to deliver effective outdoor learning.

- Learning is planned termly using CfE experiences and outcomes. Planned learning is highly individualised and supports children to make progress in all areas of the curriculum. Assessment is integral to planned learning. Teachers use a range of assessments to support children to demonstrate their skills and abilities. This range of assessments provides detailed and reliable data on how well children are progressing in their learning. Teachers use this data to plan learning, which builds on children's skills progressively. Teachers are now using software to track and monitor children's progress. This is producing detailed and rigorous data to support them to evaluate each child's progress. Teachers need to build upon this to ensure assessment and tracking and monitoring continue to support planning for children to attain as best they can.

Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

- The school's nurturing and inclusive ethos ensures children in the base feel safe, supported and cared for. All staff have a very good understanding of the dignity and worth of every individual. Children in the base know they are valued members of the whole school community. They enjoy attending Murray Primary School and have formed close friendships with children across the whole school. This supports them to have a strong sense of belonging at the school.
- Staff support children very well to develop their understanding of their wellbeing. Relationships between staff, children and their parents are very caring and supportive. All staff are highly attuned to each child's individual needs. They are adept at managing situations where children become dysregulated or distressed. This ensures children settle quickly and reengage in their learning.
- Extensive planning to meet children's needs supports staff's understanding of each child. All staff have a very clear understanding of national guidance related to children's wellbeing. They embrace professional learning and use this to reflect on and improve their practice. Children's individual targets are captured effectively in their additional support plans. Teachers should consider how to involve children and their parents more effectively in designing children's individual targets.
- Children are included fully in all lessons and clearly enjoy developing their skills with their friends. All children have significant opportunities to experience learning alongside their mainstream peers. For example, children join mainstream classmates in science and physical education. This supports them to feel valued members of the school community. All staff, parents and partners speak highly of the strength of the relationships across the school community. They are mutually supportive of each other. This supports the school and partners to improve outcomes for children and their families. Teachers use outdoor spaces in the school campus effectively to support children to develop their wellbeing.
- All children have opportunities for religious observance in line with their faith.
- The school, with the support of the local authority, needs to ensure children on part-time timetables receive their full entitlement to education.

Raising attainment and achievement

- Children's progress is evaluated using a range of measures including the curriculum for excellence benchmarks and individual targets in children's additional support plans. Overall, all children are making very good progress from their prior levels of attainment.
- Teachers' well-developed understanding of each child ensures they have a very good understanding of how well children are progressing. They track and monitor children's progress closely. This helps them to plan learning at an appropriate level for each child. As a result,

children are developing their skills very well, building on their prior learning. Teachers should continue to gather data to support rigorous tracking and monitoring of children's progress.

- Children exercise responsibility through taking on roles in class and the whole school. For example, children act as resource monitors in class and have been elected as house captains. Children are developing their skills in a variety of wider achievement opportunities. Teachers should consider how they can track the specific skills children are developing through their wider achievements.
- All children have opportunities to experience meaningful learning alongside their peers in mainstream classes. Children are included in all aspects of the school's work very well. This helps them to recognise their achievements are considered equal to that of their peers.

Practice worth sharing more widely

Ensuring that all children understand their own importance and worth as members of the school community lies at the heart of the school's work. This shared vision underpins all aspects of school life at Murray Primary School. The headteacher, senior leaders, teachers and support staff all work together with energy and huge commitment to meet the wellbeing needs of all children and families. This engenders very high levels of trust among all members of the school community and supports the development of happy confident children. Staff are sensitive to the unique needs of children and families and alert to changes in children's personal circumstances. Staff promote inclusion by providing many opportunities for children from the mainstream and the ASN classes to learn together through IDL, PE and clubs. Children and families benefit from the strong focus on equality and a determination to translate this into enabling all children to experience success.

All staff and children are ambitious and have high expectations of themselves and others. Children's wellbeing and achievement are central to the school ethos. Children benefit from a nurturing culture of mutual respect where learning experiences are high quality, meaningful, challenging and fun. All staff understand the 'Murray Way' including the expectations and the nurturing approaches that permeate the school. This is leading to successful school improvement, achievement and attainment for learners at Murray Primary School.

Children thrive on the level of trust adults place in them. Children are empowered to share worries and concerns and have many opportunities to share successes. Children demonstrate consideration of each other's feelings, as well as an awareness of the impact their own words and actions can have on their peers. Older children provide helpful and very effective support to younger children in roles such as reading buddies and peer mediators. This strengthens the warm and caring relationships between children at all stages, while also helping children improve their reading and communication skills.

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.