Summarised inspection findings

St Ignatius Primary School

North Lanarkshire Council

26 March 2024

Key contextual information

St Ignatius Primary School is a denominational school in Wishaw, North Lanarkshire. The school shares a campus with Wishaw Academy Primary School. At the time of inspection there were 180 children across seven primary classes. The experienced and well-established leadership team comprises a headteacher, an acting depute headteacher and an acting principal teacher.

Just over half of the children attending the school live in areas classified as Scottish Index Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles 1 and 2. The remainder of children live mostly in SIMD decile 4. Approximately one quarter of children are entitled to free school meals. One fifth of children have English as an additional language. Just over two fifths of children receive additional support in the learning.

Children's attendance is in line with national averages and above the average for North Lanarkshire. There have been no exclusions in the last six years.

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	

■ The school community has created a shared vision and set of values that underpin approaches to learning and teaching across the school. Children have a very good understanding of the values of faith, honesty, inclusion, achievement and respect. These values have helped to create a very positive environment for learning, where children benefit from respectful and nurturing relationships. Staff explore with children the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, showing their strong commitment to rights-based learning. Children have led the development of class charters, giving them a strong sense of ownership and belonging of their school.

■ Across the school, all children engage very well in their learning and make choices about what they learn. Staff use floor books, mind maps and 'wonder questions' very effectively to capture children's ideas about their learning across the curriculum. Children in P1 to P4 make very good use of the well-resourced 'Happy Hub', which they helped to name, to develop their skills and learning through play. Play pedagogy is an ongoing school priority and senior leaders and all staff are developing their skills through professional learning. Teachers work collaboratively with colleagues in other local schools, using a practitioner enquiry approach, to develop their approaches to play. This has led to positive changes across the school environment that offer spaces and resources that promote children's curiosity and creativity.

■ The senior leadership team together with staff have created a learning and teaching policy that is helping to ensure consistently high-quality approaches across the school. All staff plan

enjoyable and challenging learning experiences that motivate children. Staff share routinely the purpose of lessons with children, providing clear explanations and instructions. They have high expectations of children, both in their behaviour and learning. Children take great pride in their work, with examples of good practice displayed in classrooms and around the school. House captains enjoy the opportunity to look at and appreciate other children's writing, choosing examples across the school for the 'House Challenge Writing Wall'.

- Staff provide children with quality feedback about their learning. Children are encouraged to self- and peer-assess their work. Almost all are confident using a range of self-assessment techniques. Staff have identified a next step is to further develop these approaches, ensuring children use feedback they are given to identify their own next steps in learning.

- Children have good access to digital technology and use this well to support their learning. Teachers use assistive technologies very effectively to include and support children with barriers to learning. For example, children who need support are identified using the 'literacy consultation profile' and then access bespoke programmes to support their confidence and accuracy in literacy. This has helped this group of children to have increased pride in their work. Staff use digital barcodes across the school to help children access appropriate activities to meet their individual needs. This is encouraging them to be independent and resourceful learners.

- Staff use a range of assessment approaches very well to gather information on children's progress. Pupil health and wellbeing surveys are carried out twice each year, which provides staff with detailed information about how each child feels about being a learner in this school. Staff use this data alongside their detailed knowledge of children to make appropriate and well-timed interventions wherever required.

- Staff participate in moderation activities with colleagues across the joint campus. These activities are providing staff with opportunities to plan high-quality assessment tasks and to share and discuss evidence gathered. This has developed staff's understanding of national standards for children's writing and has ensured that their judgements are accurate. As planned, senior leaders should utilise this successful model to now moderate learning in other curricular areas.

- Staff have very effective systems in place to track regularly children's levels of engagement and participation in learning. They use this information rigorously to identify children requiring additional support or intervention. Senior leaders' carefully planned initiatives such as the Forest Club are helping all children to see incremental gains in their engagement in learning.

- Staff maintain detailed records of children's progress and attainment over time, gathering information from a range of sources. Senior leaders have devised an innovative digital programme to analyse the wide range of information about the progress of children in different cohorts. This includes information about gender, children's levels of need and barriers that arise through disadvantage. This is helping staff to ensure the specific needs of all children are met very effectively. Senior leaders hold regular meetings with each class teacher and pupil support workers. Together, they review the individual progress of each child, identifying whether children are on track with their learning or need extra support. Senior leaders and staff use the wide range of worthwhile data they collect very effectively to pinpoint inequity and any gaps in children's learning. Together, they use Pupil Equity

Funding (PEF) very carefully to plan the interventions and targeted support necessary to successfully close these gaps. This is making a difference for children and families.

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	**very 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

■ Senior leaders and staff have a clear focus on raising attainment and strive to achieve equity and inclusion for all. The wealth of robust data presented by the school demonstrates that most children achieve national Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels in literacy and numeracy. Within the SIMD context of the school, this is a major strength. Across the school, significant numbers of children with additional support needs are making strong progress in relation to their personal milestones and targets.

Attainment in literacy and English

■ Overall, most children make very good progress in literacy and English. Children apply their literacy skills very well in a range of relevant contexts. Children for whom English is an additional language make strong progress in their acquisition of English.

Listening and talking

■ Across all levels, children listen attentively and are respectful when others are speaking. They follow verbal instructions correctly. Almost all children are articulate and are keen to share their thoughts and opinions. At early level, almost all children engage with stories and texts by retelling and enacting stories. At first and second levels, almost all children take turns and contribute successfully to discussions. At first level, almost all children can identify the skills required when talking in groups and presenting to an audience. At second level, almost all children communicate clearly and audibly. Almost all children at second level apply their presentation skills very well through weekly assemblies and mass services. A next step for children is to transfer their listening and talking skills to debate key issues about their topics.

Reading

■ Parents play a valuable role in promoting a love of reading. The Parent, Teacher and Friends Association runs the school's popular lending library. At early level, most children recognise initial sounds and blends and use these with increasing confidence to read unknown words. They recognise these in simple texts. They use picture clues well to make predictions and identify characters within a story. Most children working at first and second levels read with fluency and expression and summarise the main ideas of a text. They explain their reasons for selecting their favourite author and genre. At first level, most children demonstrate a sound understanding of setting and characters and answer literal questions. At second level, most children make relevant comments about features of language, including authors' use of vocabulary and punctuation. Most children are developing their ability to respond to inferential and evaluative questions.

Writing

■ Writing is a whole-school priority for improvement. Staff should continue as planned to apply their professional learning to improve the teaching of writing. This is having a positive impact on children's enthusiasm and confidence. Across all levels, almost all children's writing is clear and legible. Children take great pride in the presentation of their work, writing for a variety of purposes and audiences. At early level, most children use known sounds to write simple words independently, with only a minority requiring support. The majority use capital letters and full stops to punctuate sentences with increasing accuracy and independence. Most children working at first level spell familiar words correctly. They use their knowledge of grammar and connectives appropriately in their writing. At second level, most children use a range of punctuation and grammar successfully. They are developing their understanding of features of language such as simile, metaphor and onomatopoeia, and use these to enhance their own writing.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

■ Across the school, children are very positive about their learning in numeracy and mathematics. They say they find it interesting and enjoyable. Most children are making very good progress in numeracy and mathematics. They apply their learning confidently in different curriculum areas and contexts. Across the school, a minority of children exceed national expectations and standards relative to their age and stage. Children who have additional support needs are making steady progress towards their personal numeracy targets.

Number, money and measure

■ At all levels, almost all children use mathematical language accurately, relative to their age and stage, to explain number processes. Children's agility and speed in mental calculations is a strength. Most children at early level identify and recognise numbers to 30 and beyond. A few count forwards and backwards within 20 and can identify missing numbers in a sequence. At first level, most children use number operations correctly. They add and subtract numbers accurately and understand the link between multiplication, division and fractions. Most children estimate length accurately and convert centimetres into metres. They use coins and can give the correct change. At second level, most children apply their knowledge and skills in numeracy very well to solve problems in creative ways. They change fractions into percentages and decimals with increasing confidence. A next step for children is to learn more about financial education in real-life contexts, for example exploring the difference between debit and credit cards and working within a budget.

Shape, position and movement

■ At early level, almost all children describe the properties of a range of two-dimensional shapes. They describe the position of objects during their play with loose parts. At first level, most children understand the properties of a right angle and identify these in their environment. At second level, children use the correct mathematical language to describe and classify a range of angles, including within shapes and the environment. They use their knowledge of the eight compass points and angles to describe, follow and record directions.

Information handling

■ All children at early level sort objects into different categories and explain their reasoning. At first level, all children interpret data from a graph and use tally marks to collect data. At second level, all children collect, organise and interpret information in a range of appropriate graphs and charts.

Attainment over time

■ Senior leaders have developed robust systems and procedures to track children's attainment and achievement over time. Senior leaders, along with teachers, are becoming skilled in interrogating the data they gather to track the progress of individuals, cohorts and particular groups of children on an on-going basis. This informs teachers' planning, which is leading in positive outcomes for all children.

■ The headteacher and promoted staff have established a clear and effective strategy for raising attainment. Staff demonstrate clearly the positive impact of intervention strategies, including those funded through PEF. They are very successful in raising attainment for targeted groups of children in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. There is an improving trend in attainment for both literacy and numeracy across the school.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

■ Staff celebrate the achievements of all children in a range of ways. This is demonstrated through assemblies, displays, online platforms, newsletters and social media. Staff record and monitor all children's achievements.

■ Across the school, children benefit from the positive culture of ambition and 'can do' approach that is promoted and nurtured by senior leaders and all staff. Children's participation in citizenship groups and committees enables them to demonstrate their leadership skills very effectively. This empowers children to contribute to the life of their school and wider community. Older children relish the wide range of responsibilities and duties they have. They display empathy, tolerance and understanding for younger children in their roles as buddies. They benefit from training as young leaders to carry out their roles successfully.

■ Staff track each child's achievements within and beyond school through twice-yearly surveys. This allows teachers to identify children who may be missing out on enriching opportunities. They take action to address any gaps, working with the Active Schools Co-ordinator, to provide equity of access for all. As a result, all children benefit from participating in a range of worthwhile lunchtime and after-school clubs and activities that are free of charge.

Equity for all learners

■ There is strong evidence of the impact of the school's work in promoting the wellbeing of children and families and in securing the best outcomes for all. Senior leaders and all staff provide highly effective support for families, with equity at the centre of their daily work. They have worked tirelessly to create and sustain a climate of mutual trust, respect and genuine partnership with parents. They frequently go the 'extra mile' to provide practical advice and support for families, to ensure that no child misses out. They continuously refresh and refine policies and practice to ensure that school life is accessible for all.

■ Senior leaders and the staff team demonstrate clearly the difference they are making and how they achieve this. This is based on robust and honest self-evaluation, a clear focus on inclusion and equity, and having high expectations for every learner. Senior leaders and staff monitor the impact of their use of PEF meticulously. The expertise and targeted interventions of staff, such as the Forest Club, are measured carefully and are clearly leading to success. Staff are successfully closing the poverty-related attainment gap. This is based on the clear vision and direction of senior leaders, and the collective efforts of the staff team and valued partners.

Practice worth sharing more widely

Reducing the attainment gap

Staff use data and high-quality, targeted support to close the attainment gap that is caused by socio-economic factors, such as the cost-of-living crisis. Staff have developed bespoke programmes, such as the Forest Club and music tuition, to meet the social, emotional and learning needs of individual children. The expertise and targeted interventions of staff are evaluated meticulously using 'scales' that measure children's levels of engagement and small, incremental steps in learning.

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.