

Summarised inspection findings

Braehead Primary School

Stirling Council

20 December 2022

Key contextual information

The school roll for 2022/23 is 353 children across 13 primary classes and two nursery classes. Braehead Primary School and Nursery Class is situated in the suburbs of South Stirling within a residential area. Children live in a catchment area that represents the range of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) with 6% living in SIMD 1 and 2. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the school in a number of ways but mainly there has been an increase in the number of children requiring emotional support.

1.3 Leadership of change

satisfactory

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

- Before and during the pandemic the school had a period of uncertainty and disruption. Since the pandemic, staff have had a strong focus on improving health and wellbeing and in supporting children with barriers to learning. They have made an early start to improving literacy and numeracy. The work on numeracy is beginning to raise attainment. Staff should now seek advice on the most effective way to improve attainment in reading and writing. The headteacher, depute headteachers and staff have created a positive ethos where children and staff display mutual respect. There are strong relationships between adults and children. Senior leaders and staff have good arrangements in place to meet the needs of children who face challenges in their learning. The leadership team deploy support staff, support for learning staff and the health and wellbeing officer well, resulting in well-behaved settled children.
- All stakeholders were involved in the creation of the schools vision and values. Staff and children demonstrate the school values by being respectful, inclusive, safe, kind and connected in their interactions and quality of relationships across the school. These values have supported the school's recovery following the pandemic. Staff have made a good start in developing children's understanding of their rights.
- The leadership team promote a collaborative approach to school improvement. Staff have a positive attitude to school improvement and feel fully involved in change. This supports staff to feel positive, involved and enthusiastic about leading change. All teachers are members of one of the working groups which focus on improving children's attainment in reading and writing. There is need for the senior leadership team to provide staff with clear direction to maximise the impact from the working groups on children's attainment. The headteacher should provide opportunities for staff to engage in professional learning and visit other schools to inform their work.
- The headteacher has worked with staff and parents to create a clear improvement plan to help support change. They share how they plan to improve the school with parents through regular newsletters. The headteacher has plans to now involve parents more in leading change. All staff are included in the evaluation of school improvement activity. There are now plans in place to involve children more in improvement planning. Now that mitigations have decreased,

staff should now increase the pace of change across the school in order to raise attainment further.

- Senior leaders monitor the work of the school. They have created an improvement calendar which outlines the range of approaches used to evaluate the quality and impact of children's learning experiences. This includes visiting classes to observe children's experiences, learning walks, and discussions with teachers regarding children's attainment, progress and achievements. As planned, they should now sample children's work to ensure all staff have high expectations of standards. Staff should now focus on ensuring class observations help identify and share good practice and support further improvement. The leadership team should ensure that all quality assurance activity leads to improved outcomes for learners.
- The leadership team use Stirling Council's system to monitor and track children's attainment across the school. Staff carefully track and monitor the attainment of children with additional support needs. Staff make effective use of additional funding from the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) to support identified children. In addition, they use PEF to provide a health and wellbeing officer, who provides invaluable support to children and families. There is a need for the staff and senior leaders to use the tracking system more effectively to raise attainment of all children. Staff have only recently begun to measure the progress of children in SIMD 1 and 2. They should now track the progress of different groups such as young carers, children who are care experienced and children who have English as an additional language. This will support staff to become more rigorous in how they evidence progress in closing the gap in attainment. Senior leaders should now provide clearer direction to staff on how to demonstrate more effectively that all children are making the best possible progress.
- Staff are re-establishing opportunities for children to develop their leadership skills. They have focused on motivating children in P7 by providing a range of leadership groups such as sports leaders, buddies for P1 and digital leaders. As a result, P7 children feel confident and valued for their role in the school. Increasingly, staff provide opportunities for younger children to develop leadership roles such as lunch-time buddies. There is scope to increase this further across the school, including providing opportunities for children to lead learning.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

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

- All children experience a very caring, supportive and nurturing ethos at Braehead Primary School. Relationships across the school are positive and respectful, reflecting the school's values and the developing understanding of children's rights. The school's values are displayed throughout the school and together with the wellbeing indicators illustrations, support improvements within health and wellbeing.
- Most children behave well and are attentive and engaged in their learning. The majority of children interact positively with their peers on learning tasks and activities including working independently or in pairs or groups. All staff are nurturing in their interactions with children, which ensures their emotional wellbeing needs are supported well. Teachers provide feedback to children on their effort and engagement with learning tasks. Staff should work together to improve the quality of feedback to children to support them in making progress in their learning.
- Most staff prepare and organise suitable resources to support a majority of children's experiences. Staff should review approaches to differentiation to provide a more consistent approach to providing support and challenge across the school. Most children are not yet able to talk about their learning journey, or articulate their progress in learning confidently. Senior leaders and teaching staff should work collaboratively across levels to develop a shared understanding of high quality learning and teaching that ensures clarity around children's skills development.
- Senior pupils in their newly formed leadership group roles are all beginning to contribute to the life of the school, supporting younger pupils in their roles as buddies, digital leaders and sports leaders. There is a need to develop children's skills in leading their own learning more fully and to include them more in school improvement planning.

Quality of teaching

- In most classes, the quality of teaching is satisfactory and there are a few examples of very good practice. Staff should work together to share good practice and improve approaches to learning and teaching, in particular differentiation. Staff support and encourage children in their learning. Classroom learning environments include safe, calm spaces. Staff have initiated changes to the teaching of reading and writing across the school. In reading, this has been successful in motivating most children to read, including all learners in the reading activity and encouraging children to read more widely. Staff now need to teach reading skills more regularly using text appropriate to children's ability. The pace of learning phonics at the early level is too slow. In writing, staff have made changes, which are beginning to motivate and inspire children to write through using more stimulating contexts. They should now complement this work with the regular teaching of writing skills.

- The teaching in a few classes is beginning to support the introduction of play-based learning approaches. Staff have made an early start in looking for ways that older children can learn through play. Across the school, staff would benefit from opportunities to develop further their knowledge and skills within play pedagogy. All early level staff should now take time to work with the nursery practitioners to explore the national practice guidance, *Realising the Ambition: Being Me*, to improve their approach to play. In doing this, they should focus on how they use the space well to create meaningful, motivating play experience for all children.
- In most lessons, teachers share the purpose of the learning and the success criteria with children. There is a need to share learning in more child friendly language and encourage children to identify what success would look like. This would support more fully how children understand their learning.
- Across the school, most staff listen well to children and give clear explanations and instructions about their learning, tasks and activities. Staff approaches to questioning to develop, support and challenge children's thinking is not yet of a consistently high enough quality.
- Most children have access to digital technologies to support and enrich learning. They use interactive boards and tablets to support their understanding of learning. Older children support younger children with their digital skills and have opportunity to develop their own digital skills using microbits and engagement with coding. Children also make good use of technology when learning Mandarin.

Effective use of Assessment

- Teachers use a range of summative assessment resources at key points across the year, including the introduction of new reading and spelling assessments. They recognise how these increasingly support professional judgements on attainment and progress. Staff use the results from these to plan interventions for children needing support in their learning. They should now work together to ensure results from assessments directly influence teaching and learning. Now mitigations have eased, staff should work with each other, and other schools, to develop a shared understanding of achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence level. Senior leaders and staff should review the school's assessment criteria used for writing. In a few classes, staff assess children's writing using criteria that is beyond their writing ability. The school recognise the need for a more reliable approach to assessing writing and have included this in their improvement plan.

Planning, tracking and monitoring

- All staff use curricular progression pathways to support planning of learning. Staff would benefit from a more streamlined, consistent approach to planning learning, teaching and assessment. This would support staff in planning for progression in learning for different cohorts of learners.
- All staff track children's progress on the school's digital tracking format. They meet termly with senior leaders to review children's progress. They use this to identify children that are not on track and those who are almost on track. As part of these meetings, they identify interventions for children who require support for learning. Staff should now use these meetings to plan interventions for children who they identify as almost on track to ensure they raise attainment. In addition, the leadership team should analyse the attainment of specific groups of children more fully.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- A variety of learning pathways are in place to support teachers to plan and assess experiences and outcomes across all curricular areas. Staff use Stirling Council's pathways to support some areas of the curriculum and other published frameworks to support the remaining areas of the curriculum. The staff team have recently changed their approach to delivering Interdisciplinary Learning (IDL) by grouping the experiences and outcomes within social subjects. Whilst these pathways provide helpful support to plan for progression across a level, they vary in structure and content. Staff should now ensure that all pathways include reference to the experiences and outcomes, National Benchmarks and offer opportunities to record relevant assessment information. This will ensure the approach to planning the curriculum is more consistent across the school.
- Teachers effectively plan with stage partners but should now ensure that they plan across a level to support progression in learning. There are effective transition arrangements from nursery to P1 and P7-S1 in place. Nursery staff share helpful information to support children to settle well as they start in P1. Early years and nursery staff should now work together to build on these transition discussions by sharing more detail regarding children's progress in learning at nursery. This will ensure learning seamlessly continues as children progress into P1. P7 children transition from Braehead Primary School to a variety of secondary schools in the local area. Despite the challenges that this could potentially pose, senior leaders are proactive in ensuring they obtain support for all children in their move to secondary.
- Children across the school learn French as a second language. The Confucius Hub for the learning community is based in the school. Children in P4–P7 also learn Mandarin from a specialist Mandarin teacher.
- Children are benefiting from two hours of physical education each week as per national requirements. Children in P5 receive swimming lessons.
- Children have good links with the local library and benefit from regular visits there. Library staff provide classes with reading materials to support their IDL learning. Staff should continue to build on the recent improvements to their own school library to support reading for enjoyment.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Almost all parents shared that their child likes being at school and that staff treat them fairly and with respect. Parents are valued partners at the school. Staff across the school are committed to developing quality partnerships with parents. Community partners such as Citizens Advice Bureau and Credit Union were available during recent parents' evenings to offer advice and support to families. The headteacher plans to re-establish the positive links created with the Parent Forum to support future improvement planning. In doing this they should take the opportunity to involve parents more in leading school improvements.
- Mitigations surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic limited parents' ability to be in school to hear about their child's progress in learning and school developments. Very recently, parents welcomed their visit to the school to learn more about how they could support early level literacy. The headteacher is looking forward to welcoming more parents back into school to share learning experiences.
- Staff have adopted a range of ways to improve communication with parents such as; class newsletters, social media and a school digital application. Most parents are positive about the school's approach to communication. A few parents would like clearer information on their child's progress in 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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

very 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

- Children have very positive relationships with staff and with each other. This creates a supportive and caring ethos where children are respectful and kind. Children understand well the school values and demonstrate these in their day-to-day interactions with others.
- Staff have put in place a range of approaches that support children effectively and enable them to identify their own wellbeing needs. For example, children use daily emotional check-ins to assess how they are feeling. Staff use this information to ensure children feel well supported if they have concerns or worries. Children understand if they indicate that they are feeling upset, a member of staff will help them. In their daily check-ins, staff are skilled at identifying changes in children's' behaviour or presentation. They share concerns with relevant members of staff to ensure that children receive the support they need.
- Children are developing a very good understanding about what they need to do to keep healthy and safe. They are very aware risks such as the harm caused by substance misuse and the importance of different types of food to keep healthy. Children use the wellbeing indicators well to regularly assess and talk about their own wellbeing. Staff use the information from these assessments effectively to support children who identify as requiring additional help. Children are making appropriate links between children's rights and their wellbeing.
- Children, and their parents and carers, are very positive about the school. In questionnaires, most children feel safe and say that staff treat them with respect. Most children recognise that the school helps them lead a healthy lifestyle and provides opportunities for regular exercise. Almost all parents feel that the school supports effectively their child's social and emotional wellbeing.
- Staff meet the individual social and emotional needs of children and their families very effectively through a broad range of interventions. Staff know children and their families very well and understand the particular challenges they sometimes face. The health and wellbeing support worker, funded by PEF, is key in ensuring the needs of children and families are well met. Children and families benefit from the high quality support and interventions provided.
- Staff provide supports such as play sessions and nurture work, which are helping children, understand and manage their emotions. The health and wellbeing officer provides interventions for parents and carers such as helping them access foodbanks, funding and housing. This is resulting in significant positive outcomes for these families. The school should now look for ways to capture this important work and gather the positive impact on children and families.
- The partnership working between the school and other agencies is having a positive outcome for children and families. Staff work very well with partners such as health professionals, the community garden and Active Schools Stirling to provide a range of supports. Most children

across the school participate in activities led by Active Schools to improve their physical fitness and sports skills. In addition, staff encourage individual children to attend specific events such as summer activities to ensure they have access to physical activities and food. Community supports, such as the Parent and Family Support Team, are very positive about collaborative working with staff in the school. Together, they identify and meet the needs of families that require support at home. This collaborative working is helping to improve children's attendance and their engagement in learning.

- Support staff across the school have very positive relationships with children and provide caring and high quality support. They know the needs of children well. Support staff work well with teaching staff to ensure they are fully aware of the needs of children. Staff value the range of professional learning, such as dyslexia training and training in talking mats. This allows them to support children very well.
- Staff implement effective approaches to assessing and meeting the needs of children who face barriers to their learning. They identify children's needs appropriately and effective interventions are in place. Support for learning staff, together with class teachers and the senior leadership team, regularly monitor the impact of interventions to determine if they are improving outcomes. Staff should review models of support to ensure there are optimum opportunities for children to learn within their class groups. Children who require a high level of support have an appropriate child's action plan. Targets within these plans broadly identify outcomes for children. There is scope to strengthen targets further by ensuring they are more specific and measurable. The leadership team and staff should review and record progress towards targets regularly and help children understand their targets.
- Staff have very good understanding of their responsibilities and statutory duties related to wellbeing, equality and inclusion. Their approaches to child protection, safeguarding and meeting the additional support needs of learners are firmly embedded in legislation and national guidance such as Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC).
- Children across the school are developing a very good understanding of equality and diversity. They discuss the importance of ensuring the school is inclusive for all types of learners. Children recognise and celebrate the wide range of cultures and languages within the school community. As a result, children are respectful of each other and demonstrate tolerance and kindness.
- Children have appropriate opportunities to lead work that promotes inclusion such as the Mission Dyslexia group and the Tech team. Staff plan events, such as Neurodiversity Celebration Week and Diversity day, which are helping children understand and celebrate differences and achievements of others. The school recently achieved a 'Success Looks Different' award. This was in recognition of work to help children recognise that strengths and achievements look different for everyone. Staff should now continue to support children promote equality and diversity across the school and wider community. Children across all stages are well placed to lead this important work.

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

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- The school provided attainment figures which are accurate for numeracy but not for literacy. The school were having difficulties with the new tracking system. They recognise that some of the data provided was therefore unreliable.
- The inspection team identified that most children at early and first level and the majority at second level achieved expected levels in numeracy. A majority of children in reading, writing, listening and talking achieve expected levels.
- The leadership team and staff now need to work with other schools to develop a shared understanding of achievement of a level. Staff should now take steps to gather evidence to support their judgement of achievement of a level.
- Staff in the school are able to provide accurate evidence that children with additional support needs are making good progress towards their targets.

Attainment in literacy and English

Listening and talking

- Overall children are making satisfactory progress in listening and talking. Most children listen well and engage well in conversation with adults and peers during learning. At early level, most children take turns during class discussions. A minority of children at early level lack confidence in retelling a story with detail. Children at early level should continue to build their communication skills and expand their vocabulary through play. At first and second level, children build on the opinions and views of others during group work. They were unable to talk confidently about the skills required to speak to an audience or when debating a topic.

Reading

- Children's attainment in reading is satisfactory. Overall children are making satisfactory progress in reading. Staff have made improvements to how they teach reading which is motivating children to read more widely. At early level, most children recognise the majority of initial sounds. Children working towards the early level now need to increase the pace of learning initial sounds. Most children use pictorial clues to retell familiar stories and predict what might happen next. At first and second level, a majority of children read fluently. Children at the first and second level need to develop further their higher order reading skills using text appropriate to their level of ability. Children across the school now need to develop their reading skills through a wider range of texts. Older children need to develop their reading stamina through having access to text of a longer length.

Writing

- Overall children are making satisfactory progress in writing. Across the school, staff have made improvements to the teaching of writing by ensuring they provide motivating contexts for children to write. As a result, children are more motivated and enthusiastic about writing. A few children who have achieved the early level are beginning to write independently. A few children know how to write common words and try to use these in their play. At the first and second level, a majority of children show skills of writing instructions. For example, older children wrote instructions for making shelves from pallets. Children were unable to discuss the differing features of writing genres. They would benefit from having more frequent opportunities to develop their writing skills at a level appropriate to their ability. Staff should take part in moderation activities with other schools to increase their expectations of children's writing. Children's skills in spelling and punctuation need improved. Staff have begun to address this.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure

- Most children at the beginning of the early level recognise and use numbers to 10 in their learning and in their play. Those who achieved early level last session are able to successfully count, add and subtract numbers to 30. They have a limited understanding of measure and are unable to use non-standard units. Those who achieved first level at the end of last session can add and subtract three-digit numbers successfully, recognise money values and are able to convert pounds to pence accurately. They can convert grams to kilograms and centimetres to metres. At second level, most children order, add and subtract decimals and match fractions to decimals. Most can identify profit and loss. Across the school, children lack confidence in mental mathematics and would benefit from regular opportunities to develop these skills. Across the second level, children lack understanding of probability and chance.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, most children can identify two-dimensional shapes. Most can explain symmetry, within simple shapes. At first level, children understand three-dimensional objects and can explain the properties of shape. At second level, most children understand perimeter, area and can identify diameter and radius within circles.

Information handling

- At early level, children can create and discuss pictograms. At first level, children create bar charts, using gathered data. At second level, children can illustrate data in pie charts. Children across the school should develop independence in gathering and illustrating data and be challenged to interpret and discuss their findings.

Attainment over time

- The leadership team track attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics over time. Staff ensure that they use data effectively to plan interventions to remove barriers to learning for individuals. This is ensuring that most children with additional support needs are making good progress. There is scope now to use this data to raise attainment of cohorts or specific groups of children, including those in SIMD 1 and 2. There should now be a clearer focus on evidencing how staff accelerate progress of the most vulnerable. The leadership team now need to work with staff to establish a clearer strategy to raise attainment for all learners. There is a need for staff to accurately evidence children's progress.

Overall quality of learner's achievements

- The school community recognise and celebrate children's personal achievements in a variety of ways, including at assemblies and through social media. They encourage children to be 'shining lights or beacon lights' in their displays of achievement across the school. As a result, children are proud of their achievements and look forward to recognition at assembly.
- Staff record children's achievements and are pro-active in addressing gaps to ensure equity of opportunity. They should now track children's wider achievements and identify the Skills Development Scotland meta-skills that they are achieving through these opportunities. Children were unable to talk confidently about the skills they were developing through their achievements.

Equity for all learners

- All staff have a strong understanding of the range of barriers to learning children may face. The leadership team track closely the progress and attainment of most children with potential barriers to their learning. They work effectively with teachers and support workers to analyse data and identify specific gaps in children's learning and achievement. Staff have made an early start to tracking the progress and attainment of children supported through PEF. The headteacher uses PEF funding to provide interventions and extra staff to support the wellbeing of identified children and their families. They now need to demonstrate how they are closing the attainment gap caused by children's socio-economic circumstances. This should help ensure that the most vulnerable children begin to attain as well as their peers.

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.