

Summarised inspection findings

Preston Street Primary School

The City of Edinburgh Council

31 March 2020

Key contextual information

Preston Street Primary School is a non-denominational primary school located in the south east of Edinburgh. At the time of the inspection the roll was 301 children.

1.3 Leadership of change

good

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

- The school's vision displayed clearly throughout the school encourages high expectations for all children. The aims reflect well the school's commitment for mutual respect throughout the school community. The school agreed the seven year aspirational vision, values and aims in partnership with stakeholders in 2017 and updated it in 2019. They focus well on excellence, equity and inclusion. Staff regularly revisit the values and embed these into practice. As a result, over the past few years, the ethos has improved with children showing high levels of respect for themselves and each other. Collectively staff understand the context of the school. They embrace initiatives to support children's learning needs and engage very well with parents and partners.
- The headteacher creates conditions enabling staff and stakeholder participation in continuous improvement. She looks inwards and outwards, including visits overseas, to improve outcomes for children within the school. Improvement plan priorities take good account of the needs of the school with actions and success measures identified clearly. The headteacher has recently put in place a senior leader model providing effective opportunities to build on the school's existing strengths. These systems aim to raise attainment, improve achievement and parental engagement further. In a relatively short period of time, the new team embraced their leadership opportunities and set out clear plans for improvement. There are already improvements in pedagogy at the early stages, provision for children with English as an additional language and standards in reading are higher. More children are enthused by their learning and a few describe changes as inspirational for them as learners. Other improvements include well-judged targeted support for children with barriers to learning, including family learning and actions arising from data analysis. The new team is very well-placed to continue to reflect on practice, motivate staff and sustain the improvements.
- Over the past few years, children's wellbeing has been central to the school's work. In addition, staff place a much needed focus on raising attainment in literacy and numeracy. Quality assurance processes in place across the school support staff reflections well. This session, in planning for improvement, staff have taken greater account of self-evaluation. As a result, attainment in literacy and numeracy continues to rise from a very low starting point. The deputy headteacher's detailed use of quantitative data for planning small group interventions is effective on improving children's progress within these measures.

- Staff across the school undertake professional learning. They work well with their stage partners sharing good practice and learning from each other. All staff are encouraged to take forward areas in which they have a particular interest or expertise. A few undertake professional enquiry and work well with universities, partners and other schools to improve the quality of experience for children. Parents have leadership opportunities through the Parent Council class representative role. This improves communication with parents about a range of issues, including school improvement priorities. They made valuable contributions on decisions relating to homework, Pupil Equity Funding and the school's vision, values and aims. As a result, the headteacher has a clear understanding of parental opinion.
- Recently the headteacher and depute headteacher introduced a well-judged focus on pupil participation within decision making. Children's circles involve children working collaboratively across year groups in the school. They discuss issues relating to learning identified from 'How good is OUR School?'. Increasingly their voice is heard in these forums about effective feedback, anti-bullying and challenge in learning. The school's own Young Learning Ambassadors involving a small group of children participated in reciprocal visits with other local schools. Although at the early stages of implementation, these groups and other planned activities are well placed to improve children's involvement in decision making within the school. Staff value leadership opportunities for children and are continuing to embed this into the work and life of the school.
- The school has many strengths which impact positively on children's learning experiences. Moving forward there is a need to revisit approaches to self-evaluation and ensure robust evidence supports decision making and identified improvement priorities. Planning for improvement processes in place involve professional dialogue with teachers. There is a need to review processes and develop further the evidence base on an ongoing basis across all improvement plan priorities. Presently, approaches do not evaluate the impact and effectiveness of interventions on classroom practice. As a result, while most learning and teaching is positive, there are inconsistencies in pedagogy across the school affecting the effectiveness of assessment and pace of learning. Promoted staff need to continue to work collaboratively as a team and create sustainable improvements through effective strategic planning. A few initiatives impacting very well on children's progress are not maintained consistently across the school. In addition, there is a need to revisit the learning teaching and assessment policy and ensure that assessment approaches are understood by all staff and inform planned learning fully.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- Across the school children are happy, articulate and eager to learn. There is a supportive ethos resulting in positive relationships between staff and children. Staff use praise well to promote positive relationships. The school values are evident, in the ways that people relate to one another and on displays throughout the school. Staff should now revisit children's rights and embed them in class charters consistently across the school.
- In almost all lessons, children are motivated and engaged in tasks. At the early level, teachers provide interesting learning experiences in motivating learning environments indoors and outdoors. They provide an effective balance of direct teaching and independent learning. As the improvements to the learning environment develop, this approach should be shared across the school to ensure children have opportunities to lead their own learning.
- Most children talk appropriately about what they are learning. Children work very well together in pairs and in groups. Most work very well independently and respond very positively when given responsibility for their own learning. They are at an early stage of evaluating their own learning and setting personalised targets across the curriculum.
- Overall the quality of teaching is good. In most lessons, teachers plan interesting learning experiences. They share the purpose of learning effectively and most children know what to do to be successful. Across the school, teachers provide effective support and challenge in differentiated reading tasks. The school should develop its approaches to learning and teaching to ensure all children are challenged in their learning.
- In most lessons, teachers provide effective verbal feedback. There is a need to focus on developing further high quality, evaluative written feedback to help children understand how they are progressing and what they need to do to improve across a period of time. The school should now ensure learning targets are matched to the needs of the children and are regularly reviewed and updated.
- The school uses a variety of assessments to inform how well children are learning and progressing in literacy and numeracy. Assessment information is gathered and discussed termly by senior leaders and staff. The school now needs to improve further their use of formative and summative assessments together with holistic assessment. Teachers are at an early stage in becoming familiar with National Benchmarks. Senior leaders correctly identify the effective use of assessment and development of moderation as priorities for improvement. They should now take a strategic lead in developing assessment across the school. Senior leaders and staff should develop a whole-school approach to planning for progression in learning. This should include an assessment framework to support teachers' professional judgements and raise expectations ensuring all children achieve as well as possible.

- Teachers track children's overall progress in literacy and numeracy through Curriculum for Excellence levels. Staff use tracking approaches help to identify the needs of children from vulnerable groups and those who have English as an additional language. This needs to be developed further. There is a need for more regular professional dialogue between senior leaders and teachers to ensure all children are progressing as well as possible. The school should work towards manageable tracking of children's progress in all areas of the curriculum. Overall, there is a need for senior leaders and teachers to develop skills of data analysis that lead to improved outcomes for all children.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Staff plan learning within a structured framework detailing key aspects to be covered at each stage. Staff should review these documents and articulate clearly the uniqueness of the school and its place in the community. There is a need to ensure greater account is taken of the design principles. There is a need to ensure greater depth, choice, challenge and progression in children's learning.
- There is a range of helpful documents in place to support teachers in planning learning. Teachers refer to and make use of the experiences and outcomes to track coverage. There is a need to continue to develop progression pathways, to track progress in learning ensuring appropriate pace for all learners. In addition, a skills framework for all areas of the curriculum will ensure children benefit from progressive learning opportunities.
- Children are involved in planning aspects of interdisciplinary learning through discussions about what they know already and what they would like to find out. Children at the early stages engage in learner conversations.
- In the early years of the primary school, the pedagogical approach includes well-planned direct and indirect learning in an environment that promotes children's responsibility for learning. Planned learning experiences are stimulating and engaging for children. The outdoor learning environment provides children with opportunities to explore and investigate through a range of motivating experiences. This is at the very early stages of development and staff should continue to evaluate this approach to ensure that children are making appropriate progress in their learning.
- The school has a range of partners who enhance the curriculum, including Scottish Widows, Heriot Watt University, Dumbiedykes Outreach, Meadows Tennis, a local nursing home, the local church and the local mosque. Older children all have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. Children speak enthusiastically about opportunities to perform for a wider audience. The school has recently added a podcasting suite to its digital technology resources. A planned after-school club will support children in gaining valuable skills through this resource. Children learn Spanish in all classes, with older classes also learning Gaelic and Mandarin. Teachers plan learning activities linked to 'My World of Work'. As a result, children are developing their understanding of skills for learning, life and work. There is scope to link children's skill development with the Career Education Standards.
- The school's development of the health and wellbeing curriculum is at an early stage. A recently introduced whole school programme for relationships and sexual health and Parenthood is providing structure and progression within this aspect of the health and wellbeing curriculum. The school should now look to refresh its curriculum pathway to ensure it takes account of all organisers, allowing children to benefit from an appropriately wide range of health and wellbeing knowledge, understanding and skills. Teachers should consider how they are assessing children's health and wellbeing needs and evidencing progress to ensure that they are improving the health and wellbeing outcomes for all children. This would support children in setting individual targets for their own health and wellbeing.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Almost all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaires indicate that their child likes coming to school and that they are treated fairly and with respect. Feedback from a variety of parental engagement events indicates parents welcome these opportunities and find them beneficial. The school should develop further opportunities for parents to learn alongside their children. This could involve learning activities to support achievement in writing.
- The Parent Council is supportive of the work of the school. Their involvement in the life of the school is valued by staff and the wider parent forum.
- The school communicates effectively with parents in a range of ways. These include newsletters, social media and the school website. The school provides valued support for parents which impacts positively on outcomes for children and their families. Children's attendance has improved and increasing examples of parents supporting other parents through art and cookery sessions is evident. In addition, opportunities to celebrate and increased involvement of parents in local community projects is developing relationships across the school community as a whole.
- The school presently provides information to parents about their child's learning for example, helpful termly leaflets detailing an overview of curricular content. Senior leaders should continue to evaluate the approaches to involving parents in their children's learning. This should provide useful evidence to inform future work to increase further partnership working and a more consistent approach to parental engagement.

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

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

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

- Staff create a caring and respectful learning environment, which is built on positive relationships. As a result, most children report that they feel safe in school and that they have someone to talk to if they have a concern or worry. Children are polite, engaging and respectful. Although most children feel that the school deals well with bullying and that they are treated with respect, there is a need to ensure that this applies to all children. Most children feel that the school helps them to lead a healthy lifestyle. The majority of children feel that the school takes their views into account. There are opportunities to include children more effectively in school improvement decisions.
- Most children have an awareness of the wellbeing indicators, although their understanding of these is not well developed. Staff now need to make greater use of the wellbeing indicators to support children to understand their own progress in wellbeing. In time, as this develops, there is potential for the school to demonstrate improved outcomes for children. Class charters are in place in most classes, with a few of these linked well to children's rights. Children would benefit from developing their understanding of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and how they are relevant to their own lives.
- A variety of lunchtime and after-school clubs provide good opportunities for children to develop their health and wellbeing. These clubs are organised by Active Schools and school staff. Over the year, children are involved in a range of sports including running, basketball, tennis, cycling and volleyball both within the curriculum and beyond the school day. Through these opportunities, children are developing an awareness of the importance of physical activity. They are increasing their interest and involvement in sports and a more active lifestyle. Participation levels at clubs are high and the school recognises the contribution these experiences make to children's overall health and wellbeing. Staff monitor attendance at clubs. Children who are at risk of missing out are then identified and consulted on what type of activity they are interested in. In addition to sporting clubs, a range of lunchtime and after school activities take place to meet different interests. For example, children attend clubs such as mathematics, reading for enjoyment, art, knitting and Bilingual Buddies. Children are beginning to record their participation in achievement opportunities. Teachers should now help them gain a greater insight into the skills they are achieving through these opportunities.
- The senior leadership team is proactive in working with the family support teacher to help those children and families for whom there are attendance concerns. Interventions and individualised support for families are leading to improved attendance.
- Children who have additional responsibilities through participation as reading and mathematics ambassadors and buddies to younger children speak positively about their roles and how this builds their confidence and interpersonal skills. There is scope to develop this further and to involve more children in leading aspects of the life of the school.

- Children at P1 and P2 learn outdoors on a regular basis. They enjoy engaging in outdoor activities within the local community. Older children speak enthusiastically about their experience of learning outdoors through a range of projects, such as, hill walks, residential trips and working with local park rangers.
- Overall, the senior leadership team has a good understanding of statutory requirements in relation to wellbeing, equality and inclusion. The leadership team have a staged intervention process to identify children who require individual plans. Staff develop individualised plans for a few children who have additional support needs, with appropriate targets, which are regularly reviewed. The support for learning teacher also provides advice and guidance to class teachers to support the learning of children who are experiencing barriers to learning. Staff involve parents in planning meetings and include children's views when planning targets and next steps. There is scope to make children more aware of their targets to help them take more ownership of their learning. The school engages well with a range of partners, such as psychological services, teachers of children with English as an additional language and speech and language therapists to help address barriers to learning. Teachers and pupil support assistants work well together to deliver supports for identified children. All staff participate in relevant professional learning to support children with possible barriers to learning. For example, recent dyslexia and autism training led to improved planning for children needing additional support in their learning.
- The school has rightly identified the need to ensure children learn about equality, diversity and discrimination. The ongoing development of the health and wellbeing curriculum will provide teachers with the opportunity to explore how to develop this in a relevant and meaningful way for children. For example, the school community enjoys an Eid celebration which is organised by parents and school staff. The school should now update its equalities policy to more accurately reflect their work in this area.
- Most staff have a good knowledge of individual children, their families and the school's context in the local community. The school has a positive approach to ensuring equity. The family support teacher's knowledge of the school community and her role in the school ensures that available resources are prioritised to best meet individual children's and families' needs. She has facilitated a range of programmes which support parents and families, as well as signposting parents to other services. For example, mathematics clubs, bereavement support, anxiety management, friendship groups, social communication and an Eid parent group. This effective support for families has led to more parents engaging in school events and an increase in confidence amongst children.

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

- Overall, attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is good. The school uses the information from standardised assessments annually to help inform staff of children's progress. Most children are achieving expected levels. A few children are attaining beyond expected levels and are capable of increased depth and challenge. Senior leaders and staff now need to analyse data more systematically. More needs to be done to improve staff understanding of standards.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, the standard of literacy and English attainment across the school is good. Most children, including those who have English as an additional language, are making expected progress and a few are attaining beyond expected levels. Children who require additional support are making good progress.

Listening and talking

- Overall, most children are making very good progress in talking and listening, with a few exceeding minimum expected levels. Across the school, almost all children listen well to instructions from their teachers and most are confident and articulate. Most children share their views confidently when working in small cooperative groups. At the early level, children talk and play purposefully together sharing ideas and communicating well. They listen attentively to teacher directions and respond confidently. At first level, most children communicate clearly when working independently in small groups. They contribute their thoughts and ideas appropriately and are confident in making contributions in teacher led lessons. By second level, almost all children are articulate in sharing their opinions and build effectively on each other's ideas. They take roles in small groups and respond confidently to questions from teachers. They are becoming skilled in reaching consensus and use persuasive language very well influencing one another in decision making. A few children are making outstanding progress in talking by the end of second level.

Reading

- Overall, most children are making very good progress in reading. At the early level, most children recognise initial sounds and simple common words. They are confident in predicting simple texts from clues when reading aloud. Children working at first level are enthusiastic about reading and use their skills well in a variety of learning contexts. They read widely for pleasure and select appropriate texts of interest to them. They are becoming skilled in applying reading skills to research texts linked to topics of interest. By second level, almost all children read independently and with very good comprehension. They use their comprehension skills and meta cognitive strategies to ensure understanding of texts they have read. They select from a variety of fiction books to encourage personal reading and shared reading activities. They are developing a very good understanding of character and reader's responses. Children

take roles as 'reading ambassadors' and are skilled in fostering reading for enjoyment across the school.

Writing

- Overall, most children are making satisfactory progress in writing. At the early level, the majority of children are developing confidence writing a simple sentence independently. A few form words legibly in cursive style. They are developing good oral vocabulary as they progress towards writing independent stories. At first level, most children organise their writing appropriately when writing a letter. Overall, children are not yet applying spelling to their continuous writing accurately enough. They are developing skills in using connectives and now need to use punctuation more consistently. Teachers should moderate standards in writing regularly to support consistency in expectations and the use of feedback. At second level, a few children are making very good progress and have achieved success in a writing competition. However, across the school a minority of children are not sufficiently skilled in writing for a wide range of purposes or applying their skills in imaginative writing. Overall, the standard of children's writing across the school should be of a higher quality. Too few children write well-crafted pieces across a variety of genre and do not apply their skills in other curricular contexts sufficiently.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, attainment in numeracy and mathematics is good. Most children, are making expected progress and a few are attaining beyond expected levels. For the few children progressing to third level in aspects of numeracy, staff should ensure that children do not have any gaps in their learning across all the numeracy and mathematics organisers. Children who require additional support are making appropriate progress. The school's emphasis on strategies for learning is leading to most children being skilled in finding solutions to problems and articulating their reasoning. However, children do not yet apply their numeracy skills systematically across their learning.

Number money and measure

- At the early level, most children write, match and order numbers to 10 confidently. Most children working at first level have a good understanding of place value and how to calculate number problems using a range of strategies. They round numbers to the nearest 10. They estimate the length of everyday objects using appropriate units of measure. They identify the numerator and denominator and use pictorial representation to demonstrate their understanding of fractions. Most children at second level demonstrate the relationship between fractions, percentages and decimals, simplify and add fractions and calculate fractions of a whole number. They multiply by two digit numbers using a variety of strategies and round numbers to the nearest 10,100 and 1,000. They calculate the area and perimeter of regular and irregular shapes.

Shape position and movement

- At early level, most children can recognise and describe two-dimensional shapes. At first level, children are confident in describing a range of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects and can identify two-dimensional shapes within three-dimensional objects. They can identify right angles. Children at second level can draw and describe acute, right obtuse and reflex angles. They can plot coordinates on a four quadrant Cartesian grid.

Information handling

- At early level, children use tally marks and block graphs to record information. They interpret simple charts and answer questions about the information they contain. At first level, children describe the use of bar charts. At second level, children are developing their knowledge and

understanding of budgeting and can use a spreadsheet to record a monthly budget. Children are insufficiently skilled in interpreting and displaying data in a wide range of contexts.

Attainment over time

- From a low starting point, the school has raised attainment in most aspects of literacy and numeracy over the past three years. However, the quality of Curriculum for Excellence assessment information over time is variable. Teachers now use a range of assessments very well to inform them of what children have achieved and identify areas of improvement within those measures. This information helps identify those who require additional support and target interventions. Senior leaders should continue to focus on working collegiately with staff to strengthen further a common understanding of standards. They should continue to support staff to develop clear expectations for all children.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Most children are achieving success in a range of opportunities and are proud of their leadership roles as reading 'ambassadors'. They speak enthusiastically about the skills they learn through links with universities and from local business volunteers supporting the curriculum. They are developing skills for learning, life and work and the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence. A few children are developing inter-generational links through sharing their reading skills with local residents at St Margaret's Care Home. Others share their empathy and concerns about poverty by broadcasting discussions through a podcast. Overall, most children relish the responsibility they take across the school and recognise the effective contribution they make to the school community. Children enjoy the recognition of their success through the many approaches that celebrate their achievements. The school successfully tracks participation levels and most children attend at least one club.

Equity

- The school serves a diverse population and the headteacher and staff know children and their families well. The school's focused interventions in literacy and numeracy and use of Pupil Equity Funding are having a positive impact on outcomes in children's attainment and achievements. Analysis of data is ensuring almost all children who have English as an additional language are achieving success. The school successfully minimises any barriers to learning and actively takes steps to support needs as they arise.

School Empowerment

■ Empowerment: Empowerment for parent and pupil participation

- The school continues to develop approaches for parent and pupil participation in the life and work of the school. Parent representation from each class works well to support the participation of a wider body of parents. Recently, the school reviewed pupil participation approaches. These improved opportunities are making a positive start for children being involved in decision making. Almost all adults working in the school work alongside a group of children discussing aspects of improvement identified through 'How Good is OUR school?'. This session the focus is 'our learning'. The recent pupil empowerment approaches are at the early stages of demonstrating evidence-based decision making about the life and work of the school. The headteacher is confident that over time this will increase the school's social capital.
- In addition to pupil participation in decision making the school maximised partnership working with local business. Using the skills for work agenda, close partnership with a local business led to volunteers working alongside children to support reading maths and essential skills for work such as creating CVs and mock interviews. Children from the school participated in the children's parliament and undertook reciprocal visits with other schools.

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.