

Summarised inspection findings

Lincluden Primary School

Dumfries and Galloway Council

3 October 2023

Key contextual information

Lincluden Primary School serves the Lincluden, Newbridge and Sandside areas of Dumfries. The current building opened in 2009. There are 284 children on the school roll, 230 in the primary school and 54 in the nursery class. There are 16 children attending the school's Learning Centre, which is a resource to support children with significant additional support needs. There are nine classes in the school. There has been a significant change to the structure of the senior leadership team in recent years. This has impacted on the school's capacity to take forward key school improvements. A new headteacher took up post in May 2023, just prior to the inspection.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

weak

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

- Senior leaders and staff are committed to creating a warm and welcoming ethos across the school. Collectively, they ensure a strong focus is placed on positive relationships and these lie at the heart of their interactions with children. Almost all parents feel their children enjoy being at Lincluden School and that staff treat their children fairly and with respect. The majority of children feel that their views are sought and taken into account. A majority of children are respectful to staff and work effectively with their peers when given the opportunity. However, a minority of children require support to maintain respectful relationships with staff and their peers. As planned, senior leaders and staff should continue to review approaches to nurture and inclusion across school. The focus of this should be to ensure that the needs of all learners are fully met.
- Planning in most lessons does not meet the needs of all children. As a result, a minority of learners are disengaged with learning. This lack of engagement diminishes the quality of experiences for other children due to the impact of negative behaviours being displayed by this minority. Senior leaders should now ensure that staff have consistently high expectations of all learners to ensure high-quality learning and engagement takes place.
- The quality of teaching across the school is too variable. In most lessons, teachers share effectively explanations and instructions which help children to understand the tasks and activities set for them. In a majority of lessons, teachers share the purpose of learning, and a few children can articulate these well. Staff should now ensure that all children are clear about the purpose of their learning and involve them in identifying how they will be successful. In a few classes, teachers use plenary sessions well to revisit planned learning. Senior leaders and staff should now review their approaches to high quality learning and teaching to ensure all learners are fully motivated and engaged.
- Senior leaders have an established a quality improvement framework which has the potential to effectively support self-evaluation of school performance. This has not been implemented in full this session. Senior leaders should now ensure this framework is used effectively with staff to rigorously evaluate and improve the quality of learning and teaching.

- In most classes, children are motivated by the use of tablet computers to supplement learning through games and other activities. Most teachers use the 'ICT suite' effectively to develop children's digital skills. Not all teachers are confident in using digital technology to enhance children's learning. They should build their knowledge and skills through sharing expertise with colleagues.
- Current approaches to teaching do not yet provide sufficient opportunities for children to be actively involved in their learning. In the majority of lessons, children spend significant amounts of time listening to lengthy input from the teacher. As a result, they lose motivation to engage in their learning. Teachers should encourage children to develop their creativity and enquiry skills to enable them to be more independent in their learning. In most lessons, pace and challenge need to be increased as the majority of children are capable of engaging in learning that is more appropriately challenging for them.
- In a few lessons, teachers use questioning effectively and are at the early stages of developing children's thinking skills. Most teachers differentiate literacy and numeracy lessons, to a limited extent. Teachers should use effective assessment evidence more robustly to ensure they plan learning that meets all learners needs. In most classes, teachers must take steps to ensure they provide timely feedback to support children's learning.
- Teachers at the early level are at the very earliest stages of implementing play-based pedagogy. Staff would benefit from further professional learning and use of the early years national practice guidance, *Realising the Ambition: Being Me* (2020). There is a need to strengthen staff's understanding of learning through play and develop a fuller understanding of the role of the adult in the learning environment. School staff should link more closely with practitioners in the nursery to share practice. This will help to develop further play-based pedagogy across the early level primary classes.
- A few teachers use formative assessment strategies well during lessons. Children complete a range of summative assessments including standardised assessments which have the potential to support teacher's evaluations of progress and attainment. Senior leaders should now work with teachers to analyse these fully to support evaluations and plan next steps for individuals more effectively. This will help to ensure children are making the best possible progress in their learning. As planned, senior leaders should work with teachers to ensure that National Benchmarks are used effectively across the curriculum to inform judgements about children's progress. Senior leaders recognise the need to develop a consistent, whole-school approach to assessing children's progress. This will support teachers to make reliable judgements on children's progress, based on a sound evidence base. Children need to be more meaningfully involved in assessing their own progress, identifying successes and next steps in learning.
- Teachers use long term planning for all curricular areas that highlight the coverage of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) experiences and outcomes. Senior leaders need to support teachers to implement medium and short-term planning to outline individual children's next steps linked to assessment. Teachers' current planning approaches do not indicate how they are building on children's prior learning. Teachers are also unable to demonstrate how well children are progressing within a level. They would benefit from a shared understanding of the national learning, teaching, assessment and moderation cycle. In addition, teachers need to engage in moderation activities within their school and with colleagues in neighbouring schools. This will support them to develop a stronger, shared understanding of national standards and progress within and across a level.
- Senior leaders are developing approaches to tracking children's progress. This is at an early stage of implementation. The headteacher has re-started attainment meetings with teachers.

Senior leaders are aware of the need for a clearer focus during these meetings. They should focus on the actions necessary to raise attainment for individual children, identified groups and cohorts. Senior leaders and teachers should continue to develop their analysis and use of data to inform planning and monitor children's progress more closely.

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

weak

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, the school's data shows that levels of attainment in literacy and English, and numeracy and mathematics are satisfactory. However, the school's attainment data is not yet robust or reliable. School leaders are aware that there are important weaknesses in the school's approaches to raising attainment for all.
- Staff's current work on moderating learning, teaching and assessment in writing should expand to include all areas of the curriculum in due course. This should include an initial focus on all aspects of literacy and numeracy. This will help to raise children's attainment across the stages.

Attainment in literacy and English

- A majority of children at early and first levels, and a minority at second level, are making satisfactory progress in literacy and English.

Listening and talking

- Across the school, the majority of children listen well. However, a minority of children become disengaged when listening as part of whole class lessons and when receiving individual advice. At early level, the majority of children follow instructions. A minority of children need more support to improve their ability to take turns in discussions. At first level, the majority of children know how to listen to others, take turns and contribute to discussions. At second level, the majority of children share their opinions in discussions. Across the school, most children are not clear about how they develop skills in listening and talking.

Reading

- Most children at early level use sounds and letters to read words. A majority of children describe their favourite books. They would benefit from developing their skills in making predictions. At first level, most children explain their choice of texts and a minority can talk about their favourite authors. The majority of children identify the main ideas in texts, however they have difficulty in identifying text genres. At second level, the majority of children read with fluency, understanding and expression. A few children identify author style and explain how these impact on readers. At all levels, children would benefit from further experience across a full range of genres, including finding and using information from non-fiction texts.

Writing

- The majority of children working towards early level can draw pictorial representations of people. Most children are aware of full stops with the majority using them in their writing. The majority of children increasingly use familiar words in their writing and with support, include more unfamiliar words when writing for a purpose. Children now need opportunities to explore

patterns and sounds in a range of play, imaginative and real contexts. At first level, the majority of children write independently, punctuating most sentences correctly. At second level the majority of children use punctuation accurately and are aware of different genres such as fiction and non-fiction. At first and second levels, children would benefit from more opportunities to write imaginatively on subject-matter of their own choice.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, the majority of children in early and second levels, and most children at first level are making satisfactory progress in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, the majority of children count on and back within 20 with a few counting forwards to 30. Most children need further practice with subtraction. Most children are confident in reading o'clock and a few are reading half-past on an analogue clock. They would benefit from more real and meaningful experiences in using coins to pay for items. At first level, the majority of children have a good understanding of place value. The majority can use strategies to carry out a range of calculations. They would benefit from further work on rounding numbers to the nearest 10 and 100. At second level, the majority of children understand place value and can round five-digit numbers. They are developing their understanding of the differences between credit and debit cards. They would benefit from learning more about algebra.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, most children recognise and name two-dimensional shapes with a few recalling the properties of three-dimensional objects. Children would benefit from the development and use of positional language through the use of loose parts and block play. At first and second level, the majority of children can identify types of angles.

Information handling

- At early level, most children match and sort unfamiliar objects confidently. Most children would benefit from more opportunities to interpret simple graphs, charts, and signs. At first level, a majority of children successfully gather, collate, organise, and display data on simple bar graphs. At second level, the majority of children are confident at displaying a range of data using graphs such as line and bar charts. Children at first and second levels have a developing understanding of ideas of uncertainty, probability and chance.

Attainment over time

- Senior leaders have identified correctly that the school's approach to tracking and monitoring children's progress is not sufficiently effective. Senior leaders and staff do not have a full understanding of how well children are progressing over time. As a result, there is a risk that children's attainment may be lower than might be expected. Senior leaders and teachers should develop an effective tracking system. This will support them as they engage in conversations about children's progress and attainment. Senior leaders and staff should use all data more effectively to identify trends in children's attainment over time, for example with particular cohorts of children.
- Teachers should strengthen their moderation activity and engagement with the National Benchmarks to support their judgements about attainment. Senior leaders and staff should ensure all interventions are having a positive impact on raising attainment.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Children's achievements are celebrated during assemblies. Children from P4 to P7 enjoy developing skills through responsibility groups such as digital leaders and the pupil council.

Senior leaders should develop this approach further by creating opportunities to include all children in responsibility groups. Supported by staff, children participate well in lunchtime and after-school clubs. These include choir, football, netball and construction sessions. Children are building skills in teamwork and confidence as a result. Senior leaders should now track this information to ensure all children have equal access to clubs and activities.

Equity for all learners

- Staff have a strong understanding of the barriers faced by children in the school, including those caused by socio-economic pressures. Senior leaders use the school's significant allocation of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) to offer a variety of interventions to support targeted individuals or groups of children. PEF has also been used to enable children to participate in learning experiences that they might otherwise miss out on. For example, PEF was used to support a recent residential trip.
- At present the school does not have robust data to demonstrate that PEF is being used effectively to accelerate attainment for individuals or groups. Senior leaders have recently introduced PEF profiling forms which are beginning to capture this information. Senior leaders now need to ensure that they monitor all PEF projects and gather robust evidence of their impact on outcomes for children. They need to make sure that the PEF interventions are improving equity, resulting in raised attainment for learners that are most affected by deprivation. Senior leaders have recently introduced PEF profiling forms which are beginning to capture this information.

Context

The Learning Centre is one of four similar provisions in the town of Dumfries for children with significant additional support needs. Places at the Learning Centre are allocated by a multi-agency referral panel, and the expectation is that children are at Stage 4 of the local authority's stages of intervention. Most children in the Learning Centre have communication difficulties and attend the Learning Centre full-time. All children are on the Lincluden Primary School roll.

QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

- Children benefit from a calm, purposeful beginning to the school day, with soft start activities available in the classroom or in the small outdoor area. Staff encourage children to participate together in activities such as the 'good morning' song. Children are organised into groups for each learning activity by the principal teacher. The principal teacher sets out the work for each of the groups at the beginning of the day. Most groups are run effectively by learning assistants. The relatively small area for learning and teaching within the Learning Centre can be challenging for staff when carrying out group or individual learning activities. The main classroom is well resourced and used to support a variety of engaging learning experiences for children. Although children access the outdoor area, this has the potential to be a more engaging learning location. The principal teacher should now work with staff to plan more effective use of this valuable space.
- Most children are engaged in and focused on their learning tasks. They have very positive relationships with staff, who understand their needs well. Children enjoy demonstrating their learning and discussing it with adults. They respond well to their work being displayed in the Learning Centre or elsewhere in the school.
- Each group of learners has different work to undertake, and this is the main way in which tasks are differentiated. Staff work sensitively with children and are clear in their instructions. They are attuned to children's needs and their mood. Where necessary, they adapt or modify the work for their group if the task is not proceeding appropriately. Care should be taken by staff to ensure that there is not an over-reliance on commercially produced worksheets during learning activities.
- Staff handle transitions between tasks well and children respond positively to predictable elements of their school day. Staff are also aware that they need to work with children to develop greater flexibility of thought, and gradually introduce small changes to routines. Transitions into and out of the Learning Centre are handled sensitively by staff, allowing children to take as long as is necessary.
- The principal teacher carries out an initial assessment of needs when children are referred to the Learning Centre, including literacy and numeracy baseline assessments. Further assessment is carried out through observation and analysis of children's work. Photographs were previously used by staff to record achievements and progress, but further work is required to allow this approach to restart.
- Each child has an individualised educational programme (IEP) with long-term and short-term targets in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Children benefit from planned learning opportunities which are closely linked to children's targets from their (IEP). More could be done to ensure that these IEPs are kept up to date, appropriately filled in and updated.

QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

- Attainment in literacy and numeracy, according to tracking and monitoring data provided by the school, is limited. In literacy, there has been no measurable progress for those children working at the early level in reading across the past year, although there has been limited progress in writing. In numeracy, children at the early level have made good progress in number, money and measurement, but no progress in shape, position and movement or information handling.
- In literacy, children's communication skills are developing well. They use a range of ways effectively for example, through signing, the use of symbols and verbally. Writing ranges from initial mark making through to writing individual words and, in some cases, sentences.
- In numeracy, a few children are working on shape, position and movement by completing jigsaws. Others are working on addition problems by using concrete materials. A few children are able to understand sequencing of numbers up to 100. Others can complete addition and subtraction operations for numbers with up to three digits.
- Overall, children's attainment over time in the Learning Centre is satisfactory. Whilst the tracking and monitoring data shows limited individual progress, this can be supplemented by looking at samples of work and progress against the targets in children's IEPs. Overall, however, further work is required to ensure that progress over time can be more clearly and comprehensively demonstrated for children in the Learning Centre.
- Achievement for children in the Learning Centre needs to be scheduled during the school day, due to the use of taxis for transport. However, this currently includes opportunities, as appropriate, for some children to attend local horse-riding and to go swimming in an adapted, accessible pool. Staff also take children out into the community on a weekly basis to develop their road safety skills, visiting a range of different local areas. As a result, children are developing their confidence and many life skills.
- More could be done to ensure that children in the Learning Centre benefit from the school's allocation of PEF, with a focus on raising their attainment.

Other relevant evidence

- The school submitted information relating to compliance with the revised Nutritional Regulations 2020 and key duties as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007. The Health and Nutrition Inspector (HNI) discussed this information with relevant staff and children. In addition, the HNI examined documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole-school approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of children through food in school. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.
- Senior leaders and staff should ensure children in school benefit from more regular learning in modern languages.
- There is a library area in the corridor which can be accessed by all classes. Children would benefit from more opportunities to engage with a range of appropriately challenging texts of different kinds. Currently, the range of books available for children to read does not allow them to explore a full range of genres.

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.