

# Summarised inspection findings

**Dunlop Primary School**

East Ayrshire Council

28 January 2020

## Key contextual information

Dunlop Primary School is situated in a semi-rural area of East Ayrshire. At the time of the inspection, the school roll was 188. Children are taught in eight classes. Almost all children reside at addresses in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles six to eight.

### 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

- Dunlop Primary School has a warm and welcoming ethos. Children are confident, articulate, well behaved and mannerly. The learning environment is calm and purposeful. Children are very proud of their school and value the wide range of learning experiences on offer within and outwith the school day.
- There are very positive relationships across the school. Almost all children feel their teachers treat them fairly and with respect. Children treat each other with respect as they learn together and move around the school. Children talk confidently about their recently revised school values. They know how to exemplify the values in school and within the wider community.
- Almost all children are motivated and engaged in their learning. They work well in groups and with their peers, as well as independently. Teachers know their children's learning needs very well. Almost all learners' experiences are appropriately challenging. Teachers plan tasks that are well matched to their needs. Children who require additional support with their learning are supported well within an inclusive environment. They experience success, particularly when utilising technologies to access aspects of the curriculum.
- In most lessons, a range of digital technologies support learning and teaching well. Teachers make effective use of digital technologies to enhance learning. They should continue to share their effective practice in digital technologies, both within the school and with the wider education community. Children would benefit from having increased access to outdoor learning experiences.
- Almost all children in P4 to P7 feel staff listen to them. Children speak with enthusiasm about the wide range of pupil groups available. These groups are providing positive opportunities for children to demonstrate a range of leadership skills and skills for learning, life and work. Staff share the focus for each leadership group and children's views are welcomed to shape how objectives will be met. Children should now have greater opportunities to lead the improvement activities across the committees. They should be supported to reflect on the skills that they are developing as a result. Whilst younger pupils in P1 to P3 benefit from a range of skills-based 'masterclasses', they now need to have age-appropriate opportunities to develop further their leadership skills.

- Children and staff have agreed criteria for what high quality learning and teaching looks like at Dunlop Primary School. As a result, they have high expectations of one another. Overall, teachers provide effective learning opportunities for children, particularly in literacy. However, in a minority of lessons, learning and teaching is not yet of a consistently high standard. The school should continue to work to ensure children experience high quality learning experiences at all stages of the school and in all curricular areas. Most teachers make the purpose of learning clear. They make appropriate use of questioning to gauge children's understanding of learning. In consultation with children, staff have developed an effective approach to provide children with feedback, which successfully supports learners to identify their next steps in learning. Staff now need to embed this approach fully. Teachers have correctly identified the need to develop further children's role in their learning. They should work collaboratively to ensure children have more opportunities to take responsibility and lead their own learning.
- In almost all classes, children are involved in planning aspects of interdisciplinary learning contexts. For example, they identify what they already know about a context and what they would like to find out. Staff should now develop further opportunities for children to take a role in planning and evaluating their own learning across the curriculum.
- Teachers use a variety of assessment approaches to evidence well children's attainment and achievement. The school's approach to gathering quality assessment information is planned rigorously. It ensures a range of quality formative, summative and standardised assessment data supports teachers to monitor children's progress. Teachers discuss regularly assessment evidence, moderating children's work across a few curricular areas to ensure consistency across stages and levels. Staff should now apply this approach to all curricular areas. This should help provide better evidence of children's progress across the curriculum.
- The headteacher facilitates termly tracking meetings to support and challenge staff regarding children's progress. As a result, teachers' professional judgement provides accurate evidence of children achieving a Curriculum for Excellence level in literacy and numeracy. The headteacher supports staff to use Scottish National Standardised Assessments as a diagnostic tool for children at P1, P4 and P7, to plan next steps in learning.
- Moderation activities within the school and across the education group support teachers to make robust judgements regarding achievement of a level in literacy and numeracy. The school has recently focused on the moderation of reading, writing and numeracy, both within the school and with the local partnership. This has increased teachers' confidence to plan and assess children's progress in this area. As a result, children are writing at a high standard across all stages. Staff should now ensure moderation activities in other areas of the curriculum are as robust as those for literacy. Staff would benefit from looking beyond the school and local partnership to develop further their moderation activities.
- Across all curricular areas, teachers plan effectively, using local authority and school progression frameworks. Teachers' approaches to planning effectively capture children's ideas, curriculum experiences and outcomes, skills to be achieved, pedagogical approaches and planned assessment. Teachers' planning demonstrates their clear focus on children's learning.
- The school's robust tracking system ensures teachers have a very good understanding of children's progress and the support required at key points in the learning journey. Staff work together closely to identify children who require additional support and plan interventions to support progress. The headteacher meets regularly with staff to evaluate the impact of these interventions. Together, they plan next steps in learning to ensure the pace of progress is appropriate for all children.

## 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

### Overall attainment in literacy and numeracy

- The overall quality of children's attainment in literacy and English language is very good. In numeracy and mathematics, it is good.
- Data provided by the school from session 2018-19, shows reliably that most children in P1, P4 and P7 achieved the appropriate Curriculum for Excellence level in reading, writing and numeracy. Almost all children achieved the appropriate level in listening and talking in P1 and P7, with all achieving first level in P4. A minority of young people at P4 are working beyond first level in reading and a minority at P7 are working beyond second level in literacy and numeracy.

### Literacy and English

- Overall, attainment in literacy is very good. Most children are making very good progress in all aspects to achieve appropriate levels of Curriculum for Excellence.

### Listening and talking

- Almost all children listen respectfully in class and follow instructions carefully. Most children express their views, ideas and thoughts articulately. At early level, most children can give a simple response to a question. They are learning to take turns and listen to one another. They re-tell a short sequence of events in the correct order. At first level, children communicate clearly and audibly. They discuss character and setting using appropriate contextual and descriptive vocabulary to make this interesting to the listener. At second level, almost all children offer their own viewpoint and respect the views of others. They can contribute their ideas to a group discussion and explain their thinking.

### Reading

- Children benefit from access to a wide range of texts appropriate to their needs and enjoy opportunities to read for enjoyment. At early level, most children can explore a text and make predictions. They are beginning to ask questions about what they are reading and make connections to stories they have read before. At first level, almost all children read with increasing fluency and with some expression to engage the listener. They decode unfamiliar words, using their knowledge of phonemes and context clues. At second level, most children make very effective use of a range of strategies to gain a deeper understanding of text. They summarise a text by selecting the main ideas, paraphrasing effectively and making use of more complex vocabulary.

### Writing

- Across the school, children write for a variety of purposes. Children have a very clear understanding of the expectations within each genre of writing. They use their writing targets

and high quality feedback to inform further improvements. At early level, most children write a short sentence, using correctly capital letters and full stops. Using picture clues and contextually appropriate vocabulary, they write and re-tell main events in a logical sequence. A few children at early level require further consolidation of formation of letters in order to develop positive handwriting habits. At first level, most children identify and use verbs, adjectives, nouns and connectives in their writing. Almost all children at first and second levels assess and review their own writing. At second level, almost all children can explain the features of an explanation and use the appropriate style and format to convey information. They use paragraphs successfully to separate their thoughts and ideas. A few children working beyond second level use more complex punctuation to enhance their writing, such as colons and ellipses. To support their writing progress, children would benefit from further opportunities to write more extended pieces.

### **Numeracy and mathematics**

- Overall, children's attainment in numeracy and mathematics is good. Almost all children are making appropriate progress.
- There are clear improvement priorities in numeracy and mathematics, as detailed in the school improvement plan over the last two years. Staff have participated in a range of professional learning opportunities to support the delivery of numeracy and mathematics learning. Staff have also focused on improving problem solving skills and ensuring learners can apply their numeracy skills in an increasing variety of contexts. These approaches are resulting in improved levels of attainment in the most recent year. All staff should continue to review the depth of learning children have in numeracy, before moving them on to more challenging work.

### **Number, money and measure**

- Across the school, children are developing confidence in mental calculations, through talking about different strategies to solve number problems. At the early level, most children identify the number before, the number after and missing numbers in a sequence within ten. They identify coins to 20p and add within ten. At first level, almost all children round numbers confidently, convert between pounds and pence and identify equivalent fractions. At second level, children are developing a range of strategies to carry out calculations. They are confident when working with whole numbers and when rounding numbers to a given number of decimal places. They would benefit from further work on calculations involving numbers with decimals fractions. Staff need to provide more opportunities for children to reason algebraically, calculate time intervals and develop an understanding of a greater range of number patterns.

### **Shape, position and movement**

- Almost all children identify the properties of 2D shapes and 3D objects, as appropriate to their age and stage. At first level, most children confidently identify right angles and know they measure 90 degrees. Almost all can create pictures with one line of symmetry. At second level, almost all children can describe a range of angles properties. Most can identify the basic properties of a circle and calculate a circumference. Almost all are developing an understanding of four-quadrant coordinates, translations and reflections.

### **Information handling**

- At the early level, most children interpret simple graphs and can collect and organise objects. Most children at first and second level use tally marks appropriately and are confident with a range of graphs as appropriate to their age. Children working at first and second level would benefit from further opportunities to develop their understanding of uncertainty and chance.

## Attainment over time

- Staff use a range of helpful data sources to track children's progress over time. Regular tracking meetings have an appropriate focus on individuals' progress. The school has maintained high levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy at P1, with most or almost all children attaining in line with expectations. There is a similar pattern at P4 and P7. In 2015-16, the majority of children at P7 achieved the expected level in reading and writing. In 2017-18, the majority attained expected levels in writing and numeracy. Through robust approaches to tracking, senior leaders correctly identified the above patterns in attainment. As a result, staff successfully implemented a range of interventions in literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders can evidence clearly where this has led to improvements in attainment for individual children and cohorts as they move through the school.

## Overall quality of learners' achievements

- School staff are committed to providing a variety of activities for children, during and after the school day. Children's views are gathered to inform planning for this provision. Staff, a large number of parent helpers, the Active Schools coordinator and Kilmarnock Football Club facilitate after-school clubs. This is supporting children to develop a range of sporting, musical and social skills. Senior leaders track attendance at clubs to target gaps in participation. As a result, almost all children take part in a club across the school year.
- Children in P4 to P7 have developed important skills in leadership and teamwork, through a wide range of activities in school. These include citizenship, house captains, eco-committee, junior road safety officer and playground buddies. Pupil council representatives from P1 to P7 have developed skills in communication, through working with the wider school community to refresh the school's values. The school's work has been recognised through a number of external awards. These include, Digital Schools Award, four Eco Schools Scotland Green Flags and a bronze values-based education award. Children's involvement in committees are helping them to develop valuable skills for learning, life and work. Children can articulate confidently the skills they are developing in classroom learning. They are not yet able to do this with the skills developed through wider experiences.
- Children's achievements, both in and outwith school are celebrated and recognised in class, at assemblies and through social media. Class teachers track children's achievements well. Staff know children's needs and circumstances very well and use this information to ensure all children have opportunities beyond the classroom. Children are supported to record their achievements and reflect on the skills developed.

## Equity for all learners

- Senior leaders have identified gaps in attainment for individual learners as part of their rigorous approach to tracking. They have used this information successfully to intervene and close the attainment gap for a few children in numeracy and in areas of literacy. Children who require additional support with their learning make very good progress in writing from prior levels of attainment. They access supportive technologies to enable them to document their work with confidence. All children participating in the numeracy intervention approaches achieved their individual target.
- To improve attainment for targeted children, additional staffing and resources have been provided through Pupil Equity Funding. Senior leaders can evidence the positive impact this is having on improved attainment for identified children. Senior leaders have a suitably strong focus on ensuring the sustainability and longevity of these interventions. Senior leaders have a particular focus on upskilling staff to support this work.

## 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.