

Summarised inspection findings

St Peter's Primary School

South Lanarkshire Council

3 December 2019

Key contextual information

St Peter's Primary School is a Roman Catholic school established in 1957 serving the area of Laighstonehall in Hamilton, South Lanarkshire. The school has a new building which was opened in 2015. There are 121 pupils and eight teachers.

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

- A positive supportive ethos is evident across the school and relationships amongst staff, pupils and families are strong. Within classes, staff and children are respectful and kind towards each other. Children's emotional wellbeing is well supported and it is clear that staff place high regard on supporting emotional resilience. The recently adopted focus on emotional wellbeing is beginning to support children's ability to settle in class and their readiness to learn. The headteacher has placed an important emphasis on getting to know her staff, children and families. She models and supports the Catholic values of respect and kindness which lie at the heart of the school. The children have a strong sense of belonging to St Peter's Primary School and speak enthusiastically about school. There would be merit in involving children more fully in a rights based approach to learning in order to support further the school values.
- Across the school, teachers have recently placed a greater emphasis on engaging children more in their learning. They have begun to gather helpful data around children's varying levels of engagement within classes. This is a positive start in helping teachers to work more closely with children to plan activities that stimulate their learning. Teachers have begun to provide greater variety in class activities however, children are not yet fully engaged and a minority become distracted from learning.
- Teachers work well together and sometimes share learning with stage partners. Senior staff should now support professional discussions about how to increase the pace and challenge of learning and teaching in classes. Too often the pace in lessons is slow. Children's tasks need to be more tailored to different abilities and should include appropriate challenge in order to raise attainment and increase their progress.
- Teachers display/share the purpose of learning in all classes. A few children can talk about what they are learning. However, the shared purpose is not yet clear enough for children to understand what is expected of them. Teachers now need to have a clearer focus on planning with experiences and outcomes to enable skills to be more explicit in lessons. This will help children to engage more in their learning and to progress at a pace which challenges them.

- A majority of children from the upper primary stages carry out leadership roles well, such as captains and playground buddies. Across the school, children enjoy being involved in fundraising and charity events. All children now need to be involved more fully in developing their leadership skills and in contributing to the wider life of the school.
- Almost all children are enthusiastic about school and behave well in classes. They are positive and supportive of their teachers and the work they do for them. Teachers should now support children to become more independent in their learning, affording them greater choice and voice in their class activities. Children now need to lead their learning, including being involved in recognising and recording their achievements and attainment.
- The learning environment is stimulating and bright. The staff have a wide variety of resources available to them and teachers have helpful support from class assistants which is enabling teachers to focus on children's learning. Support staff need to be included more fully in school planning and should have more of a collaborative role, especially in relation to planning for and supporting individual children.
- Across the stages, most lessons are teacher led and taught to the whole class. This leads to a majority of children becoming disengaged and losing interest in their learning. Teachers need to differentiate activities to ensure that children are working at an appropriate level. There are missed opportunities to extend children's thinking and understanding. Teachers now need to make more use of open and higher order questioning to promote children's curiosity and independence. Teachers need to increase their expectations for children's potential. In planning learning, teachers could include more experiences for children to learn using digital technology and through outdoor activities. This would support a differentiated approach and increase children's interest in learning.
- Teachers assess children in a variety of ways. They provide feedback to children verbally and through written comments in jotters. This feedback is not yet specific enough for children to know how to progress. The staff should now develop a shared understanding of assessment across the stages linked to planning, learning and teaching. This will support progress across the stages and enable each teacher to make plans to build on children's prior learning.
- Teachers have begun to work on moderating their professional judgement of Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy. They should continue with this important work and use National Benchmarks across all curricular areas to support this, in line with their school improvement plan. The headteacher has identified correctly the need to develop a shared curriculum rationale in order to enable teachers to plan for children to progress in their learning. This needs to include assessment approaches and arrangements for moderation. Staff across the school should continue to make sure they share expected and high standards for children's learning. As part of this they need to discuss and implement robust moderation procedures to help ensure accurate professional judgements on an ongoing basis.
- Staff now need to ensure greater clarity around children's individual skills, talents and specific learning needs to ensure better progress in their learning. Children who have additional support needs should have clearer targets and more focused individual plans to help them develop and progress. Children should be involved fully in planning their targets and these should be monitored closely by teachers and parents.

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

satisfactory

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 is satisfactory. Data presented by the school demonstrates that the majority of children at early level attain appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels in reading, writing and numeracy. At first level, the majority of children attain appropriate levels in reading and numeracy with a minority attaining an appropriate level in writing. At second level, most children attain an appropriate level in reading. The majority attain appropriate levels in writing and numeracy. Across the school, most children attain an appropriate level in listening and talking. The headteacher has identified correctly the need to continue to improve the rigour and accuracy of teacher professional judgements. Overall, children across the school are not attaining as well as they might be.
- Interventions to support spelling and reading are demonstrating progress in literacy for a few pupils.

Attainment in English and literacy

- The overall quality of children's attainment in literacy is satisfactory.

Listening and talking

- Overall, attainment in listening and talking is good. Across all stages, most children listen and respond appropriately to teachers' questions. At early level, most children can ask questions and respond appropriately to others. At first level, most children listen well when given the opportunity to work collaboratively. By second level, most children listen and respond appropriately to teachers and peers.

Reading

- Overall, the majority of children are making satisfactory progress in reading. At early level, the majority can identify the purpose of the book's title and role of the author. They can recall the content of their reading books and engage in relevant discussions. They use appropriate vocabulary to predict what will happen next. The majority at first level read well orally, showing awareness of fluency and punctuation. They use decoding skills to read unknown words. The majority can identify and describe the main ideas and make inferences from texts and justify their answers with confidence. At second level, most children can explain their choice of texts with confidence. A few children enjoy using audiobooks to access more challenging texts. Most children respond well to a range of inferential, literal and evaluative questions about texts with justification for their answers. Teachers should continue to challenge all learners to progress in all areas of literacy. Across the school, children could be making more progress through accessing more challenging and demanding texts, including non-fiction texts.

Writing

- Overall, the majority of children are making satisfactory progress in writing. At early level the majority form most lowercase letters correctly. They are beginning to spell familiar words with accuracy. At first level, a minority of children write independently and are developing skills in using simple punctuation and a variety of vocabulary. This area should be more fully developed for all children. At second level, the majority of children write for different purposes and with an awareness of audience, using knowledge of technical aspects appropriately. Across the school children now need to develop their skills in writing extended pieces for a variety of purposes within relevant contexts. Overall, children need to be making better progress in writing, particularly at first level.

Overall progress in numeracy and mathematics

- The majority of children at all levels are making satisfactory progress in numeracy and mathematics. Across the school, a majority of children have improved their mental agility and their recall of mathematical facts.

Number, money and measurement

- Overall, the majority of children are making satisfactory progress in number, money and measurement. At early level, the majority of children are developing confidence in working with numbers. Children know numbers to 20. They can identify coins to pay for items giving more than one way of doing so. Children are confident in telling the time. At first level, most children are less skilled at solving problems involving addition and subtraction of two digit numbers. The majority of children can solve word problems involving simple fractions. At second level, the majority can recall multiplication facts and solve addition problems involving decimals. Children are able to calculate simple percentages of an amount and give the equivalent fraction. Almost all children need to develop their understanding of place value.

Shape position and movement

- Overall, the majority of children are making good progress with shape, position and movement. At early level the majority of children can identify 2D shapes and talk about 3D objects. At first level, almost all children can name the features of 3D objects. Most can identify and name right angles and talk about the number of degrees in right and straight angles. Children apply these skills when using programmable toys to solve problems. Children working within second level can draw and label circles using compasses and use the terms radius, diameter and circumference. Children need to develop their skills in estimating more accurately the length of everyday objects.

Information handling

- Overall, children are making satisfactory progress in handling information. At early level, all children are developing their skills in sorting and categorising objects. Children undertake simple surveys. At first and second level, children's skills in information handling are less well developed. They are not always able to recall prior learning on how to collect, display and analyse data. Children should be making better progress in information handling skills. Children should now develop and apply their skills to other areas of their learning across all curricular areas.

Attainment over time in literacy and numeracy

- School data demonstrates a decline in attainment for the previous three years with an improvement in attainment during 2018-2019. The senior staff should continue to support teachers in developing confidence using the National Benchmarks. This will ensure consistent and accurate assessments of attainment over time.

- The school is tracking children's progress in literacy and numeracy. They should continue to ensure rigour in using this data to inform interventions and to support raised attainment in literacy and numeracy. In addition, it would be helpful to identify trends in children's attainment over time, for example, with particular cohorts of children.
- The staff recognise that children with socio-economic barriers are not progressing as well as children in other deciles. The plans for the Pupil Equity Fund should be more clearly focused on specific children with measurable targets and identified outcomes leading to improved attainment. Those children who are capable of higher attainment should experience greater challenge in their learning.

Overall quality of children's achievements

- Children at the upper stages have some responsibilities including as classroom helpers, house captains, pupil voice leaders, monitors, buddies, playground leaders and Junior Road Safety Officers. There is scope for more children across the stages to take on leadership roles. Achievements are celebrated in class and at assemblies. Children enjoy bringing achievements from home and they gain house points for doing so.
- Active Schools activities are targeted to groups of pupils during the school year. Attendance at Active Schools' activities is recorded and staff now need to analyse this data. Staff should ensure that they are proactive about groups of children who may be missing out. The school needs to develop a process for tracking and monitoring children's achievements to ensure that children's achievements are recognised and celebrated.

Equity for all learners

- Staff have a good understanding of the socio-economic background of all children. The headteacher is aware that children should not be disadvantaged by the cost of the school day and uses the Pupil Equity Fund to address this. The school has also used Pupil Equity Fund to support literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and nurture across the school. There is data which highlights the school attainment gap across all stages in literacy and numeracy. Staff are at an early stage of using this data to target specific pupils. They now need to ensure that their plans for using Pupil Equity Funding are clearly linked to increased outcomes for specific groups of children.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.