

# Summarised inspection findings

North Queensferry Primary School

Fife Council

19 March 2024

## Key contextual information

North Queensferry Primary School is situated within the village of North Queensferry in Fife. At the time of the inspection the roll of the school was 61 children across three composite classes. The headteacher has been in post for four years. Most children who attend the school live within the local area, with approximately 30% of children attending as a result of placing requests. Most children live in deciles 7-10 of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. Approximately 30% of pupils are reported as having additional support needs.

### 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

- Across the school, children are confident, articulate and enthusiastic about their learning. They benefit from positive relationships with staff and with each other. Children understand well their school values of, respectful, ambitious and determined. They talk about how these values help them in their learning and everyday life. The staff team work together effectively to support the pastoral and learning needs of children. They have high expectations of children. Learners respond positively to this and engage well in activities.
- Overall, children benefit from interesting and creative approaches to learning and teaching. In a few lessons, teachers use questioning very well to support children to reflect on the learning and to justify choices. Teachers use effective questioning to extend learning and provide further challenge for learners. Across the school, teachers should take better account of the different stages and abilities of children when delivering learning. Teachers should continue to review the pace and challenge of lessons in all classes to ensure tasks and activities are appropriately matched to children's learning needs.
- In almost all classes, teachers give clear explanations and instructions. They use a range of assessment strategies as part of their teaching to check for understanding. Teachers provide timely oral feedback that supports children's engagement and understanding. Children have opportunities to engage in peer and self-evaluation activities. They would benefit from further support from teachers to improve the quality of feedback provided. Teachers make effective use of wall displays to celebrate children's achievements and to scaffold learning. Children regularly refer to resources and prompts on displays. As a result, children are becoming more independent in their learning.
- Across the school, teachers use a variety of teaching approaches well to engage children in learning experiences. These include opportunities to work with partners, in groups and independently. Support staff work well with children to help them in their learning. They work in collaboration with teaching staff to provide valuable feedback about how children are progressing.

- Children participate in outdoor learning, community citizenship initiatives, and mock court experiences. As a result, children are developing a deeper understanding of the purpose and relevance of their learning. Teachers should continue to maximise the use of local resources and partnerships to enhance children's experiences. They regularly involve children in meaningful discussions about their learning and encourage them to make links with prior learning. As a result, most children can accurately identify the skills they are developing and can explain how they link to skills for life and work. Teachers should build on this practice by ensuring children understand what they need to do to be successful in their learning. This will help children to reflect on their progress and set meaningful personal learning targets.
- Staff have introduced play-based learning for children at P1 and P2. This is supporting children well to develop independence and their problem-solving skills, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Staff should continue to evaluate the impact of new approaches and use national practice guidance to develop further play opportunities. As they do so, staff should review the environment and resources available to support children to develop their problem solving and creativity.
- All teachers use interactive whiteboards effectively as a teaching tool to enhance learning and teaching. Children have regular opportunities to use digital technology to enhance their learning. Staff should now ensure all children can develop further their digital literacy skills through a planned, progressive programme.
- Older children have a range of opportunities to develop their leadership skills by supporting younger children and participating in committees such as Diversity, Eco and Digital Leaders. As a result, children have developed very respectful and supportive relationships with each other. These opportunities are supporting children well to become confident and responsible citizens.
- Children's attendance is good. Staff engage the support of other agencies to work with the families of a few children who do not maintain good attendance. The school identified an increase in families taking holidays during term time. Staff have promoted the importance of attendance at school using resources provided by the local authority in response to similar issues across the area. As a result, less families are taking holidays during term time.
- Teachers use a range of planning tools well to support children's progress in their learning. They make effective use of local authority progression frameworks to track and assess children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Teachers should continue to review their approaches to planning to ensure all children have access to a broad, balanced range of learning across the curriculum.
- Children contribute to planning through the school's four-step planning process and classroom learning reflections. They identify what they already know and what they would like to learn. Teachers help parents to support their child's learning at home through termly learning journals and regular shared learning events. This helps parents to develop a better understanding of their child's learning.
- Children who require additional support are fully involved in creating and reviewing their personal plans and setting personal targets. Staff use support plans well to monitor the impact of interventions. As a result, children and staff have a shared understanding and commitment to addressing personal learning targets.
- Senior leaders and teachers meet regularly and use manageable processes successfully to monitor children's progress. They make good use of diagnostic assessment information to create individualised learning plans for children who require additional support. They monitor

the impact of targeted interventions effectively and ensure children with additional support needs are well supported and make good progress in their learning.

- Teachers have participated in cluster level moderation work. This has helped them to develop a shared understanding of expected standards, particularly in writing. Teachers should continue to engage in moderation activities with colleagues within the school and cluster. This will support them to continue to develop their confidence in applying national standards more accurately when assessing children's progress in learning.

## 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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

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**

- At the time of inspection, there were small cohorts of children at each stage of the school roll. Almost all children are achieving expected Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels in listening and talking and reading. Most children are achieving expected CfE levels in writing and numeracy. Attainment is less strong at first level. A few children are working beyond their expected level in literacy and numeracy.

### **Attainment in literacy and English**

- Almost all children are making good progress in literacy and English, in line with national standards.

### **Listening and talking**

- Almost all children across the school listen well and engage confidently in discussions with adults and peers. Most children listen and respond respectfully to the ideas and viewpoints of others. At early level, almost all children answer questions and make simple predictions about texts. They retell familiar stories confidently through imaginative play. At first level, most children contribute appropriately to a discussion, building on other children's responses and asking relevant questions to seek further information. Children at first level would benefit from further opportunities to develop and extend their vocabulary and to present information orally to different audiences. At second level, almost all children engage enthusiastically in discussions about their novels and topics. They share ideas, justify choices and explain their thinking.

### **Reading**

- At early level, almost all children read familiar texts using pictures to support them. They explore sounds and letters to read simple words. They should continue to develop their fluency and to use expression. When reading aloud, most children at first and second levels read fluently and with expression. At first level, most children answer confidently a range of questions about texts and skim and scan main points. A few children would benefit from further encouragement to read for pleasure and extend their understanding of different author's styles. At second level, almost all children answer a range of increasingly challenging questions about texts. A few children are becoming more confident in generating appropriate questions to extend their thinking. Most children discuss different strategies used by the author to engage the reader. Children should apply this knowledge in their own writing.

### **Writing**

- At early level, almost all children engage in writing activities enthusiastically. They enjoy mark making and choose to explore writing in play-based learning experiences. Almost all children write simple words independently. At first level, almost all children plan and create texts for a range of purposes, such as instructions, detailed descriptions and imaginative stories. They are beginning to use a range of punctuation accurately. They require further support to apply

taught spelling skills to written tasks. At second level, most children use a range of punctuation marks and writing tools, such as character descriptions, metaphors and imagery. This makes their writing more interesting. Children are using a range of punctuation marks accurately and are using paragraphs well to separate ideas. At first and second level, children would benefit from more opportunities to apply writing skills in different contexts and curricular areas.

### **Numeracy and mathematics**

- Most children are making good progress and are achieving expected national standards in numeracy and mathematics across the school.

### **Number, money and measure**

- At early level, children have a good understanding of numbers to 20. They count forward and backwards and carry out additions and subtractions accurately. Children recognise coins and identify the correct coins up to the value of 10p. Children are beginning to recognise the days of the week and months of the year. At first level, children add and subtract numbers using a range of different strategies. They are confident explaining their working. Children require further support to confidently subtract three-digit numbers. They understand time using a 12-hour clock. Children are not yet confident using the 24-hour clock. At second level, children are successful when using larger numbers in the four operations. They read time in real-life contexts such as train timetables and work out the duration of journeys. Children require further opportunities to apply their learning in real life contexts such as in shopping and money situations.

### **Shape, position and movement**

- Children at early level recognise and describe the properties of two-dimensional shapes. At first level, children can identify right angles in shapes. They recognise and describe accurately common two-dimensional shapes. They are less confident when describing the properties of three-dimensional objects. At second level, children are confident describing and drawing angles such as acute and obtuse angles. They have a good knowledge of three-dimensional objects.

### **Information handling**

- At early level, children have a good understanding of sorting and collecting items by colour. They understand the purpose of tally marks to collect information. At first level, children confidently answer questions about information in bar graphs. At second level, children understand well the idea of chance and probability and accurately identify the chances of events occurring.

### **Attainment over time**

- The headteacher and staff have a good understanding of the progress all children are making over time. School data accurately shows that children are making good progress in literacy and numeracy over the past few years, including progress made since the pandemic. Senior leaders identified a dip in children's attainment levels in writing post pandemic. A focus on writing across the school has resulted in improved attainment.
- Almost all children who experience barriers to learning are identified and supported well through a range of interventions in areas such as, reading and spelling. The headteacher and staff track regularly the impact of these interventions. Data demonstrates that almost all children with additional support needs are making progress in their learning.

### **Overall quality of learners' achievements**

- Children are proud of their achievements and value the importance of celebrating them at school. Through assemblies and displays, children are encouraged to recognise their strengths. They talk confidently about their achievements and recognise the skills they are

gaining through their successes. Across the school, there is a strong focus on ensuring children are aware of the skills they are developing. Through leadership groups such as diversity and eco schools, children have a good understanding about how they can contribute to improving the local and wider community. Children participate in local projects such as gardening and beach cleans. This is developing their understanding of sustainability and climate issues through meaningful and practical activities.

- Children in the school are involved in supporting improvements in the local area as key participants in the North Queensferry Action Plan. They identified improvements for the village such as better access for prams and wheelchairs. They have been involved in the development of a play park within the community. Children are developing important skills as a result of their work and understand that their views and suggestions are valued.
- Children have good opportunities to participate in a range of after-school sport and leisure activities such as pilates, dance and cricket. Almost all children attend after-school clubs and activities. Staff support the participation of specific children who may be at risk of missing out.

### **Equity for all learners**

- The headteacher and staff know very well the needs of all children, including children who may be impacted by poverty. Staff understand and address barriers to learning that may impact on their attainment and achievements. Whole school and targeted approaches that support wellbeing are impacting positively. The school receives a small amount of Pupil Equity Funding. This funding is used to raise attainment in literacy at P2 and numeracy at P5, such as the purchase of resources to improve children's reading of common words. The headteacher tracks the impact of interventions well and data shows that attainment in these areas is improving. Parents are aware that the school receives funding. The next step is to involve parents in decisions about how it is used.



## Practice worth sharing more widely

### QI 3.2 Children's involvement in the North Queensferry Local Action Plan

Children in the school are key participants in the North Queensferry Action Plan. They identified improvements that could be made to the village and have been involved in the development of a play park within the community.

- Children provided views about how to improve the village.
- They attended meetings with adults and other stakeholders.
- Pupil representatives from the school consulted with other children to gain their views.
- Children discussed aspects of the process such as bureaucracy and the time for changes to happen. This helped their understanding about the processes involved in such projects.
- Children identified the skills they were developing through their involvement and how they could use these skills in other contexts.

## 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.