

# Summarised inspection findings

**Drumoak Primary School and Nursery Class**

Aberdeenshire Council

31 March 2020

## Key contextual information

Drumoak Primary School and Nursery Class is situated in the village of Drumoak in Deeside. This newly built school opened in February 2016, and the headteacher has been in post since April 2019. The school has 123 on the roll across the primary stages and 24 in the nursery class. The associated secondary school is Banchory Academy.

### 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 and staff have created a very positive ethos where children and staff demonstrate mutual respect and positive relationships. All stakeholders were involved in contributing to the newly revised vision, values and aims of the school. Children demonstrate well the values of being 'kind, fair, respecting each other's rights and being your best'. They support each other well in and out of class. As a result, across the school behaviour is good. Staff should now develop further their approaches to learning about the rights of the child including a focus on anti-bullying to ensure children understand how this impacts on their relationships with each other. Almost all children comment in the pre-inspection questionnaire that they feel safe in the school.
- Almost all children are attentive in class and engage well in their learning. They benefit from many opportunities to work individually and in pairs and groups. Children enjoy regular opportunities to self-assess their learning and share their successes with their peers. Staff should continue to place a deeper focus on the development of higher order thinking skills. Staff should continue to develop learning opportunities which enable children to develop skills for learning, life and work.
- Together with the new headteacher, staff have worked well to improve learning and teaching. In almost all lessons, children are clear about the purpose of their learning and how they can be successful. Teachers provide clear questioning and instructions. Overall, staff know children's needs well. A few children are capable of being challenged further at a faster pace through the use of more personalised and differentiated learning. Staff are meeting the needs of a few children well through the use of various approaches, for example, with music therapy. This is beginning to help children to engage meaningfully in learning. Staff should re-consider how best to engage the few learners who find difficulty with concentration and avoid them being disengaged and limiting their learning.
- Teachers provide very positive opportunities for children to take responsibility for their own learning through, for example, the use of peer-and self-assessment. There is scope for them to involve children more in discussing what success can look like. This includes children setting more of their own learning targets across curricular areas.

- All children extend their learning through participation in a variety of pupil-led groups and from opportunities to complete the Drumoak Citizenship Award. Teachers use digital technologies well to enrich children's learning. For example, this includes children's use of tablet computers to demonstrate and present their understanding, the interactive use of whiteboards and the use of the internet for research purposes. Children are beginning to develop coding skills and use digital mathematics software to enhance their learning in mathematics. Staff are developing well the use of the outdoors to promote learning. 'Intervention Prevention' staff use the outdoors effectively to broaden targeted children's learning experiences.
- Staff make effective use of the Aberdeenshire Progression Frameworks and Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) National Benchmarks for almost all curriculum areas to inform their planning and assessment. Teachers use a range of assessment approaches well to inform teacher professional judgement of children's progress. This is improving the children's learning by allowing teachers to target next steps more effectively. Assessments are planned and the data gathered is the focus for termly professional dialogue meetings with the headteacher. Staff also use this assessment data effectively to plan targeted support for children.
- Staff are benefiting from a range of professional learning activities linked to sharing good practice and developing moderation activities. Recent involvement in moderation activities across the school and with associated schools is building teachers' confidence in their professional judgement of achievement of a CfE level. Teachers should continue to build on this progress by participating further in moderation activities.
- The headteacher and staff track attainment effectively in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing in all classes. They now need to begin to track children's progress across other curricular areas to ensure children make the best possible progress in their learning.

## 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.

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**

- Most children across the school are achieving appropriate CfE levels in literacy and in numeracy. Staff use a range of assessments, including summative assessments and data from the Scottish National Standardised Assessments, to support their professional judgements of achievement of a level. Most children, including children who require additional support with their learning, are making good progress. Support for learning staff provide effective guidance and support for targeted learners. For example, support for learning staff use baseline reading assessments to ascertain children's starting point and then from there individualised interventions are put in place to support and help develop children's skills. In all classes across the school, there are a few children who are capable of achieving more.

### **Attainment in literacy and English**

- Overall attainment in literacy is good. Most children demonstrate strong listening and talking skills, enjoy reading and write across a wide range of genre.

### **Listening and talking**

- At the early stages, children demonstrate that they can talk about simple stories and their everyday life events. They listen well to instructions. Children express their views well, offering their own opinions. At first level, children are developing their skills to share their opinions and explain their own views. They listen carefully to teacher instructions and can recount the views of their group well. At second level, children explain their thinking well with increasing use of advanced vocabulary on a variety of topics. Most children listen actively when other children are speaking. Children express their listening and talking skills well through opportunities to deliver a researched presentation.

### **Reading**

- Across the school children access a wide range of books in the school library. At early level, most children read a wide range of simple texts including picture books and non-fiction easy readers. They use phonics effectively to help them read and talk about characters within simple stories. At first level, children read novels independently and aloud to each other with expression. They enjoy talking about reading and the different authors they enjoy. Children are developing their use of vocabulary very well through their reading. They enjoy describing the techniques used by writers to make texts interesting. At second level, children select and read more complex reading texts, skimming and scanning well to identify particular information. Children use texts for a range of purposes and can answer inferential questions related to a text. They discuss well how the writer uses language to describe situations in the novels which they are reading. The use of P7 buddying up with P1 learners to read texts together is benefitting children by improving their reading skills. Staff should continue to develop this work further across the school.

## Writing

- At the early stages, most children can write sentences using capital letters and use full stops to create simple sentences. By the end of first level, most children write well for a variety of purposes, including use of poetry, imaginative writing and report writing. They use basic punctuation and connectives well to sequence key ideas. They use clear plans to structure their writing well. Children enjoy using their developing writing skills across the curriculum, for example in their recent topic work they write about the Vikings. At second level, most children write regularly using a variety of genres. They complete advanced note taking, personal and imaginative writing, and the thoughtful analysis of Scots poetry. Children demonstrate well how they can summarise plots, use similes and metaphors, and use interesting openers and exciting concluding paragraphs to provide additional interest for the reader.

## Attainment in mathematics and numeracy

- Attainment in mathematics and numeracy is good. Overall, most children are making good progress. Staff have identified improving attainment in mathematics and numeracy as an improvement priority this year. As a result of this, children across the school are becoming more fluent in times tables and mental agility. More able children could cope with a faster pace of learning and more challenging learning experiences. A few children at each stage could be achieving more with more challenge in their learning in numeracy.

## Number, money and measurement

- At early level, most children count and add to 10 with confidence, with a few counting and adding to 20. They engage well in a number of activities supporting their learning including board games, use of concrete materials and computer programmes. Children are developing their skills in the use of money. At first level, most children can solve addition problems with three digit whole numbers, work out a simple shopping bill, and tell the time using digital clocks. They add units of time successfully and estimate the dimensions of everyday objects such as doors and windows. Children working within second level recognise numbers to the hundred thousand. They multiply hundreds, tens and units with confidence. They demonstrate knowledge of the strategies required to solve multi-part addition and subtraction money calculations and can articulate this knowledge with understanding. At second level, children demonstrate their skills with a good understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages and their equivalence displaying a sound knowledge and understanding of these concepts. A few more able children should be challenged more during their learning experiences.

## Shape position and movement

- At early level, most children can identify common two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. At first level, children can sort and describe various two-dimensional shapes according to properties and categorise the shapes and objects according to surfaces such as flat, round, straight. They can name a number of three-dimensional objects. They recognise and identify right angles. At second level, most children are aware of angles and their properties and recognise acute, obtuse and reflex angles. They also name and describe the properties of cubes, prisms and multi-faceted three-dimensional objects. They tessellate with shapes and understand the principles involved.

## Information handling

- At early level, children use tally marks and create simple Venn diagrams. At first level, children use tally marks to collect and gather information and display this information on simple bar graphs or tables. At second level, children create pie charts, bar graphs and line graphs to illustrate their topic work on world statistics and information. At first and second level, children are developing well their skills in recording, synthesizing and presenting information using digital resources across the curriculum.

## Attainment over time

- Overall children are making good progress over time. However, a few children could be making better progress. The new headteacher has taken steps to improve the accuracy of data on children's progress. Overall, attainment is improving over time, however, the year-on-year data shows a variable picture. Teachers are improving their confidence in their judgements on achievement of a level through recent moderation activities. The headteacher is now beginning to track children's attainment effectively in literacy and numeracy. The headteacher, alongside staff, should now develop further and extend their tracking and attainment system to include analysis of the data to raise attainment of all children.

## Overall quality of learner's achievement

- Across the school, children's leadership and social skills are demonstrated through various roles such as house captains, pupil council and P7 action group members. Children show confidence and a willingness to help as 'Young Leaders' in the playground and in the dinner hall helping younger children. As a result of learning through these roles, children in P7 are leading on a school 'Citizenship Award'. Children exercise responsibility by leading school assemblies. They contribute to the 'bikeability' programme demonstrating leadership skills and increasing their confidence in presenting, talking and listening. Younger children are involved in road safety work demonstrating their successful leadership roles. They display effectively their skills and confidence in a number of areas, for example, talking, presenting and sharing information. Children's wider achievements are tracked to ensure they experience a range of opportunities which link to skills for learning, life and work. This also helps all children to participate in school activities equitably.
- The 'imagine, believe, achieve' (IBA) club is run by the headteacher and children in P7 to support younger learners in literacy and numeracy. This encourages children to develop their skills in citizenship and thinking about others. Children are highly effective in supporting younger children.
- Children's achievements are celebrated and shared with parents regularly through a digital messaging application. This enables parents to see pictures and video clips of children doing well and achieving at school. Children who participate in a variety of sports, including football, running, swimming, badminton and other activities display their physical fitness and their social skills. Children in P6 and P7 demonstrate life skills, team work and resilience as a result of their residential trip to Glenn Shee.

## Equity for all learners

- The headteacher and staff make use of the Pupil Equity Fund to promote equity through a range of interventions. For example, enhanced staffing supports learning in literacy and numeracy for identified children and an increased nurture teacher allocation supports more vulnerable learners. These interventions are beginning to improve children's experiences and progress in literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing. The headteacher now needs to track the impact of these interventions on improving outcomes for identified learners. Pupil Equity Fund is also used to purchase health and wellbeing resources and resources for the IBA club which promotes success in targeted groups of children. This support is beginning to have a positive impact on attainment.

## 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.