

# Summarised inspection findings

**Newfield Primary School**

South Lanarkshire Council

27 February 2024

## Key contextual information

Newfield Primary School is a non-denominational school located within the semi-rural village of Stonehouse. The roll is 223 children arranged over nine classes. The nursery class doubled in size in August 2022 and now has provision for 64 children. Both the headteacher and depute headteacher are long-serving members of staff. The headteacher was appointed in 2017, having previously been the principal teacher. An increase to the school roll enabled the appointment of a permanent depute headteacher in 2020 and principal teacher in 2021. Most children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles 3 and 4.

### 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, staff and children demonstrate very respectful relationships that are strongly underpinned by the school vision and values. Children benefit from the nurturing and inclusive ethos this creates. Almost all children feel happy and safe and understand that staff know them as individuals very well. As a result, children learn in a calm, purposeful and nurturing environment. All staff and children are very proud of their school and are motivated to 'grow into excellence'. Children are increasing their understanding of children's rights and are beginning to relate these to their own lives and experiences. Staff and children should continue to develop this understanding as they progress towards achieving formal accreditation.
- Children use different technologies effectively to research, present and share their learning through a range of digital approaches. Most children make appropriate use of digital resources. This leads to greater personalisation and choice and encourages them to apply their digital skills in a variety of contexts. Staff make effective use of digital technology to enhance learning and teaching and to record children's progress. Staff use assistive technologies well to support individual children to remove potential barriers to their learning.
- Senior leaders, in consultation with staff, provide clear guidance on expectations and learning and teaching approaches. Staff make very effective use of an agreed learning and teaching policy, ensuring consistency of approach across the school. In almost all lessons, teachers set an appropriate pace of learning and ensure sufficient support and challenge to meet the needs of all children. Staff's implementation of appropriate professional learning informs whole school approaches and is evident in staff practice. In almost all lessons, staff explanations and instructions are clear. Almost all teachers use skilled questioning. They provide children with regular opportunities to explain their thinking and add depth to their learning. Teachers and support for learning assistants work very effectively together to meet the needs of identified children. Support for learning assistants use their skills and training well to support targeted children effectively.

- In almost all lessons, staff ensure that children understand the purpose of their learning. They build consistently on prior learning, supporting children to consolidate and apply their learning in a variety of ways. Almost all staff provide both oral and written feedback to help children understand how they can improve and inform their next steps. Most children reflect constructively on their own learning and that of their peers against set criteria.
- Staff have made a positive start to implementing play-based learning at P1 through engagement with appropriate professional learning. They have developed the learning environment, both indoors and outdoors and begun to develop their approach to planning learning. Children are responding positively to these developments, particularly through play outdoors. This provides children at P1 with meaningful opportunities to lead their own learning, develop their curiosity and work together to solve problems. As planned, staff should continue to review and develop play-based learning, informed by national practice guidance. They should continue to assess the impact this has on the learning experiences and outcomes of children.
- Across the school, staff are strengthening their approach to outdoor learning by increasing the frequency of outdoor learning opportunities they provide. All children experience planned outdoor learning to support a range of curriculum activities. The newly developed garden area is particularly well used by children at P1. Young leaders of learning have visited another school to inform the further development of outdoor learning. Staff should continue to embed the use of outdoor learning to develop further children's creativity and problem-solving skills.
- Almost all staff are confident in using assessment information to support children's learning and identify next steps. They use a wide range of assessments to inform their professional judgement, including standardised assessments. Staff ensure that assessment forms an integral part of planning. Their use of individualised assessment folders supports staff to review each child's progress. Staff's effective use of an assessment calendar ensures standardised assessments are conducted at identified points across the year. Staff use these to monitor the progress of individuals and specific cohorts of children very effectively.
- Teachers plan appropriately over different timescales to meet the needs of children across the curriculum. They use progression pathways and a consistent planning format well to inform their planning across all curriculum areas. These ensure that teachers take appropriate account of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) experiences and outcomes and national Benchmarks. Staff should review their approach to long-term planning to better inform the effectiveness of planned learning that connects different curriculum areas.
- Staff make very effective and regular use of robust tracking systems to monitor the progress and attainment of all children. This identifies children who are not on track to achieve, or who require additional challenge to increase attainment and achievement. Senior leaders conduct termly attainment and review meetings with teachers to discuss children's progress. Staff make very effective use of a range of assessment evidence and data to inform these conversations. Senior leaders use the information gathered at these meetings to update an overview of progress for literacy and numeracy for each year group. They use this data very effectively to strategically plan and review timely interventions. As a result, all staff have a clear understanding of the attainment of different cohorts of children. This includes children with additional support needs, those affected by poverty and differences in attainment between genders. Senior leaders ensure clear individualised plans are in place, developed in consultation with children, parents/carers and partners where appropriate.
- Staff regularly take part in formal and informal moderation activities, both within the school and across the learning community. This is increasing the accuracy and validity of teacher professional judgement in relation to literacy and numeracy. Staff make appropriate reference

to national Benchmarks to inform their moderation activities. A recent focus on the assessment of listening and talking is leading to greater accuracy when assessing children's progress in this aspect of the curriculum.

## 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.

## 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

- Overall, the majority of children attain expected CfE levels in writing, reading and numeracy and mathematics. Children are making good progress from prior levels of achievement. Across all stages, attainment is strongest in listening and talking. A few children achieve beyond expected levels in writing, reading and numeracy across all stages.
- Most children with additional support needs are making good progress towards their individual learning targets. A few children with additional support needs have made significant progress and are now on track to achieve expected levels.

### Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, children's progress and attainment in literacy and English is good.

### Listening and talking

- At early level, most children listen to their peers respectfully when responding to adult-led activities. Children should develop further their turn-taking skills when contributing and responding in a variety of contexts. At first level, most children discuss texts and communicate their understanding with increasing confidence. At second level, almost all children communicate clearly, audibly and with expression in different situations. Across the school, most children are confident when speaking with others and enthusiastically share their successes.

### Reading

- At early level, children retell familiar stories and make links with their own experiences. Almost all children identify accurately the author and illustrator of a book. They can blend sounds to read simple words. At first level, almost all children explain appropriately their preference for texts and authors. They regularly select texts for enjoyment and identify the features of a text. At second level, most children use context clues, punctuation, grammar and layout to read unfamiliar texts with understanding. They read familiar texts aloud using punctuation to add expression. Most children are confident in summarising, predicting, clarifying and questioning to support their comprehension of texts. At first and second level, children would benefit from more experience of responding to a range of inferential and evaluative questions.
- The re-development of the school library is contributing positively to raising the profile of reading across the school. Children undertaking the role of junior librarians are taking a lead role in the development of the new library space. Children read for pleasure on a regular basis and find information for a specific purpose.

## **Writing**

- At early level, most children form lower case letters correctly. They attempt to write as they engage in imaginative play using real-life contexts. At first level, children use common conjunctions to link sentences together appropriately. At second level, children plan and write a varied range of texts across different genres. Teachers should continue to support children at first and second levels, to develop their ability to create texts digitally.
- Senior leaders use Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) effectively to enhance staffing to raise attainment in writing. Staff now employ a more consistent approach to teaching writing. Staff also provide targeted support. The introduction of writing boxes, the Newfield newspaper and a writing committee has increased children's motivation and engagement to write. There are early indications that strategies used to raise attainment in writing are successfully accelerating the rate of children's progress. As a result, predicted levels of achievement indicate that most children across all stages are on track to achieve expected levels in writing.

## **Numeracy and mathematics**

- Overall, the majority of children make good progress in numeracy and mathematics.

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

- At early level, almost all children order numbers within 30, and use a range of strategies to identify a number. All children add and subtract within 10. A few children need further consolidation to read analogue and digital o'clock times. At first level, almost all children use a range of strategies to solve addition and subtraction problems. Almost all children write common fractions and use their knowledge of multiplication to find the fraction of a number. A few children need support to explain the meaning of numerator and denominator. At second level, children round numbers to the nearest 1000, 10,000 and 100,000 accurately. They multiply and divide with decimal fractions to two decimal places. A few children need further consolidation to find a percentage of a whole number within a problem.

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

- At early level, children correctly identify a range of two-dimensional shapes. They recognise these shapes within their environment and through outdoor play. At first level, children identify right angles within a shape accurately. At second level almost all children use appropriate mathematical language to describe and classify a range of angles, such as acute, obtuse, straight and reflex.

### **Information handling**

- At early level, children sort items into identified categories and create block graphs. At first and second level, children use digital technologies appropriately to display data. They collate and interpret information in Venn and Carroll diagrams. Across the school, children apply their knowledge of information handling in real-life situations and use data gathered through surveys to inform action planning. Across the school, all children should have further opportunities to use digital technologies to record and display data through spreadsheets, databases, and a range of charts and graphs.

### **Attainment over time**

- Staff make effective use of systems to track attainment in literacy and English, numeracy and mathematics over time. They interrogate data at whole-school, year group, targeted cohort and individual level effectively. Senior leaders provide comprehensive data profiles for each class to further support teacher professional judgements. As a result, staff have a sound understanding of the needs of individual learners. Senior leaders understand the factors that influence fluctuations in attainment and use this knowledge well to inform universal and



targeted support appropriately. Staff now need to track children's progress across all curriculum areas.

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

- The school community places high importance on recognising and celebrating children's wider achievements. All staff celebrate children's achievements in class, at assemblies, through displays and social media.
- Children have a range of meaningful opportunities through which they contribute to the life and work of the school. Most children feel that staff listen to, and take account of, their views. Children participate in an extensive range of leadership roles and committees. For example, children at P7 lead regular 'Masterclass' activities for all stages based on their own interests and those of others. They plan, deliver and evaluate the effectiveness of Masterclass sessions, using feedback to inform future sessions. As a result, they develop self-confidence, leadership and communication skills. Children speak enthusiastically about these leadership opportunities. They recognise the positive contribution they make to the life of the school and wider community. Almost all children demonstrate a very high level of enthusiasm and engagement as a result.
- All children participate in a variety of staff-led clubs and activities across the year. The clubs provided by staff closely reflect children's interests and motivations. Staff track participation in wider achievements and the range of extra-curricular opportunities available. They use this information to ensure all children have opportunities to enjoy success. They should now support children to have a greater understanding of the skills they are developing as part of their achievements. Staff should consider further how skills are developed progressively across the school.

### **Equity for all learners**

- All staff have a strong understanding the socio-economic background of children, their family circumstances and individual needs. They employ robust approaches to track and monitor the progress of all children, including those who are disadvantaged. Termly attainment and review meetings include a clear focus on strategies to close the poverty-related attainment gap. Pupil Equity Funding is used well to enhance staffing to provide targeted support to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy. For example, the strategy to close the attainment gap in writing is showing early indications of success.
- Staff developed a 'Cost of the School Day' policy which is helping staff understand better how poverty can affect learning and attendance. Parents, children and staff are consulted on aspects of PEF spending to minimise the costs to families. For example, staff ensure all children have the necessary materials for home learning.
- Staff monitor children's attendance and late-coming closely. They ensure that appropriate interventions and supports are in place as required. Since 2021/22 attendance shows signs of improvement and attendance now exceeds pre COVID-19 pandemic levels. Strong relationships with children and families, and partnership working have led to improvement. A focus on punctuality has resulted in a 25% reduction in late coming for identified children.



## Other relevant evidence

- All children receive two hours of physical education (PE) in line with national recommendations. Senior leaders should review the use of short periods of time for PE within class timetables to ensure it supports the delivery of high-quality PE for all children.
- The Parent Council has a membership of 23 parents/carers who engage fully in a range of social and financial support for the school. Parents also offer curricular enhancements by sharing their skills and expertise. The headteacher ensures that the Parent Council is appropriately consulted when determining the focus of PEF spending.

## Practice worth sharing more widely

### QI 3.2 wider achievement

This is an example of the development of children's skills for learning, life and work through leadership opportunities.

- All children from P3 and P7 are part of a leadership group, with P1 and P2 children joining taster sessions in these groups. These groups present to school assemblies and organise school events. They contribute to school improvement. For example, Young Leaders of Learning visited another school to inform the development of outdoor learning. They are using the information gathered to improve their own experiences. Children speak with pride of their involvement in school improvement.
- P7 children plan, deliver and review a wide range of 'masterclasses'. These provide opportunities for children to work with different groups and staff members, strengthening relationships across the school. They provide opportunities for personalisation and choice. Masterclass leaders actively seek feedback from participants to inform the content and design of future masterclasses.

## 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.