

Summarised inspection findings

Sidlaw View Primary School

Dundee City Council

4 June 2019

Key contextual information

Sidlaw View Primary School is a non-denominational primary school. It is situated in Dundee City, and serves the area north of the Kingsway, including the housing areas of Kirkton, Trottick and St. Mary's. Its associated secondary school is Baldragon Academy. In February 2019 the school role was 187, divided between nine classes.

The school community moved into a new building, on a shared campus with Jessie Porter Nursery, in October 2016.

1.3 Leadership of change

weak

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- There is a need for the school and the local authority to take prompt action to improve leadership across the school.
- The school has revised recently its vision and aims. The vision 'A School Community: happy and healthy, achieving together' is displayed prominently throughout the school. This is helping children to begin to be able to articulate and understand it. The aims, which are based on the wellbeing indicators, are also displayed widely. A few children are beginning to be able to talk about the wellbeing indicators although they are not able to consider how the indicators may relate fully to them. A next step for the school should be to identify important values. These would help all children, staff, parents and partners to know what is important to them and to promote this consistently across the school. Although senior leaders did seek the views of the school community in devising the vision and aims there is considerable scope for them to work with all stakeholders more closely to devise the school values. They should pay particular attention to the unique context of Sidlaw View Primary School. There is also scope for staff to listen to and act on children's views more regularly. Children would benefit from sharing their views more regularly through the pupil council, particularly concerning important aspects of school improvement.
- The headteacher endeavours to adopt a consultative style of leadership in planning for improvement, seeking the views of staff regularly. All staff participate in the planning process, contributing to reviewing and setting the school's improvement priorities. The school improvement plan needs to be streamlined to have a clear focus on priorities. Currently, a number of plans, reviews and frameworks are in place to support school improvement. However, these are not always aligned carefully. The school should provide increased clarity as to how its priorities for improvement will be taken forward in a planned and progressive way.
- Senior leaders use a few self-evaluation activities to inform school improvement. For example, they work with individual teachers regularly to review and analyse information on children's progress, putting in place interventions as appropriate. They also engage in regular dialogue about learning and teaching. However, there is considerable scope for them to use a range of

self-evaluation activities more effectively to inform the work of the school. There is a need to ensure approaches to self-evaluation inform ongoing planning in order to raise attainment and achievement. An important part of evaluating the work of the school should be an increased focus on observation learning and teaching to provide clear feedback to staff to improve the quality of learning and teaching.

- The headteacher is caring and committed to improving experiences for all children. Working with the principal teacher and all staff she now needs to adopt a stronger, more strategic style of leadership. This will help her to ensure that high standards and aspirations are expected and maintained consistently, across all areas of the school's work. The headteacher should also make sure that the school's priorities for improvement are based on clear evidence which is gathered during self-evaluation activities. Currently, too much leadership time is devoted to the management of behaviour
- All staff engage regularly in professional learning. This includes them leading and participating in working groups, undertaking work related to aspects of curriculum development, and attending professional learning events. These activities are helping them to improve their understanding of a range of children's needs, and meet children's needs more effectively. A few teachers have shared successfully their work with other staff in relation to children's play, and have been motivated further by colleagues' interest in their practice.
- Children experience very few leadership opportunities in the school. Children at P7 value the opportunities they get to act as buddies for children at the beginning of P1, and children from P4–P7 speak enthusiastically about the opportunities they get to lead school events, such as school fayres and fundraising initiatives. A few children also represent the school in music activities in the local authority, such as performing with the brass band. This is developing their skills in performance, as well as in working as part of a team. A few senior pupils also lead a dance club for junior pupils. The pupil council is in the early stages of its development. This should be developed further to enable children to have an increased role in influencing the school's work.
- Senior leaders have used Pupil Equity Funds appropriately to target interventions in relation to improving attendance and late coming, and improving the pace of learning across P1 and P2. These interventions are beginning to have a positive effect on young people's learning and attainment.

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

- School leaders recognise that there remains considerable work to do to ensure the learning needs of all children at Sidlaw view are met well. The overall quality of learning, teaching and assessment is weak. The leadership team and the local authority need to take immediate action to improve the quality of children's experiences at several stages of the school.
- Staff across the school know the children and their families very well. They understand the challenges faced by children and their families, including health and socio-economic issues. Teachers and support staff are committed to trying to do their best for the children and have identified 'wellbeing' as the key driver in order to support children to achieve.
- Children's levels of engagement in their learning is variable across the school. In a few lessons, children are motivated and participate fully. In these lessons, learners experiences are matched to their needs and interests well. For example, children at P1 enjoy play based learning. They benefit from a range of activities that support them to develop skills across literacy and numeracy. They also experience well-planned, differentiated teaching to enhance and extend their learning. Children at P4 also benefit from a purposeful learning environment which is organised and managed well. In the strongest lessons observed, the majority of children understand the purpose of their learning. Most can talk about the tasks they are asked to complete. A few can talk about how they can improve their work. The staff team should continue their work to ensure consistent approaches to learning and teaching across the school.
- Children enjoy using digital tools in their learning. In the best examples, children use digital skills to access the internet for research purposes. For example, children use a programme to find an aerial view of their home and street. They are being supported to learn to use reliable sources. The school uses a range of programmes to support learning in literacy and numeracy. School leaders and staff should evaluate the quality and appropriateness of these resources.
- Too many children spend too much time each day in low-level activities that do not support their learning across the curriculum. The school is committed to a 'soft start' approach, which staff believe enables children to settle in school. They say it also creates a calm environment and supports a clearer start to lessons. We have asked school leaders to monitor the use of this 30 minute slot each day, to evaluate the quality of the children's experience and reflect on the quality of learning offered. We have asked staff to reflect on their use of the learning week to ensure that children benefit from quality experiences throughout this time. As the school continues to reflect on the quality of children's learning experiences, staff should work together to consider how improved approaches to differentiation in learning and teaching might better meet children's needs and interests.

- Over the last year the school has established a nurture room. A few children benefit from developing their social and emotional skills within this room and are making appropriate progress in their learning. The school recognises the need to build on the positive start made by nurture staff to develop approaches to becoming a nurturing school. This would provide more effective support to children across all stages. Action needs to be taken to support a few children who cannot sustain learning within the classroom setting to ensure their needs are better met.
- Children who participate in various music activities are highly motivated in their learning and eager to perform their skills in school and at Dundee-wide events.
- The quality of teaching across the school is too variable. The school does not yet have shared values to underpin its work. Staff need to work together to develop a shared understanding of standards and expectations. Children rarely spend time together in assemblies or gatherings. Around the spacious new building, too many learning spaces lack purpose and are cluttered and untidy. Children need to be supported to develop a pride in their school. In the best lessons, explanations and instructions are clear. The majority of staff use questioning effectively to check learning and promote thinking. When used appropriately, most children are eager to feature on 'recognition boards' and respond well to praise. Staff acknowledge the need to develop more consistent approaches to providing feedback to children which supports them to improve their work. In a few lessons, children have a degree of choice in how their learning develops. This is at an early stage of development. The presentation of children's work is too variable across the school.
- As the school continues to improve learning and teaching across the school there is scope to offer children well-planned opportunities to develop an understanding of children's rights, become more independent in their learning, and develop skills for learning, life and work.
- Teachers make use of a range of assessments tools, including standardised assessments to measure children's progress and identify next steps. This is evident increasingly in the whole-school approaches to literacy and numeracy. Staff are gaining confidence in using national benchmarks in these areas. Staff should build on this work to improve assessment across the curriculum and ensure that assessment is integral to the planning of learning and teaching. In doing so, children would benefit from increased opportunities to demonstrate and apply their learning in new and unfamiliar real-life settings. Further work is needed with colleagues across the campus to moderate standards and expectations.
- Across the school, staff have developed a range of approaches to planning. This includes using progression pathways, annual overviews, medium-term plans and ongoing weekly and daily plans. We have discussed with staff the need to reflect on the scale of this paperwork, considering whether there is unnecessary bureaucracy and workload involved. Senior leaders and teachers track children's progress across literacy and numeracy. They are aware of the needs of children facing additional challenges, including young carers and care-experienced children. Teachers should now build on this planning to ensure there is clear evidence of planned assessment and progress in learning for children.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- A curriculum rationale based on the school's vision and aims is in place. Staff should ensure that the uniqueness of the school's context is reflected within this to help make the curriculum more motivating for children.
- The senior leadership team, in consultation with staff, needs to review and agree a clear framework for the curriculum in order to provide children with coherent and progressive learning experiences. This will also support staff at all levels to plan a curriculum which meets children's entitlements to a broad general education.
- The school has developed progression pathways for literacy and numeracy which ensure breadth and progression in children's learning. In other curricular areas, the school uses overviews and local authority curricular guidance. The school recognises that the programme for modern languages should be developed further in line with national guidance.
- Children at P1 are benefiting from the carefully-considered development of play. This is motivating them and supporting them to learn across the curriculum in new and creative ways. The use of play across first and second levels needs prompt attention to ensure it is of a consistently high quality, and provides sufficient challenge and progression for all children.
- In most classes, children use tablets for a range of purposes, for example to take photographs and play games. This is helping them to develop their digital skills. Children also visit the ICT base to extend their skills. School staff have identified the need to involve children further in using technology as part of their learning. A positive start has been made to educate the children about internet and social media safety.
- A few children across early and first level can talk about jobs they might like to do in the future and they explore these in play experiences. A Careers Week is used to introduce the children to a range of jobs and professions. There is scope to develop children's understanding about the world of work more fully through developing the use of the Careers Education Standards.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- The school has an enthusiastic Parent Council, which meets regularly to discuss aspects of the school's work. It appreciates being able to influence change in the school, such as being part of discussions to change lunch provision in the school. Parent Council representatives are involved in fund-raising and acquiring resources for the school. Additionally, they plan to re-introduce a community café into the school to continue to build positive relationships between the school and members of its community. Parent Council representatives make a point of being available to speak to parents at key school events. They are keen to engage with the wider school community and are actively seeking ways to raise its profile and improve communication.
- Senior leaders also continue to seek ways to communicate more effectively with parents. There is scope for them to increase the pace of this work, to reach out to parents more creatively.
- Recently, the school worked with one of its partners to provide targeted support to groups of parents. 'Parent empowerment sessions' were organised to help parents engage with their child and their child's learning. Parents evaluated these very positively, particularly the sessions which helped them to engage with their child and their child's learning.

2.1 Safeguarding

- 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 that need to be addressed as a matter for urgency.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

weak

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- The headteacher and staff are committed to creating a nurturing and supportive school environment. They know children, their families and the community well. Children benefit from positive relationships with teaching and support staff. Children can identify how the school helps them to be healthy and talk about the regular opportunities they have to be active. They engage in regular quality physical education (PE) and there is high participation in the Active Schools programme. Most children say they have someone to speak to should they have any worries or concerns. A few children say that bullying occurs in the school and it is not always dealt with. Staff are aware of the need to work with children and families to ensure that all bullying incidents are dealt with and that all actions planned or taken are communicated well. The headteacher and parents are in consultation to review the school's anti-bullying approach and policy. Senior leaders should ensure that this reflects current local authority and national guidance.
- The school has a range of interventions in place to support the wellbeing needs of children who face challenges. The work of the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) family support worker is beginning to have a positive impact on children and their wellbeing. Children are also benefitting from the provision of a recently developed Nurture room. As a result, they are developing skills in social interaction and communication. The impact of interventions should now be monitored, evaluated and reviewed more rigorously.
- Commendably, the school has developed approaches to support the wellbeing of staff and the wider school community. All school staff participated in a coaching programme offered by an external provider. This provided staff with emotional and practical support which they valued. Coaching provision sessions are also available to interested parents, with the aim of developing their confidence and self-esteem.
- The school is developing a shared understanding of the wellbeing indicators with children and families. Children have recently had the opportunity to reflect on their own wellbeing across the indicators. School staff now need to help children understand the purpose of this activity and what they can do to improve their wellbeing.
- The school does not yet have agreed strategies to promote positive behaviour consistently. This is evident in the ways that a few children disengage often from their learning and display inappropriate behaviour in classes and in the playground. Well-considered strategies would support all teachers to manage challenging behaviour more effectively and help all children to better engage in their learning. Senior leaders, staff, parents and children should work together to develop a clear policy which reflects the school's vision for wellbeing, including children's rights.

- The headteacher should review processes and record keeping to ensure that the school complies with all relevant legislation and statutory duties to support children's wellbeing, equality and inclusion.
- A significant number of children in the school face barriers to learning and require additional support with their learning. These children need to have their progress monitored, tracked and recorded more effectively to ensure that they make appropriate progress in their learning. Currently, the school has limited evidence to demonstrate how well children's needs are being met. Senior leaders need to ensure that all plans written by the school are robust, have clear targets and comply with best practice. In addition, it is essential that key stakeholders, including parents and children as appropriate, meet regularly to review and refresh these children's individual targets.
- Across the school, staff are committed to including every child in the life of the school. The school can demonstrate that there are particular groups of children, such as those who are young carers, who benefit from inclusive approaches which have been developed. The school is working to support children in improving their attendance and late-coming. Too many children have experienced exclusion from school. We have discussed with school leaders the need to ensure that the needs of all children are met more effectively. This will enable children to receive their full entitlement to education.
- Teachers celebrate multi-faith events and festivals throughout the school year during religious observance. Children in the upper school have completed an anti-racism related design challenge. This has helped them to understand the importance of respecting all people. As the school continues to implement its equalities policy there is scope to ensure that staff keep abreast of current legislation and guidance. The school recognises the need to develop children's understanding of diversity and equality issues further within the curriculum, as part of planned and progressive learning.

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

- The overall attainment in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory, with the majority of children achieving appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels. There is still considerable headroom for improvement in children's attainment across the school. The inspection team is not yet confident that the data provided by the school accurately illustrates children's attainment. As yet, teachers have limited engagement in moderation activities to help them assess children's progress accurately and consistently in relation to the national assessment benchmarks. Additionally, children's progress across classes is considerably variable.
- Senior leaders hold tracking meetings three times a year with class teachers. During these meetings they discuss children's progress in relation to their achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels. These meetings focus primarily on literacy and numeracy information at present, although the school plans to widen the discussions to other curricular areas in the near future. The meetings help senior leaders and teachers to maintain an overview of children's progress and to provide interventions as appropriate.

Attainment in literacy and English

- The school provided attainment data for children across the school. The inspection team agree with the school's judgements that by the end of P1, the majority of children achieve early level in reading and writing. By the end of P4, the majority of children achieve first level in writing. By the end of P7, the majority of children achieve second level in writing and listening and talking. However, the inspection team believe the judgements made on early level listening and talking by the end of P1 to be inaccurate. They also believe judgements made on first level reading, writing and talking by the end of P4 and second level reading by the end of P7 to be inaccurate. Staff would benefit from continued opportunities to engage in moderation activities with colleagues across the campus.
- Overall, children's attainment in literacy and English is satisfactory.

Listening and talking

- Attainment in listening and talking is satisfactory. Overall, the majority of children are making appropriate progress. In primary one, most children take turns in talking and listening in a range of contexts, including during play experiences. Most are inquisitive and eager to ask questions. The majority of children at first level can contribute to a group or class discussion with support. They can discuss class texts and offer their opinion. By the end of second level, the majority of children can answer a range of literal and inferential questions. They can identify and explain the difference between fact and opinion. There should be a clear focus on teaching and assessing talking and listening skills to improve children's confidence and abilities in these areas.

Reading

- Overall, the attainment in reading is satisfactory and the majority of children are making appropriate progress. At early level, the majority of children can hear and say blends made by a combination of letters. With a familiar text, around half of the children can read aloud and apply their knowledge of sight words. Most can identify the cover, title and author of a book. The majority of children at first level use knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns to read unfamiliar words. At first level, the majority of children can read a familiar piece of text aloud with growing fluency and can demonstrate their understanding. Most children can discuss the characters and setting in a story. The majority of children at second level can talk in increasing detail about characters, make predictions and read with growing fluency. At second level, children should be given opportunities to read aloud to develop their use of expression. Across first and second level staff should work together to focus on increasing reading for enjoyment. To promote reading the learning environment should be enriched. This should include children having access to high-quality texts. Children should be encouraged and supported to read a wider range of authors and genres.

Writing

- Overall, attainment in writing is weak. There are a significant number of children across the school who could achieve more. The school has identified writing as an area for improvement. Most children at early level are growing more confident with pencil control and can form letters. They enjoy exploring drawings, letters and writing in a range of imaginative play activities. In the best examples at first and second level, children can produce extended pieces of writing that demonstrate their skills in using punctuation, structure and vocabulary. However, the quality and presentation of children's work across the school is too variable. Children at all stages should be given regular opportunities to create a wide range of texts and write for meaningful purposes across the curriculum. The school should develop the quality of feedback in jotters and orally to ensure that this supports children to make better progress in their writing.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- The school provided attainment data for children across the school. The inspection team agree with the school's judgements that by the end of P1, the majority of children achieve early level in numeracy. By the end of P7, the majority of children achieve second level in numeracy. However, the inspection team believe the judgements made on first level numeracy by the end of P4 to be inaccurate. Staff would benefit from continued opportunities to engage in moderation activities with colleagues across the campus.
- Overall, the majority of children are making satisfactory progress in numeracy and mathematics as they move through the school.

Number, money and measurement

- The majority of children working at early level can count forward and backwards from zero to 20. They can also identify the number before and the number after. The majority of children are also able to add to ten. They are less confident in subtracting. The majority of children can name the days of the week. A few children working at first level are able to accurately calculate change from a given sum of money easily. A few need further practice in this area to ensure that they can do it quickly. Children at this level would also benefit from further work in identifying the sizes of fractions. The majority of children working at second level are developing skills in performing mental calculations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division appropriate to their age and stage. They also demonstrate a developing knowledge of fractions, percentages and decimals, and are confident in identifying units of measurement. Children would benefit from additional work on calculating duration to help them understand the link between speed, distance and time.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level the majority of children can recognise 2D shapes and sort these according to their own or given criteria. The children are beginning to develop their knowledge of 3D objects. At first level, the majority of children can recognise a range of simple 2D shapes and 3D objects and identify them in the classroom environment. Most children are developing their knowledge of compass points. They are less confident when discussing angles. At second level, children require practice in describing and classifying a range of angles.

Information handling

- At early level, the majority of children are able to collect and organise objects confidently. They use their knowledge of colour, shape and size to match and sort objects. At first level, most children can display and interpret data using a variety of graphs. At second level, the majority of children can also interpret data, and apply their knowledge and understanding to create databases. Children at second level need to be given more opportunities to apply their knowledge of information-handling skills in real-life situations. This will help them to learn in ways which motivate them more effectively.

Attainment over time

- Attainment data was provided by the school for literacy and numeracy for the past three years. This illustrates variable trends. The school is gathering a range of information about children's progress, and teachers are developing their understanding of how to use this well to inform their teaching and provide appropriate support for children. Senior leaders and teachers should now use all of the information which they gather on children's progress in a more focussed and rigorous way. This will help to ensure that they optimise opportunities for children to achieve.
- Children are not yet making sufficient progress across the broad curriculum.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Staff and partners provide a few opportunities for children to achieve. These include children leading and participating in whole-school events, such as school fayres and concerts, and children engaging in a range of sports and music activities. The majority of children are developing skills across the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence.
- A next step for the school will be for senior leaders and staff to raise the profile of children's achievement and celebrate their success more regularly and in a structured way. This will help all staff and children to have a better understanding of children's success across the school. In a few classes, teachers are celebrating children's achievements well.

Equity for all learners

- The school is beginning to use tracking and monitoring data more effectively to identify and plan interventions for children. As well as providing support for individual children, senior leaders are providing additional support for a few targeted groups of children, such as those who are care experienced and young carers. This is beginning to lead to improved experiences for a few children, which takes better account of their needs.
- With financial support from the PEF and the Scottish Attainment Challenge, the school has employed staff to improve children's attendance and late coming, and to improve the pace of learning across P1 and P2. These initiatives are beginning to lead to improvements, such as improved attendance patterns for a few children. Support has also been provided to enable children to experience different learning opportunities, such as opportunities to take part in learning provided by external excursions. Children speak positively and confidently about these opportunities and value the various ways in which they enhance their learning. Senior leaders

should continue to monitor the impact of all interventions to raise the attainment and achievement of all children.

Choice of QI: 2.5 Family learning

This indicator focuses on increasing the positive impact of working with families to improve learning and achievement. The emphasis is on schools working in partnership with others in the community to support families to secure better outcomes through programmes which enable them to improve literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. The themes are:

- engaging families in learning
 - early intervention and prevention
 - quality of family learning programmes
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- The school plays a central role in striving to support children and their families in the community. This includes developing partnerships with external agencies, for example regular engagement with social work, speech and language therapy and educational psychology services. Staff make good use of data and local intelligence to inform their understanding of the community and individual family needs.
 - Families have regular opportunities to discuss their children's learning with staff. Parents also have opportunities to discuss their own learning needs.
 - The school articulates well the challenges it faces in engaging with the wider parent and carer community. Staff are eager to engage with more families in the wide range of family-learning opportunities they have developed. These include a coaching programme to support raising parental confidence and self-esteem and targeted home-learning opportunities to support increased attainment in literacy. There are signs of positive impact from the use of literacy home packs, with a few children showing improved skills. A few parents have also been motivated to attend college and engage in volunteering. A few parents note that their relationships with their children are improving. The school is very well supported in this work by the school-based family support worker.
 - The school community, located in the north west of Dundee City, faces significant socio-economic challenge. The school is taking steps through its 'cost of the school day' action plan to minimise the impact of these challenges on children's lives at school. This continues to be an aspect of the school's work that needs careful monitoring. For example, there should be an agreed approach to ensuring that all children have an appropriate kit for PE.
 - The school is committed to and understands the scope for family learning in the community. Its continued challenge is to increase the number of parents, carers and families involved and to ensure that those with the greatest need are supported effectively.

Practice worth sharing more widely

- Effective practice can be observed at P1 in relation to play-based 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.