

Summarised inspection findings

Quarter Primary School

South Lanarkshire Council

30 May 2023

Key contextual information

Quarter Primary School and Nursery Class is a non-denominational school situated in the village of Quarter, an accessible rural area in Hamilton, South Lanarkshire. Sixty-eight children currently attend the school across one composite and two multi-composite classes. The number of children at each stage varies and is relatively small. Seventeen children aged three to those not yet attending primary school attend the nursery class. All children attending the nursery access 1140 hours. Almost all children who attend live in the village and surrounding farms.

The headteacher has been in post since September 2019. Prior to her appointment there were five acting headteachers over a short period of time. The school received £9,720 Pupil Equity Funding this session. The headteacher uses this to fund a 0.2 full time equivalent principal teacher. There have been a number of staffing challenges in recent years. At the time of the inspection, there were several temporary members of staff across the nursery class and school.

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

- The headteacher has worked effectively with staff to ensure children experience a very positive, caring and nurturing ethos at Quarter Primary School. She is committed to ensuring all children are respected, valued and included in the life of the school. Children and staff are very proud of their school. The recently refreshed values of safe, kind, hardworking, fun and inclusive, known as the 'Quarter Code' are evident in behaviour and interactions across the school. All children experience positive relationships with staff and their peers. They are happy, settled and enjoy their time in school.
- Children are polite and respectful to each other, adults and visitors to the school. In most lessons, children interact well with each other. They benefit from regular opportunities to work in pairs and groups. Children are developing their skills in communication, collaboration and leadership well. Almost all children engage enthusiastically in their learning. In a majority of lessons, teachers plan a range of interesting tasks and activities that are well matched to learners needs. This supports children well to develop as confident and independent learners. Teachers should build on this to ensure all children experience appropriate levels of challenge within their learning. The headteacher should work with staff to plan further opportunities to share effective practice across the school. Teachers at early level should work with practitioners in the nursery class to develop children's experiences across the early level.
- In most lessons teachers share the purpose of learning with children. In a few lessons, teachers share with children how to be successful in their learning. Teachers should develop this further to allow children to co-create success criteria. They are at the early stages of supporting children to set learning targets in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. This should help children to develop further their understanding of their strengths and next steps.

- The headteacher has taken positive steps to involve children in evaluating the quality of their learning experiences. She gathers their views during lesson observations, informal discussions and assemblies. Children value this opportunity to contribute to the schools' improvement journey. Most children are confident in making suggestions to staff.
- Overall, the quality of teaching is good, with a few examples of highly effective practice. Staff have created a learning environment which is bright, well organised and stimulating. They make good use of learning spaces within and out with the classroom. Open areas are used well to provide break-out spaces for children to work independently or in small groups. Children within the younger class are beginning to have opportunities to be outdoors throughout the day. All teachers make very effective use of technology to enhance children's learning experiences. Children use laptop computers and tablets to access educational games, use collaborative online tools and carry out research. Older children create presentations to share their learning using text, images and animations. Across the school, children use technology to record examples of their work to share with their teacher and peers. Most teachers use questioning well to help children recall prior learning and knowledge. A majority of teachers use questioning very well to support children's critical thinking skills. Across the school, teachers provide children with helpful, oral feedback about their learning. A few teachers use written feedback well. They give children clear information about what they are doing well and what they need to do to continue to make progress.
- The headteacher provides all teachers with helpful feedback after lesson observations. She highlights clearly what is working well and the steps needed to improve further the quality of children's experiences. The headteacher should continue to work with all staff to agree the features of highly effective learning and teaching at Quarter Primary School. Staff should work together to share practice and improve further the quality and consistency of learning experiences across the school.
- Teachers are at the early stages of implementing play pedagogy in the younger class. They are beginning to engage with national and local guidance and research relating to play pedagogy. While this is impacting positively on children's social and emotional development, it is not yet leading to improved learning outcomes for all children. Teachers should continue to develop a deeper understanding of child-led learning. This should help to ensure they plan motivating and meaningful learning experiences that provide appropriate levels of challenge for all learners.
- The headteacher has developed a clear assessment calendar. Teachers use this to plan a range of summative and standardised assessments in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. They record assessment information and use this to support discussions on children's progress and attainment. Teachers have engaged in moderation activities within the school with a focus on writing. This is supporting teachers' greater understanding of progress within a level and is leading to increasingly robust teacher judgements on progress and attainment. The headteacher has recently introduced attainment and progress folders for all children. In taking this forward, staff should use a broader range of assessment information to demonstrate children's progress more clearly.
- The headteacher has established robust tracking and monitoring arrangements. She meets staff termly to track and monitor children's progress. Teachers use their assessment and tracking information well to identify children who require additional support and plan appropriate interventions. Pupil support staff work very well with teachers to plan and deliver targeted support. Teachers are confident this approach is impacting positively on children's progress and achievement.

- Teachers make effective use of a whole school rolling programme to support planning for the multi-composite classes. They use agreed progression pathways to plan learning in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Teachers create interdisciplinary learning plans, bringing together experiences and outcomes from a range of curricular areas. They should ensure they plan consistently for progressive learning experiences across all curricular areas, particularly expressive arts. This should ensure children experience breath, depth and challenge in all of their 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. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

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, children's attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is good. At early level, most children are predicted to achieve expected Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels in reading, listening and talking, writing and numeracy and mathematics. At first level, most children are predicted to achieve expected CfE levels in listening and talking, writing and numeracy and mathematics. The majority of children are predicted to achieve expected levels in reading. At second level, most children are predicted to achieve expected CfE levels in listening and talking, reading, writing and numeracy and mathematics. Most children with additional support needs are making good progress from prior levels of attainment. A few children are capable of achieving more in their learning. They would benefit from further challenge in their learning to enable them to make better progress.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall attainment in literacy and English is good. There is scope for children at early level to make better progress in literacy and English.

Listening and talking

- At early level, most children listen and respond well to others appropriately and follow instructions well. Most children share their ideas enthusiastically and with confidence within small group and whole class discussions. At first level, most children communicate effectively, take turns, and contribute appropriately when engaging with others. At second level, most children build on the contributions of others very well. Across the school, children speak confidently at whole school assemblies.

Reading

- Across the school, children access a range of quality texts through the school library, digital devices and class reading areas.
- At early level, most children use taught sounds to blend and decode simple words. They use pictorial clues to retell familiar stories and predict what might happen next. At first level, a majority of children read fluently and with expression. They have a good awareness of genre and talk about their favourite authors. They are not as confident when discussing the features of different texts. At second level, most children ask and answer increasingly complex questions about a range of texts, including inferential and evaluative questions. They identify relevant evidence to justify their responses.

Writing

- At early level, most children use common words and known sounds to write simple words independently. A majority use a capital letter and full stop to punctuate a sentence with

increasing accuracy. They are not yet confident when writing more than one sentence without support. At first level, most children write well-structured sentences using correct punctuation. They are beginning to enhance their writing using interesting vocabulary to engage the reader. At second level, children confidently organise and present information in a logical format. They write well across a wide range of contexts using the correct features of each genre. Across the school, children would benefit from an increasing range of real-life contexts for them to apply their writing skills.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, attainment in numeracy and mathematics is good. Most children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. There is scope for children at early level to make better progress in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, most children identify and write numbers to 20. They know the number before, after and between. A few children at early level are exploring larger numbers. At first level, most children have a secure understanding of place value. They solve addition and subtraction problems using a range of strategies. They are confident in calculating fractions of a whole number. At early and first level, children are not yet confident in applying their addition and subtraction strategies to problems involving money. At second level, most children confidently round numbers to the nearest 100,000. They are secure in their understanding of place value to two decimal places. Most children at second level, are skilled in money calculations and understand the advantages and disadvantages of credit and debit cards. They are not yet confident in using their knowledge of fractions, decimals, and percentages to solve problems.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, most children confidently name familiar two-dimensional shapes. They recognise and sort regular and irregular shapes. At first level, most children identify a range of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. They are not yet confident in describing the properties of shapes and objects. At second level, most children are confident in discussing the properties of a range of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. They describe acute, right, obtuse, and reflex angles accurately. They are less confident in calculating complementary and supplementary angles.

Information handling

- At early level, most children confidently match and sort unfamiliar objects. They use tally marks and create simple bar graphs with support. At first level, children explain how they would organise and carry out a simple survey. At second level, children discuss how they can display data in a range of ways, including pie charts. Overall, children across the school need greater opportunities to develop skills in manipulating data to solve problems.

Attainment over time

- Overall, most children are making good progress in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics relative to their age and stage and from prior levels of attainment. Attainment data over the past five years is above or in line with local authority and national comparisons in reading, writing, listening and talking and numeracy and mathematics.
- The headteacher and staff rigorously track children's progress in learning and have a very clear overview of attainment over time for individuals and groups of children. Teachers have increased their use of National Benchmarks and, as a result, have a greater understanding of national expectations. The headteacher supports teachers well in using data to plan interventions and identify resources to support individual children's needs. This has led to

improved outcomes for children who require support with their learning. The headteacher should build on this positive approach to ensure this leads to improved outcomes for all children.

Overall quality of learner's achievements

- Children enjoy when staff recognise and celebrate their achievements regularly in class, at assemblies and through social media. Staff track the involvement of children supported by Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) well. They are proactive in supporting children at risk of missing out.
- Children are keen to contribute to the life of the school and the wider community. Children in primary 7 take part in a range of leadership and school committee roles. They talk confidently about the skills they develop and apply as a result of these roles. For example, they have the opportunity to be House Captains and Vice Captains, Junior Road Safety Officers and Playground Pals. They are developing skills for learning, life and work well through these experiences. Teachers should now extend leadership opportunities to all children across the school. This should ensure that all children have greater opportunities to develop their skills for learning life and work.

Equity for all learners

- The headteacher and staff plan a range of interventions which support children with additional needs or those who need support to stay on track with their learning. Support assistants provide effective targeted support for learners in literacy and numeracy as well as well-timed emotional support for identified children. They are responsive in their approach to ensure that they meet children's needs very well. As a result, almost all children receive good support to remain in class and access their learning with increasing independence. The headteacher measures the impact of interventions carefully to ensure that all children make good progress. She has a clear raising attainment plan which is impacting positively on children's progress and raising attainment across the school.
- The headteacher and staff know families well and have a very good understanding of the needs of the community. They make very effective use of data to identify poverty related attainment gaps. They use PEF well to support children with potential barriers to their learning and progress. Attainment gaps are beginning to narrow significantly as a result of these well-planned interventions.
- The use of participatory budgeting processes is ensuring that children, parents and staff have a clear role in agreeing school improvement priorities linked to closing the poverty related attainment gap.

Other relevant evidence

- The school submitted information relating to compliance with the revised Nutritional Regulations 2020 and key duties as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007. The Health and Nutrition Inspector (HNI) discussed this information with relevant staff and children. In addition, the HNI examined documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole-school approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of children through food in school. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.

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.