

Summarised inspection findings

Echline Primary School and Nursery Class

The City of Edinburgh Council

19 November 2019

Key contextual information

Echline Primary School serves the local community of Echline in South Queensferry within the City of Edinburgh Council. There are a few placing requests annually. The current school roll is 302 in the primary, with 30 in the morning and 30 in the afternoon in the nursery. The headteacher has been in post since April 2018. She is supported by a deputy headteacher (since October 2018) and will shortly be appointing a temporary principal teacher post. The school is in the midst of a major building refurbishment. This is now close to completion and is already offering a much improved learning environment.

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

- The ethos and culture of the school is strong and is reflected in the positive relationships and improving behaviour. The dignity and worth of every child is important and children demonstrate strong empathy towards each other. Staff and parents have recently been consulted on developing the school's vision and values. Senior leaders now plan to involve the children in further consultation, and to have a focus group to develop a visual representation of the vision, values and aims. This will support the development of Echline Primary School's curriculum rationale.
- Children are proud of their school and are aware of the school's focus on ensuring that they are ready to learn, are respectful and feel safe. Children across the school are polite, eager to please, confident, and engage well in activities. They are articulate and happy to share their views and opinions.
- Children have opportunities to be part of school improvement groups and committees across the school. This gives them opportunities to develop their leadership and team-working skills and attributes. Staff should continue to develop children's skills for life and work across all stages of their learning. This will enable children to recognise the skills they are developing and how these can transfer to other areas of their learning. It will also help children to become more involved in planning their learning, to learn independently and to identify their next steps confidently. There is significant scope for children to have more say about how they learn best, and how aspects of school decision making affects them.
- Children enjoy using tablet computers to research their learning activities, and a majority of children use tablets to capture their learning. Teachers should continue, as planned, to develop learning further through the use of digital technologies.
- Staff have been involved in useful professional learning linked to the improvement of learning and teaching pedagogy. A few staff are involved in leadership activities to take forward initiatives to help achieve improvements in learning and teaching. All staff understand that

further work is needed now to enable all staff to deliver high quality practice in learning and teaching consistently across the school.

- Teachers prepare their lessons well. Their explanations and instructions are clear. In most lessons, learning aims are shared and most children are aware of what the expected outcomes can be. Across the school, the majority of lessons are too teacher led. Children would benefit from more opportunities to lead their own learning. When learning is effective, teachers' questioning challenges children's thinking well. Teachers should continue to work collaboratively to develop the range and type of questions they ask. For example, to check for depth of understanding and to challenge and support children more to develop higher order thinking skills. In a majority of lessons, children are not given enough time to think in order to construct answers to teachers' questions.
- In order to improve the pace and level of challenge of learning, tasks and experiences need to be better matched to the needs of all children. There are examples of very effective learning and teaching, but this is not yet consistent across the whole school. Staff understand they need to continue to work collegiately to improve the overall quality of learning and teaching for every child.
- Staff use a range of standardised assessments, such as Scottish National Standardised Assessment (SNSA) to support their professional judgements. Teachers are becoming more confident in identifying children's progress in literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing at key milestones. They use National Benchmarks and local authority guidance to identify Curriculum for Excellence levels. Teachers benefit from collaborating with cluster colleagues to moderate standards in writing and mathematics.
- Staff recognise the need to develop a shared understanding and expectations for their approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. This includes more robust moderation activities within and beyond the school. Teachers need to develop further their confidence in gathering, analysing and interpreting data and assessment information. This will enable them to plan differentiated tasks and activities which are better matched to all children's learning needs. Senior leaders and staff should consider what assessment information needs to be gathered to ensure children, including higher attaining learners, progress and achieve well. They should develop these strategic improvements ensuring that all changes are made based on research, best practice and continuous high-quality professional learning.
- Teachers plan learning and teaching across almost areas of the curriculum using progression pathways. Staff identify that improvements in children's learning are being made as a result. Teachers work well with colleagues at the same stage to plan learning and teaching. Staff need to develop more consistent, whole school approaches to ensure robust tracking and monitoring. This can support children make positive progress across all curriculum areas.
- In a few classes children have clear targets for their learning. There is scope now to ensure that high-quality learning targets are set for all children, and that this approach is consistent across the school. Teachers should focus more on improving outcomes for children, including the levels of challenge or support staff need to consider when planning learning.
- Senior leaders, teachers and support for learning staff support children facing potential barriers to their learning very well. A few children benefit from well-planned interventions and targeted programmes, for example to build their confidence and resilience.

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 that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

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

- Data presented by the school in 2018-2019 indicates that, overall, in P1, almost all children are achieving appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy. Attainment is above both the local authority and national levels. In P4 and in P7, most children are achieving appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy.
- The headteacher is confident that the school's attainment figures in literacy and numeracy are accurate and inspectors observations support this view. There is a range of teacher experience within the school staff. They are continuing collectively to improve their understanding of moderation standards through work within their local cluster. They recognise that that further collaboration beyond the cluster this session will support their understanding of Curriculum for Excellence standards further.
- Support for learning staff use baseline assessments to understand where children may have gaps in learning. The school's assessment data shows that almost all children with additional challenges, are making positive progress.

Literacy and English language

- Overall, staff report that most children are making good progress in English language and literacy. Children report that they can be stretched further particularly in literacy to attain and achieve more with an increase in pace and challenge. Inspectors observation would support children's views.

Listening and talking

- Across early level, almost all children are making good progress in listening and talking. Children can talk about simple stories from their reading books and reflect on their activities during their play. During questioning, a majority of children can listen well to and follow instructions. A few children dominate conversations and more work is need to help all children to listen well to each other and take turns to speak. At first level, almost all children are making good progress in listening and talking. In group work and in pairs, children are keen to contribute their ideas and opinions independently. They can develop their own questions across a range of contexts. A majority of children can listen carefully to teacher instructions, recounting their own views. A few children at this level need to focus more on learning to listen to others views to support them to collaborate better. Across second level, most children are making good progress in listening and talking. Children listen actively, collaborating well and can explain their thinking and feedback confidently and with a wide range of vocabulary. A few children use sophisticated language and can put an opposing point of view in a very respectful fashion. The headteacher recognises that tracking and monitoring of children's attainment in listening and talking, using a clear skills progression, is not yet consistent across the school.

Reading

- Across early level, almost all children are making good progress in reading. They benefit from many opportunities to read books within and beyond school. At early level, teachers are focusing on using a 'talking, reading and writing' approach. They build children's understanding of sounds well and use a range of phonic reading texts to help children to develop their reading skills. Across first level, almost all children are making good progress in reading. Most children can read novels independently and aloud to each other. Children demonstrate strong use of vocabulary, including creative use of adjectives when they describe their reading texts. Staff should continue to widen the choice of reading texts available at first level, enabling children to identify and consider the purpose and main ideas within their chosen texts. Across second level, almost all children are making good progress in reading. Children demonstrate a high level of understanding of how to read and scan complex reading texts to identify particular information. They can answer inferential questions related to a text and can discuss how the writer uses creative language to describe a character. Children use Scots language well to broaden their understanding of their local environment. Staff should continue to support children to improve the quality of their questioning and to develop further their use of higher order thinking skills.

Writing

- Across early level, almost all children are making good progress. Children enjoy mark making and a few can already write their own sentences through their play activities. By the end of P1, children can write sentences, for example to reflect, given instructions. Across first level, most children are making good progress within a structured talk-based writing curriculum. By the end of first level, children can write within a clear structure with correct spelling and creative use of words. Children write well to entertain, to persuade, to explain and inform. Across second level, most children are making good progress in writing. They write regularly using a wide variety of genres. Children understand the connection between studying the techniques used in their reading texts and then applying these skills well in their own writing tasks. They understand the importance of up-levering writing and demonstrate this well, using similes and connectives to extend sentences and to describe a scene well.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, attainment in numeracy and mathematics is good. Children requiring additional support, are making satisfactory progress. A few children, particularly at second level, exceed expected levels of attainment and should now experience deeper, more challenging learning. There is scope for children across the school to make more use of digital technology in mathematics, for example in work on shape and information handling.

Number, money, measure

- Overall, most children are making good progress in number, money and measure. Children working at early level are becoming increasingly confident with a range of number concepts to ten. Children are applying their number skills to measurement investigations, for example, using balance scales and concrete materials. Children who have recently achieved first level can describe numbers up to and beyond 1000 in terms of place value and using zero as a place holder. A minority of children are confident in identifying and describing numbers to hundreds of thousands. Across early and first level, children are making appropriate progress in telling the time, with a few exceeding expectations. They can estimate well measuring objects using non-standard units. At second level, children can round decimal fractions to the nearest whole number and to one and two decimal places. They can convert fractions to decimals and percentages and, importantly, can apply this knowledge in other areas of mathematics, such as probability and data handling. Children at second level are making good progress with mental calculations. A few children work beyond their expected level, for example, they can evaluate mentally, simple whole number powers and roots.

Shape, position and movement

- Overall, most children are making good progress in shape, position and movement. At early level, children can recognise and describe common 2D shapes and 3D objects using appropriate language. Children at early and first level can recognise and name a range of 3D objects. They are less confident at describing their properties. They can identify right angles in their environment and in common 2D shapes. They can describe movement appropriately using fractions of turns and degrees. Children at second level are developing their knowledge of angles and can name and draw a range of angles including acute, obtuse and straight angles. They apply their ability to accurately draw angles to the nearest degree in other contexts in mathematics, for example in recent work on constructing pie charts.

Information handling

- Overall, most children are making good progress in information handling. Children at early level can gather data using tally marks and present it in pictograms. At first level, children can describe a variety of ways of gathering data. They can explain the purpose and process of gathering information using tally marks and displaying this using bar graphs. They can interpret simple graphs and charts. Children working at early and first level should be given more opportunities to carry out real-life data handling investigations. At second level children are being given the opportunity to plan and carry out surveys using real-life contexts. For example, at P7, children are currently surveying their peers on their preferences for equipment for the new playground. They plan to display the information gathered using their developing skills in constructing pie charts.

Attainment over time

- Over the last four years, there is an improving trend in children's attainment in literacy and numeracy at P1. At P4, there is a fluctuating trend over time in attainment in listening and talking with an improvement in the last year. However, there has been a decline in writing attainment at this stage, which the headteacher has recognised and is moving quickly to address. There has been a reduction in numeracy standards at P4 over the same period. The data for P7 demonstrates an improvement in literacy in the last year after the decline shown in the previous three years. There was an improving trend in numeracy from 2015 to 2017 however, there has been a decline in numeracy last session. The headteacher recognises that staff need to strengthen their approaches to gathering attainment data, including tracking children's developing skills over time. Staff need to develop more holistic assessments which allow children to apply their skills creatively in range of different ways, including ways that are unfamiliar to them.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Overall, children's achievement is good. They are confident and contribute well to the life of their school. Their wider achievements are valued, recognised and celebrated, for example through the Echline 'Stars of the Week'. Children in P6 and P7 speak positively about the new interests and skills they are developing in working towards achieving the 'Junior Award Scheme for Schools' (JASS). Children are proud of their successes, including their Eco Schools Scotland awards and their recent success at a local volleyball competition. Children are developing their confidence to express their views by being members of various committees, for example the eco schools committee, sports council and pupil council. Children can identify where their voice has made a difference. For example, they influenced the introduction of recycling points in the school and changes to the way they learn new spelling words. A variety of clubs allow children to develop new skills, for example, in sports, indoor pastimes and arts and craft. A few clubs are run by older children, giving them the opportunity to exercise responsibility and leadership. Older children are developing leadership skills by acting as buddies and House Captains, and leading fundraising activities for charities. The school has begun to monitor children's participation in clubs, sports and music activities,

including those they attend in the community. The headteacher has identified the need to begin to track children's skills development through these activities, as well as levels of participation. This should involve children in reflecting on and recording their own skills progression, and setting targets for personal skills development.

Equity for all learners

- Almost all children within the school live within SIMD deciles 8 to 10, with 2.1% of learners living in areas classified as SIMD decile 3. Senior leaders are well aware of children who face additional challenges and have put in place effective additional support to help them to achieve. Staff provide identified learners with a mixture of individualised and group support, including meaningful support to improve their wellbeing. This approach is helping to make children more resilient. Targeted support for individual children includes literacy and numeracy interventions with, for example, effective short bursts of one-to-one learning support daily, where appropriate.
- Senior leaders and staff are using the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) to improve staffing levels. The headteacher is monitoring and evaluating the impact of PEF and can demonstrate small improvements in the confidence of almost all of the schools targeted learners.
- The headteacher understands that strong attendance supports improvement, especially for children who face additional challenges. In 2017-2018, attendance was 96.3%, which is above the national average. There were no exclusions last session. The Edinburgh City Council's '1 in 5 - Raising Awareness' project led by staff is helping to ensure that families facing hardship are not disadvantaged. Arrangements, including financial support, are in place to ensure that all children have equity of access to the full range of school activities. The school's parent council has undertaken important fund raising to support this important initiative.

Other relevant evidence

- The headteacher has been in school for around one year. In her time in post she is leading important improvements. The headteacher has an accurate understanding of the school's standards at present and what they need to do to continue to improve. She is supported by an able depute headteacher and together they are providing purposeful leadership to take the school forward.
- In the pre-inspection questionnaires and from comments received during the inspection, there is a need to continue to improve communication for all stakeholders. Senior leaders understand the importance of strong communication as part of the improvement process. Staff should consider what digital strategies can be put in place to improve communication quickly.

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.