

Summarised inspection findings

Cargenbridge Primary School and Nursery Class

Dumfries and Galloway Council

16 June 2020

Key contextual information

Cargenbridge Primary School is a semi-rural school situated in the outskirts of Dumfries. The school roll at the time of inspection was 98, with nearly half the roll living outwith the catchment area. The school roll is capped at 100. There have been a few changes to staffing over the last two sessions.

1.3 Leadership of change

good

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

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

- A stakeholder consultation has resulted in the school agreeing a set of shared values and vision for the school. This is summarised in a short, catchy school motto 'Working Together Learning Together', with which both staff and children identify. Children speak positively about how the school supports their learning and wellbeing. All staff demonstrate commitment to the vision, values and aims which underpin their collaborative approach to school improvement. There are plans to revisit the vision, values and aims to ensure that they reflect the changing context of the school, particularly in relation to inclusion.
- The headteacher consults a range of stakeholders in formulating and evaluating the school improvement plan (SIP). This results in strong, shared ownership of school improvement. Parents respond favourably to the more concise, parent friendly version of the SIP. This is helping them to have a better understanding of school improvement priorities. The headteacher should build on this streamlined approach taken with parents by focusing on a small number of key areas for improvement. This would provide greater clarity on what the school needs to do next and mobilise staff efforts more effectively in driving forward improvements aimed at raising attainment further. Expressing priorities as measurable outcomes would also allow the headteacher to demonstrate impact more effectively.
- The headteacher has established a comprehensive self-evaluation calendar that includes classroom observations, tracking and monitoring meetings, surveys and focus groups of children. This allows her to gather a wealth of information and intelligence to monitor and evaluate the work of the school. The headteacher should improve further the use of evidence through more effective synthesis analysis of information. The headteacher should strengthen the monitoring and tracking conversations with staff to ensure that they are clear about their responsibilities in relation to ensuring the best possible outcomes for all children. The headteacher has used the school's Pupil Equity Fund allocation appropriately to improve the learning experiences and progress of a few children. They are benefitting from increased support in aspects of literacy and numeracy.
- The headteacher provides effective and supportive leadership. She leads by example and promotes a caring and supportive environment. She has an open, consultative style of leadership that results in a culture of empowerment in the school. The headteacher ensures that the working time agreement, professional learning and dedicated time for discussion are

central features of how she leads change. All staff understand that they have an important role to play in taking forward the work of the school and feel empowered to do this. They are confident to exercise initiative, share responsibility and adopt lead roles across the school. Teachers reflect on their practice and identify their 'itch' or issues that requires attention within their own classroom practice and then undertake research-based enquiry to address these. They also look outwards to other schools as a means of identifying and sharing good practice. In moving forward, staff should consider identifying more appropriate professional learning that would have the greatest impact on children's learning and attainment.

- There has been positive impact of some of the developments introduced across the school. For example, approaches to improving parental engagement have resulted in more parents being involved in the life and work of the school. Recent work on nurture and tracking wellbeing has also strengthened the inclusive ethos of the school, as well as supporting individual children. In addition, new approaches to planning now include a strong focus on the moderation cycle and assessment evidence. The headteacher has also taken forward national developments such as Developing the Young Workforce successfully through links with business partners such as Dupont Teijin Films. Children are confident in talking about the skills they have developed through these positive links. Improving the quality and consistency of learning, teaching and assessment in an effort to raise attainment further remains an important area for improvement.
- Children act as strong agents of change and feel confident in initiating and leading improvement across the school. Children feel their views are valued through their engagement in pupil voice groups and school-based surveys. They are also beginning to use How Good Is OUR School? as means of further improving their role in school improvement.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- Almost all children participate well in their learning, are highly motivated to learn, and demonstrate a very strong work ethic. Highly Effective partnerships working with businesses and community partners such as Dupont Teijin Films, Goldlielea and Active Schools, significantly enhances children's experiences. Children are actively engaged in their learning but this is not a consistent feature of practice across the school. They are clear about the attributes of successful learners and believe that effort and perseverance are important characteristics of good learners. In addition, they believe that they can learn from mistakes and are encouraged to do so by their teachers. This results in children who show confidence in discussing their learning in class and answering questions. Staff make good use of the learning environment through attractive wall displays and maximising available space.
- In all classes, teachers provide clear explanations and instructions. In a majority of lessons, teachers demonstrate skilled use of questioning to support children to develop higher order thinking. Children need more opportunities to demonstrate higher order thinking skills more regularly and consistently. There is a clear structure to lessons. Teachers discuss with children what they are learning and encourage children to link this to real-life contexts. In a majority of lessons, children contribute to the criteria of what successful learning looks like. This supports children in assessing their own work and that of their peers. This practice is stronger in literacy than other areas of the curriculum. Most children are aware of their strengths and next steps in learning. Teachers provide good quality individual feedback to children. The use of 'learning stars' is supporting children to reflect on their learning, however there is inconsistency in how well children use this approach.
- Staff provide effective support to help children progress in their learning. In most lessons, teachers meet the needs of children well. They plan suitable tasks, activities and resources which are relevant to children's experiences and interests. Teachers should take better account of children's prior learning and provide tasks and activities that promote higher levels of challenge. The headteacher and staff should review the time devoted to features of the school day, so that teachers maximise time for children to be engaged in meaningful learning.
- Teachers have a good understanding of assessment and the integral role it plays in planning, tracking and monitoring. Increasingly, they use application, breadth and challenge as criteria for planning high quality assessment tasks. Teachers are using a rich range of evidence to inform their professional judgements. They monitor and track the progress of their children, noting progress over time as well as achievement of a level. This helps inform appropriate interventions, including the effective use of support assistants.
- Teachers are making good use of National Benchmarks for each curriculum area to support them in assessing progress and achievement. Their confidence has improved through their work on moderation, both in school and within the North West Community cluster. They have a

good understanding of the moderation cycle and work well together to plan learning, teaching and assessment. Their involvement at regional level through the South West Collaborative is supporting further their practice.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- There is an appropriate overview of the curriculum at Cargenbridge, set against the four contexts of learning. The headteacher, staff and all stakeholders should review the curriculum rationale so that it better reflects the uniqueness of the school setting. Teachers use experiences and outcomes to plan learning, teaching and assessment. They use local authority progression pathways for all areas of the curriculum. Teachers work well together in bundling experiences and outcomes to provide progressive interdisciplinary learning experiences for children.
- Increasingly, children apply their knowledge and understanding across the different organisers in both literacy and numeracy. Teachers make explicit links between associated experiences and outcomes, which supports children to make connections and apply their knowledge in different contexts. Teachers should build on existing work to plan experiences that allow children to demonstrate their understanding in new and unfamiliar contexts.
- Teachers reference skills children develop as they progress through the curriculum. Staff are well placed to streamline the existing skills framework to support children more effectively to reflect on their skills for learning, life and work.
- There is highly effective partnership working with a range of local businesses, and the local care home for older people. These partnerships contribute significantly to the ethos and life of the school and reflect the school's motto of 'Working together, Learning together'. As a result of these links, children are developing a good awareness of the world of work, particularly science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Parents are positive about the school's approaches to keeping them informed of the life and work of the school. They are well informed about how well their children are progressing in their learning through parental reports, learning conversations and learning postcards. Teachers should strengthen their approaches to providing clear feedback on children's strengths and next steps in learning. This will assist parents even further in supporting their children's learning. The parental engagement focus group has undertaken a very useful audit in monitoring and evaluating current approaches to parental engagement. They have used the Education Scotland toolkit to identify areas of good practice. As a result, a skills audit conducted by parents is resulting in a greater number of parents supporting the life and 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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

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

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- There is a positive, nurturing culture in Cargenbridge Primary and all staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the wellbeing of children. Staff and children show consideration for others and demonstrate positive behaviour and relationships. The headteacher has prioritised relationships within the school community, which has resulted in a climate of trust. As a result, children feel safe and have a strong sense of security. Children know they can speak to any member of staff if they are worried or upset about anything. The 'posh tea' provides children with an opportunity to build strong bonds with their teachers in a relaxed, informal setting.
- Staff engage well in professional learning to support children's wellbeing. There is an increased understanding of nurture across the school which helps support children to develop further their resilience. Emotional check-ins for identified children provide teachers with a quick indication of children's readiness to learn. There are a number of specific interventions in place to support individual children. These are having a positive impact on making children feel more included in their learning.
- Most children have a good understanding of the language of wellbeing. They are confident in their ability to identify risks and resolve issues for themselves or seek support from an adult, if necessary. They use the wellbeing wheel to self-assess using the wellbeing indicators. Teachers use this information to intervene where children have indicated low responses. Teachers are attuned to the needs of children. They should now consider how to monitor children's progress in wellbeing and support children in identifying their own strengths and next steps.
- The headteacher is aware of her role and responsibilities related to statutory duties. The support for learning teacher tracks and monitors the progress of children who have an individualised education plan (IEP). There are appropriate targets set which are shared with parents. These plans are revisited regularly and targets are reviewed, these should be consistently reviewed by staff. There is evidence that children are making good progress against targets detailed in these plans.
- Children treat each other fairly and with respect. They are learning about differences and how to respond to these. Children are benefiting from a research-based international anti-bullying programme. As a result, instances of bullying are rare across the school. A few parents think that bullying issues are not always resolved effectively and followed up. As a result, the headteacher, in consultation with the parents and children, is reviewing approaches in line with national guidance 'Respect for All'. An agreed understanding of what constitutes a reportable incident of bullying would be helpful across the school community.

- Children show a good understanding of their rights and almost all children feel they are treated fairly. Children could be better informed of diversity. Teachers should actively promote understanding and a positive appreciation of the diversity of individuals and groups within society. The school is well placed to review and evaluate their approaches to diversity and equality. This will support children to gain a deeper understanding of the concepts relating to this.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

good

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Due to small numbers at the various stages in the school, statements about children's progress are written to ensure anonymity of individuals. The school's reliable predictions of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels for June 2020 indicate that most children will achieve expected levels. Overall, attainment in literacy and numeracy is good.

Attainment over time

- The data on the percentage of children achieving CfE levels in literacy and numeracy has varied considerably over the last three years. This is due partly to the growing confidence of staff in assessing the achievement of a level. The school has introduced a new management information system to record progress and attainment. This data should be scrutinised on a regular basis to ensure that all children are attaining appropriately high levels. The headteacher and staff should now assess children's progress in other curricular areas out with literacy and numeracy.

Literacy

- Children are making good progress in literacy and English, with the exception of writing where children are making very good progress.

Listening and Talking

- At the early stages, children display a developing vocabulary as they describe different characters in texts. They share ideas well within a group such as designing and describing their alien. They should continue to develop their understanding of being a good listener, as a few struggle to take turns when listening and talking. At first level, children listen and talk with confidence in a range of different contexts and for a variety of purposes. As they progress in their learning, children are more able to explain their views and give an opinion. Across second level, children talk and listen to others in a range of contexts such as pupil voice committees and through their engagement with business partners. These contexts build children's confidence and awareness of different audiences.

Reading

- Children should continue to use sight vocabulary to read familiar words in context and blend sounds to decode unfamiliar words. Most children working at first level read aloud familiar pieces of texts showing understanding and are beginning to use expression. Through the 'read to self-stamina' school approach, children are increasingly reading more independently. Most children at second level can read with fluency and understanding. They explain why they prefer particular authors, including Scottish poets. Children would benefit from reading increasingly more challenging texts.

Writing

- Most children at the early stages use sounds and letters to construct words. They are making good progress in developing knowledge and application of phonics. Most children are able to write well for real-life audiences and purposes. Children articulate orally, identify and apply common conventions of writing, such as adjectives and verbs and the more common literary devices. Staff make very good use of current class work and the wider life of the school to contextualise writing, which means that children have a strong source of knowledge to draw upon. Refreshed approaches to planning and assessing writing is resulting in children who write regularly for a variety of purposes, in different genres and almost all produce high quality results.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, children's attainment in numeracy and mathematics is good.

Number, money and measurement

- At early level, most children recall the number sequence forwards within 0-30, for any given number. They identify successfully the number after, and a missing number in a sequence. A few children identify the number before, and double numbers confidently, to a total of 10 mentally. Most children add and subtract confidently within 10. Almost all name the days of the week in sequence and link daily school routines to time sequences. At first level, most children round whole numbers successfully to the nearest 10 and 100. Most count forwards and backwards in 2s, 5s, 10s and 100s, as well as adding and subtracting multiples of 10 and 100 to or from any whole number to 1000. Most children multiply and divide accurately whole numbers by 10 and 100 and solve confidently two step problems. Most children need to practice telling half past and quarter past times using analogue clocks. Most children at second level, partition confidently a wide range of whole numbers and decimal fractions. They add and subtract multiples of 10, 100 and 1000 to and from whole numbers and decimal fractions to two decimal places. A few children, divide whole numbers and decimal fractions to two decimal places by a single digit, including answers expressed as decimal fractions.

Shape, position and movement

- Most children at early level recognise and name successfully two-dimensional shapes such as circles, squares, rectangles and triangles. They identify these shapes in the environment around them. A few describe them using the terms straight, round, sides and corners. At first level, most children know and use well the compass points north, south, east and west. A few children find right angles around them and use informal methods to estimate, compare and describe the size of angles in relation to a right angle. Most children at second level use their knowledge of right angles and straight angles to calculate the size of missing angles. They are less confident using their knowledge of angles when using the eight compass points to describe, follow and record directions.

Information handling

- At first level, most children use the most appropriate way to gather and sort data to identify the most popular healthy sandwich in school. They conduct successfully a survey and organise data appropriately using group tallies. They use well digital technologies to create spreadsheets and bar graphs to display the information they gather. Most children ask and answer accurately questions to extract key information from the data they collect.
- At second level, most children are aware of different ways to organise and display data including frequency tables, bar graphs and pie charts. At second level, children need to develop their skills in using digital technology to record, organise and present data.

Overall quality of achievement

- Children are achieving well through after-school activities and pupil voice groups. These include community groups, a variety of after-school clubs and activities, such as hip-hop and football. Children develop fitness skills and performance skills through these activities. They also engage well with a range of competitions across the local area such as cross-country festival. Children develop important skills of independence and team working through their residential trip. All staff celebrate children's success very well using wall displays, newsletters and online forums. Children receive wristbands for being 'student of the week'.
- Staff track attendance at school clubs and other activities, encouraging participation to ensure that everyone is included in an activity. They should now support children to identify more explicitly the skills which they are developing through participation in wider achievement opportunities and link this with their on-going work on developing skills for learning, life and work.

School Empowerment

■ Staff Empowerment

- The headteacher has a consultative style of leadership that results in a culture of empowerment in the school. Staff feel empowered, able and confident to exercise initiative, share responsibility and adopt lead roles in their own areas. Teachers reflect on their practice and identify their 'itch' or issues that requires attention within their own classroom practice. Teachers undertake research-based enquiry to address these identified issues. They also look outwards to other schools as a means of identifying good practice.

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.