

# Summarised inspection findings

**Langbank Primary School**

Renfrewshire Council

27 August 2019

## Key contextual information

The headteacher has been in post for four years, and substantively for two years. He is currently assisted by one full time acting principal teacher. The school serves the West Renfrewshire coastal village of Langbank, with some placing requests from surrounding towns and villages both in Renfrewshire and nearby Inverclyde. The roll of the school in September 2018 was 68 and has risen to 70 across four classes; one P1 and three other composite classes.

### 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 took up the substantive post two years ago. At this time, he carried out a consultative exercise to renew the school values. In partnership with stakeholders, parents, staff and the children, they agreed the acronym REACH (respectful, effortful, achieving, compassionate and honest). Across the school, children and staff demonstrate the recently established values in the everyday life of the school. Almost all children are motivated and are engaged fully in their learning. Most children are confident and are eager to develop their curiosity as learners. They work well in pairs and engage well in creatively planned activities. Most children understand the purpose of their learning. However, as discussed with senior leaders, there is scope to capitalise on skills development so that children are more aware of the relevance of what and how they are learning.
- In most lessons, planned learning is appropriately challenging and meets the needs of most children. We discussed with senior leaders ways in which they could capitalise on the composite dynamic of lessons to increase challenge further for all children. Children would welcome further opportunities to shape their learning. In a few classes, children work together effectively to co-create framed learning outcomes.
- In almost all lessons, children have regular and well planned opportunities to experience a variety of learning styles. The majority of children demonstrate confidence and skill in discussing their learning. Throughout the school there are examples of children supporting each other very well in their learning. The quality of teacher feedback to children is variable across lessons. There would be notable benefit in staff sharing the examples of very effective practice which exist across various stages. This will help to create greater consistency of children's learning experiences. Importantly, this will help children to develop clearer targets on exactly what they need to do to improve in their learning.
- Overall, the quality of teaching is good. HM Inspectors observed some very good examples of teaching in a few contexts across the stages. The use of assessment is a developing feature across the stages, which is increasingly helping to inform overall teacher professional judgement of achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence level. In almost all lessons, the purpose of learning is shared and discussed with the children in a clear manner and sometimes in more creative ways. In the most effective examples, teachers revisited planned

learning outcomes at various points throughout the lesson, so that children could develop a clear sense of their progress through planned activities.

- In the majority of lessons, teachers check children's understanding of their learning through well-developed questioning. In the majority of lessons, skilled use of questioning helps to challenge and support children to develop higher order thinking skills. This is an area of ongoing development which has been highlighted by senior leaders. Teachers should continue as planned, to work collaboratively to develop the range and type of questions asked to ensure depth of understanding.
- Almost all teachers use digital technology very effectively to enhance and deepen children's learning. Children are confident when using tablets to conduct research, consolidate or extend their learning. Commendably, teachers make available to children a wide range of online resources, without a reliance on commercially produced applications and materials. Senior leaders and teachers should continue to develop learning through digital technologies. Planned opportunities for staff to look outwards at other effective examples locally and nationally will help to progress this area of developing learners' experiences.
- Senior leaders have correctly identified the effective deployment of formative assessment techniques as an area for development. Plans to develop this a pace, as well as streamlining overall approaches to assessment, will help inform planning for children's next steps in learning. This will also help children to understand how and when they have been successful. On taking up post, the headteacher correctly identified and acted upon the need to embed a range of standardised and diagnostic assessment tools, to support teacher judgement when work on moderation was still developing. The use and role of standardised and diagnostic assessment tools should now be regularly reviewed. This will help teachers arrive at more confident judgements of achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence level, based on a more measured balance of assessment tools, and teacher professional judgment. There is scope to develop consistency across the school, in the ways that teachers understand, plan and use assessment information as an integral aspect of planning for learning.
- The school and local cluster group of schools are working together to develop a shared understanding of national standards and expectations for planning and assessment. Senior leaders and teachers should continue as planned, to develop approaches to moderation. This should include moderation activity in all curriculum areas ensuring depth, rigour and challenge to children's learning. Teachers and support staff work well together. There is scope for individualised educational plans to be reviewed more regularly so that short term targets are more meaningful for children. This will help them gain satisfaction of achieving short term targets more frequently.
- Senior leaders and teachers communicate at regular planned intervals in order to discuss children's progress and review interventions for challenge and support. There are effective systems in place to track and monitor children's attainment in literacy and numeracy. As a next step, senior leaders and teachers should include skills development in overall tracking and monitoring of children's progress. This will help children in making relevant connections across their learning, and develop and apply targeted skills in different contexts.

## 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

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

- Data provided by the school shows that overall, children make very good progress in literacy and numeracy. HM Inspectors observed learning and sampled children's work across the stages and levels, which supports this evaluation. Staff should progress plans to continuously develop understanding and rigour of professional judgement to ensure that all children make improved progress from prior levels of attainment. Commendably, the headteacher has quickly developed a wealth of opportunities and strategies for children's progress to be assessed and tracked. Moving forwards, these strategies should be reviewed in order to allow for a greater emphasis and increased confidence of teacher professional judgement of a Curriculum for Excellence level.
- A good range of well-developed strategies are in place to raise attainment for individuals and groups of children in both literacy and numeracy. These strategies continue to be reviewed at regular intervals between senior leaders and teachers, to ensure their effectiveness. There is a need to focus closely on challenge in learning across all stages. Overall, there is headroom for teachers to develop opportunities for children to be able to demonstrate and develop their abilities in literacy and numeracy, across the curriculum and in different contexts.

### Attainment in literacy

- Attainment in literacy and English is very good. Almost all children are on track to achieve appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels by the end of the school year. Support for those children who require it is allowing them to make progress from prior levels of achievement. Importantly, senior leaders and staff are working to improve pathways for children who are exceeding expected levels earlier in the school session. This will help to maintain high levels of challenge for those children who require it. The development of an agreed framework for assessment and as discussed with senior leaders, more focused approaches to moderation, will support staff.

### Listening and talking

- Most children are making very good progress in listening and talking. Support for those children who require it is allowing them to make progress from prior levels of achievement. Almost all children listen well to teachers and one another. They work confidently in pairs, groups and across stages with each other. Almost all children at the early level, listen and respond appropriately when following instructions and are developing independence in their learning. At first level, most children are developing well a range of more sophisticated language about their learning. By second level, most children collaborate well in groups and show empathy and respect for one another's ideas when evaluating their work.

## Reading

- Most children are making very good progress in reading. Support for those children who require it is allowing them to make progress from prior levels of achievement. Teachers plan meaningful opportunities for children to engage well with a wide range of genre across learning and regularly select books for their personal reading. Children would benefit from a wider range of group reading opportunities and opportunities to read aloud. Children at the early level and into first level, use their knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns to read a variety of common words with growing confidence. At first level, children talk well about their favourite authors and books. At first level, children are beginning to be able to talk about how aspects of literary techniques identified from their reading activities, are helping to inform and improve their writing. The children are enthusiastic readers who read well for comprehension. By second level, most children understand key vocabulary and themed technical language and predict what may happen next within a story.

## Writing

- Across the school, most children are making very good progress in writing. Support for those children who require it is allowing them to make progress from prior levels of achievement. More structured approaches are being used well to support the development of writing skills, including a range of commercially produced resources, which are having a positive impact on children's progress in writing. At the early level, almost all children are developing quickly, the necessary skills in forming letters. Most children at the early level are confident in building more complex sentences, using punctuation with accuracy. At first level, most children organise their writing in paragraphs, start sentences in a variety of ways and enjoy writing for a variety of purposes. By second level at P7, almost all children use their writing skills in a range of contexts and purposes and select confidently vocabulary to suit the purpose and audience. By second level, children are successfully developing skills to review and refine, redraft and improve writing. Handwriting skills are increasingly leading to high quality presentation of written work. As a next step, there is a requirement to focus on the development of accuracy in spelling across the levels, including second level.

## Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Data provided by the school shows that almost all children are achieving appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels in English language and literacy and in mathematics by the end of P1, P4 and P7. Support for those children who require it is allowing them to make progress from prior levels of achievement. Predictions for the end of this session show that these levels of attainment will be sustained. Through engaging with groups of children, observing learning, sampling children's work and studying the school data, the inspection team support these predictions. However, inspectors also identified that with appropriate support and challenge across learning, more children could progress beyond expected levels for their stage.
- Standardised assessments are used to support the tracking of learner's progress year on year, with appropriate supports and interventions identified. The headteacher should continue to lead the staff in developing their understanding of the need for holistic assessments to support achievement of a level. Staff are developing their understanding of the moderation cycle. They have been involved in the moderation of writing activities from the planning stages and report that this has been helpful in confirming their professional judgements. While they are beginning to plan for assessment there is further scope to develop a whole school approach to holistic assessments as identified by the management team. They should now make more effective use of the National Benchmarks when gathering information to support their professional judgement.

- The overall quality of attainment in numeracy and mathematics is very good. Data for June 2019 shows that, by the end of P1, all children will have achieved early level in numeracy. By the end of P4, most children will have achieved first level and, by the end of P7, most will have achieved second level in numeracy. Children at all levels need to be involved in applying their numeracy and mathematics skills in new and unfamiliar contexts, for example, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) challenges across the school.
- Staff are confident that the new mental maths planner will increase consistency and progression across all stages, with the children using a variety of strategies to build confidence and accuracy. Almost all children working towards early level recognise, sequence and subitise with confidence up to ten. They recognise coins up to the value of £2 and put days of the week and months of the year into the correct order. By the end of first level most children are developing their confidence in multiplication and should now be encouraged to divide mentally. They read, write and use halves and are beginning to use fractional language. Most children working towards second level round whole numbers and decimal fractions to three decimal places. They calculate speed at rate per hour and solve speed, distance and time problems. They are developing their skills in adding and subtracting fractions. All children would benefit from more opportunities to use their numeracy skills in a range of real-life contexts.
- While children at early level recognise and identify properties of 2D shapes readily, they should consolidate their identification of 3D objects. They are beginning to use positional language. At first level almost all children readily identify the properties of 3D objects. They know that a right angle is 90 degrees and state compass points North, South, East and West. At the end of second level, almost all children use correctly the terms diameter, radius and circumference. They classify angles as acute, obtuse, straight and reflex and can produce a scale drawing using ratio.

### **Information handling**

- Across the school children collect information and present it in graphs and tables, they are beginning to gain experience of using digital technology to record and organise data. At early level, children use pictographs and bar graphs to interpret data with increasing confidence. Children at first level use tally marks to ask and answer questions about information. Most children towards the end of second level interpret well pie charts and Venn diagrams and are increasingly able to draw conclusions from information displayed in a variety of ways.

### **Problem solving**

- Towards the end of second level the majority of children have been involved the Strathclyde University mathematical challenge and spoke enthusiastically about developing problem solving strategies through this project. Across the school children should be developing problem solving skills and solving a range of mathematical problems through a progressive and coherent approach.

### **Attainment over time**

- The school's attainment data indicates that consistently high levels of attainment have been maintained across the stages and levels. Support for those children who require it is allowing them to make progress from prior levels of achievement. The school is not yet able to provide such data for other curriculum areas and staff recognise the need to develop the use of holistic assessments.

### **Overall quality of learners' achievement**

- There are a range of opportunities for children to achieve more widely offered by the school. Children across all stages are involved in after school clubs organised by the Active Schools

Coordinator, including athletics, dodgeball, karate, archery, street dance and tennis. Upper school children talk with enthusiasm about their recent successes in competitions. Children are also very enthusiastic about the choir and the strategy and STEM clubs which are run by staff members. The school tracks children's participation in out of class activities and has identified those who are at risk of missing out. Staff should now ensure that all children are encouraged to participate in wider activities, building on their skills and interests.

- Children at the upper stages enjoy developing their skills of leadership through wider opportunities and are eager to talk about their house captain and vice-captain roles, as well as supporting their P1 buddies. While children across the school are involved in the pupil council and organised a successful crazy hair day, there is scope to develop this further with the youngest children being encouraged to take on leadership responsibilities. Children's achievements increasingly reflect the school's strong sense of community. For example, the recent community litter pick up. The children value the Learning Walk Heroes afternoon tea where the headteacher identifies children who have demonstrated the school REACH values and invites them for afternoon tea.
- The school is developing the use of the attractive outdoor area with recent investment in trim trails, an outdoor classroom and garden area. A few classes access the outdoor area to develop further literacy and numeracy skills using the environmental context. They should now develop a programme of activities to enhance learning across the curriculum.
- Children's achievements are celebrated well in school and on social media and are the focus of assemblies and displays. The yellow brick road achievement wall motivates the children to identify their own achievements and receive recognition for them.

### **Parental involvement**

- Parent helpers regularly assist in organising curricular and wider events. For example; a toast stall in the winter, the garden club and various sporting activities. There is scope to develop family learning activities to enable parents to support further their child's learning at home.
- A next step for the school would be to ensure that all children are aware of the skills they are developing. Further opportunities to help children to be more involved in planning how their skills can be applied in a range of contexts should be further developed.

### **Equity**

- Staff are clearly committed to promoting equity for all learners. Relationships in classes are positive. Staff know the children and families well and monitor the progress of those who may face barriers to learning. While the school does not receive any pupil equity funding, staff are able to offer support to any who may be disadvantaged.



## 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.