

# Summarised inspection findings

**Broughton Primary School**

Scottish Borders Council

30 January 2024

## Key contextual information

Broughton Primary School and Nursery Class is a remote rural school situated in Broughton, near Biggar. The school roll is 40 children across two mixed-stage classes. Fourteen children, aged from two years to those not yet attending primary school, attend the nursery class. The school is partnered with Newlands Primary School, Peeblesshire. The headteacher leads both schools and has been in post for five years. She is supported by a principal teacher who works in the school one day per week. Most children reside in deciles five to eight of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).

### 1.3 Leadership of change

weak

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

- The headteacher and staff have established a warm and welcoming ethos in the school. They have refreshed their vision and values: Broughton can - challenge, achieve and nurture (CAN). There is a need to ensure that all children and families are more involved in developing the vision, values and aims of the school and that these translate into practice. The children feel nurtured and cared for in their interactions with staff, but they require more challenge to achieve their full potential in their learning and leadership.
- The headteacher has worked with staff to develop a school improvement plan. The plan does not focus on areas which require prompt attention in order to improve outcomes for children. The headteacher and staff need to develop more rigorous approaches to self-evaluation to identify the key priorities. The improvement plan should include more specific measures of success to help the headteacher and staff to evaluate and evidence the impact of development work.
- There are important weaknesses in approaches to improving the quality of learning and teaching. The headteacher has developed a quality assurance calendar but it now needs to include core monitoring activities. All aspects of the work of the school must be reviewed and evaluated in a more robust and cohesive way. The headteacher should ensure that agreed approaches to learning and teaching are used consistently across the school. The headteacher needs to monitor teachers' planning for learning and provide clear direction and support in this area. The headteacher should also sample and evaluate children's work on a regular and cyclical basis and give feedback to teachers on areas of strength and development needs. These actions, and follow-up dialogue, will support teachers to improve the quality of learning and teaching.
- Staff have regular opportunities to engage in professional learning led by colleagues and partners. The headteacher has incorporated sessions for professional reading and dialogue into the working time agreement she has with teachers. This is helping to promote a culture

of professional enquiry and build capacity in specific areas within the staff team. There is now a need to ensure that planned professional learning and collegiate time is targeted at the most significant areas for improvement. The headteacher should take steps to align collegiate working more closely with the needs of the school. It is important that the headteacher and all staff monitor carefully the impact of career-long professional learning and all development work on outcomes for children.

- Almost all staff take on leadership roles across the school. These include leading the children's pupil parliament and aspects of school improvement. These leadership roles need to be more focused on core priorities, with clear actions and identified measures of success. This will help staff to understand and evidence the impact of their leadership on overall school improvement.
- Children lead aspects of the school's work, such as sustaining their green Eco flag. The majority take on classroom responsibilities and older children have roles such as house captains and Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSO). Most children feel comfortable making suggestions and feel that their views are taken into account. They are given opportunities to provide feedback on a range of issues, such as the selection of books for the school library. There is significant potential for more children across the whole school to have meaningful leadership responsibilities that are linked to the school improvement plan. Children are very well placed to contribute more fully to the school's quality assurance activities and provide regular evaluative feedback on key areas for improvement.
- Parents are highly supportive of the school. Most feel that they can make suggestions and that their views will be taken into account. The breakfast club is a positive example of parents instigating change that has led to positive outcomes for children and families. As a next step, staff should ensure that parents are given more opportunities to influence and lead aspects of school improvement.
- The headteacher has consulted with staff and the Parent Council about the use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). The plan reflects the aspiration to support equitable opportunities for children who are impacted by their socio-economic circumstances. The headteacher must now ensure that the planned interventions to support attainment are clearly defined and focus on accelerating the progress of identified learners. The plan needs to include clear and specific measures of success. The headteacher and staff should review progress at regular intervals. It is important that all staff have a shared understanding of their role in delivering interventions. The headteacher should take action to adapt the plan as required as the year progresses. This will support children to gain maximum benefit from the funds available.
- Overall, there are important weaknesses in the approaches to leadership of change. Self-evaluation needs to be more measured, rigorous and focused on improving outcomes for children. The headteacher must prioritise the improvement of learning, teaching and assessment. This will help to ensure that all children make appropriate progress in their learning and achieve their full potential.

## 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

weak

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

- There is a calm, supportive and positive ethos across the school. Staff demonstrate warm and caring relationships with the children and each other. Almost all children are respectful and polite. Most parents believe the school encourages children to treat others kindly and with respect.
- In almost all lessons, children are attentive and willingly participate in tasks and activities. However, in most lessons, children are not challenged or sufficiently motivated. This results in children lacking full and active engagement in their learning.
- Children benefit from regular opportunities to learn outdoors. Teachers should now work together to plan for children to develop their creativity and enquiry skills. This will enable children to be more actively engaged in their learning both indoors and outdoors.
- The headteacher and teachers have developed a learning, teaching and assessment framework to help support the consistency and quality of learning and teaching across the school. Teachers should now revisit this framework to establish a shared understanding of high quality learning and teaching. The headteacher and teachers then need to ensure that it is applied consistently.
- In most lessons, planned activities do not meet the needs of all learners in the mixed-stage classes. Teachers need to provide a wider range of learning activities which are correctly matched to all children's level of ability. This includes children who require additional support or challenge to help them make appropriate progress.
- In the majority of lessons, teachers share the purpose of the lesson with children. However, the quality of this practice is inconsistent. Children do not always know the purpose of their tasks and the criterion for success is not well matched to the activities they are working on. As a result, children do not know if they have been successful. Teachers should now ensure that all children are clear about the purpose of their learning and involve them in identifying how they will be successful.
- In a few lessons, children are provided with specific verbal feedback on their progress. Children across the school do not receive regular, constructive written feedback on their learning. As a result, children do not know their next steps and this is inhibiting their ability to be independent learners. Teachers must develop approaches to providing high quality feedback which helps children to understand themselves as learners.
- In a minority of lessons, teachers use a range of open and closed questions to engage learners and check for understanding. Teachers need to improve their questioning techniques to support and challenge children and promote deeper thinking.

- Staff use digital technologies to support a few children in targeted areas of their learning. They have introduced digital platforms to record and share children's learning and have raised parental awareness of these platforms. A few staff have worked with representatives from Scottish Borders Council to further their own skills in using digital technology to support and enhance learning. They should build on their developing knowledge and skills and continue to share their expertise with colleagues. This will help to increase capacity within the staff team.
- The school is at the initial stages of implementing play-based pedagogy at the early level. Staff would benefit from further professional learning and engagement with national practice guidance. They should link closely with staff in the nursery class and schools in their local area to share and develop practice. This will help to develop their understanding of the use of space and the importance of interactions in supporting and extending learning.
- All teachers use a wide range of diagnostic, summative and standardised assessments to gather information about children's learning and development. There is a need for the teachers to streamline the number of assessments children undertake and consider carefully what is being used and why. The headteacher should support teachers to analyse assessment data more fully to inform evaluations and plan next steps for individual children more effectively. This includes planning for children who are negatively impacted by their socio-economic circumstances. Teachers must now work together to review and develop ongoing assessment practices. They need to gather stronger and more relevant assessment evidence to support planning for learning that meets all children's needs.
- Teachers need to develop their understanding of the national learning, teaching, assessment and moderation cycle. They would benefit from participation in a planned programme of moderation activities within their own school and with colleagues in other schools. Teachers recognise that this would help them develop a shared understanding of children's progress within and across Curriculum for Excellence levels. It would also help to increase their accuracy and confidence when making professional judgements about children's attainment of a level.
- Teachers' approaches to planning for learning in literacy and numeracy are not effective. Planning does not provide appropriate and relevant information about the intended learning for individuals and groups of children across a range of timescales. It does not build on prior learning or incorporate approaches to assessing what children have learned. The current approach is inconsistent and overly bureaucratic.
- Teachers do not plan progressively for all curriculum areas. As a result, children are not receiving their full entitlement to the curriculum in a planned and cohesive way. This is resulting in gaps in their learning which is having a negative impact on their progress and attainment.
- Teachers now need to take prompt and well-planned action to improve learning, teaching and assessment to enable them to raise attainment and achievement for all learners.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- The headteacher is introducing curriculum pathways to support progression in learning. This work is at an early stage. Staff should work collaboratively to ensure these are comprehensive and lead to consistent, progressive planning across all curricular areas. This will support them to plan learning that builds on what children already know and can do. Teachers should ensure the pathways that they develop allow children to experience breadth, depth and application in their learning.
- Across the school children learn French and Spanish. There are opportunities for older children to develop their awareness of Spanish and French culture through a range of learning activities including focus days.
- As part of the work in promoting reading for enjoyment, children in the reading focus group have developed a well-organised and inviting central library. It provides a wide range of texts selected by the children. Children are enthusiastic about the books available and would benefit from regular, scheduled times to access this learning resource.
- The school benefits from significant outdoor space. This is used to offer relevant outdoor learning activities across the curriculum. Staff and community partners work together to implement a successful 'Growing Project'. Through this, all classes have the opportunity to learn about preparing, seeding, growing and harvesting fruit and vegetables. Children are proud of the fact that produce grown is used for cooking in the school. There is now significant potential to develop outdoor learning skills in a progressive way using existing partnerships, the school grounds and local community.
- The school has a successful partnership with the Royal Highland Education Trust (RHET). Through this, all children have the opportunity to experience farm visits and classroom speakers. Teachers should link these skills to the world of work to build children's awareness of positive destinations beyond school.
- All classes are timetabled to have two hours of physical education. Teachers should ensure that all children consistently experience their full entitlement to two hours of high quality physical education.

## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- The headteacher and staff have positive relationships with parents. Parents are confident and comfortable in approaching the headteacher and staff to discuss any concerns they may have regarding their child's progress. They feel listened to and valued. The school has recently introduced a digital platform to improve communication with parents and share learning more regularly.
- The school engages families in their children's learning in a range of ways. 'Take a Peek' events allow parents to work alongside their children in class. School community events such as litter picks are used to build a sense of community and pride in the school environment. Children share evaluations of learning at home and families reflect together on what has been learned.
- Parents are asked to share their thoughts, ideas and opinions through questionnaires, surveys and evaluations. The headteacher should further develop approaches to sharing actions arising from these consultations.

## 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. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority that need to be addressed as a matter for urgency.



### 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

satisfactory

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

- Staff at Broughton Primary School know their children and families well. Most children feel respected and almost all feel that they have someone to talk to about their worries or concerns. Children are starting to develop their understanding of the national wellbeing indicators and can give examples of how they feel safe and healthy in school. Staff should now support children to develop further their understanding and use of the language of wellbeing. This will help children to talk about and evaluate their own wellbeing.
- Children and staff have worked together to develop class charters. Children learn about their rights and recognise why these are important. The school is currently working towards a rights-based accredited award. Children are developing their ability to exemplify how these rights translate into their everyday life at home and at school.
- Children are developing their knowledge of different medical issues. This helps to promote understanding and empathy. Children need more opportunities to learn about all aspects of the health and wellbeing curriculum in a progressive manner. This should include food and nutrition and social and emotional health and wellbeing. Children need to develop further their understanding of important issues such as diversity.
- Children have free access to a community led breakfast club. They enjoy socialising with friends from across the nursery class and school and are relaxed and confident in this environment. This approach provides children with a positive and healthy start to the day.
- Staff have engaged in appropriate professional learning and carried out whole-school audits related to wellbeing and inclusion. As a result, they have now developed a nurture space within the school which is used for a range of purposes. Staff should consider how to use this valuable resource more effectively to best support children with specific wellbeing needs.
- Staff use a range of approaches to gather information about children's wellbeing, including individual conversations with children, online surveys and daily check-ins. They track children's wellbeing as part of termly attainment and achievement meetings. The headteacher and teachers use this information to identify children who need support. They should now ensure that the intended outcomes of planned support are specific and measurable. Staff need to gather robust evidence to measure the impact of interventions on improving wellbeing outcomes for each child. This will help them to demonstrate children's progress and plan their next steps.

- All staff understand their statutory duties in relation to child protection and safeguarding. They engage in appropriate training and understand school systems and procedures. Almost all parents feel that their child is safe at school.
- The headteacher tracks closely the attendance of children and is proactive in addressing any concerns. School attendance is consistently in line with, or above, the national average. In 2023, the average attendance was 95%. There have been no instances of exclusion in recent years.
- The majority of children feel that bullying is managed effectively and a minority report that they have not experienced bullying in school. The headteacher records all reports of bullying in line with local and national guidance. Staff have developed a Respectful Relationships document and are refreshing this to reflect local authority policy.
- The headteacher holds regular attainment discussions with staff to identify children who face potential barriers to their learning, such as their socio-economic circumstances. They agree on interventions that would provide these children with the required support. When appropriate, the headteacher develops individual education plans and reviews children's progress with staff and partners on a regular basis. The headteacher should ensure that she follows all aspects of local and national guidance in relation to the use of a staged intervention approach.
- There is an important need to ensure that all children who require additional support have cohesive and accessible learning plans. These plans should include specific and measurable targets, planned assessments and sufficiently detailed evaluations. Staff should provide and collate clear evidence of progress made and identify appropriate next steps. This will help the headteacher to track more effectively the progress made by individual children and support the strategic planning of support for learning. The headteacher needs to ensure that children and parents have planned opportunities to participate formally in the planning and review process.

### 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

weak

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

- Attainment in literacy and numeracy is weak. There are important gaps in children's core knowledge and understanding and they require more challenge in their learning. Most children, including those who require additional support for aspects of their learning, are capable of making much better progress.
- On account of the small roll, general statements about attainment and progress have been made to protect the anonymity of individual children.

#### Attainment in literacy and English

##### Listening and talking

- Across the school most children listen well. Children who have achieved early level listen to their teachers well and follow instructions. They are not yet able to identify patterns and sounds in words and substitute sounds to make new words. Children who achieved first level can respond to literal and inferential questions about texts they have enjoyed. They need to develop skills in turn taking and using body language to show engagement. At first and second level, children can talk about their experiences with adults and others. At second level the children can build on the contributions of others by extending an answer with an opinion of their own. They now need to develop this further by asking or answering questions and clarifying points.

##### Reading

- Across the school, all children read for pleasure every day. Children who have achieved early level participate actively in rhymes and stories. They are able to recall a few features of a text they have heard recently. Children choose books by themselves but they are not able to give reasons for their choice or explain why they like a particular book. They would benefit from increased dialogue with adults to build their vocabulary and awareness of text. At first and second levels, children can talk about their favourite books and show enthusiasm for reading. They have a very limited knowledge of authors and would benefit greatly from exploring, comparing and contrasting books by the same and different authors. Children need to explore inferential, evaluative and higher order questions to promote deeper thinking about texts they read. This will enable them to analyse and evaluate texts with greater confidence and independence. Children who have achieved first level need to develop their awareness of a range of reading strategies to help them develop their independence as readers. At second level, children can answer specific questions about tools an author may use to engage readers. With assistance, they can identify sources that are reliable.

## Writing

- Children at early level are developing their letter formation. Children at first and second level successfully complete spelling tasks they undertake. At first level, children write about personal experiences using appropriate vocabulary to describe events. They are not experienced in writing at length across a range of contexts and genres. At second level, children can use paragraphs and sentences of different length and structure to engage the reader. They now need to become more independent in making choices about layout and presentation, including in digital texts, to engage their audience. They also need to learn to apply these skills in a range of contexts for a variety of purposes.

## Numeracy and mathematics

### Number, money and measure

- Children who have achieved early level can count on and back from a given number, add and subtract within 20 and identify odds and evens. They understand the concepts of length and breadth. Children now need to improve their knowledge of core aspects of money and time. Children who have achieved first level estimate amounts with confidence and solve simple equations. They can calculate change and use coins to create a given amount. Children need to improve their recall of multiplication and division facts to solve problems and develop their knowledge and understanding of units of length and volume. Children who are working at second level understand place value but lack confidence when multiplying by multiples of 10. They need support to multiply a whole number by a two-digit number and to complete calculations involving division. Children need to improve their ability to solve problems involving money and their understanding of the link between time, speed and distance.

### Shape, position and movement

- Children who have achieved early level can create patterns using two-dimensional shapes and create symmetrical pictures with one line of symmetry. They understand simple positional language but do not have an appropriate knowledge of basic three-dimensional objects. Children who have achieved first level can name and identify the properties of a range of three-dimensional objects and recognise the four compass points. Children at first and second level are not confident in using and following directional language and instructions. Children working at second level can identify different types of angles and draw the nets of three-dimensional objects. They need support to identify the use of mathematical concepts in real life contexts, such as the world of work.

### Information handling

- Children who have achieved early level are not confident in identifying types of information available in their everyday life. They need support to use their knowledge of colour, shape, size and other properties to match and sort items in a variety of different ways. Children who have achieved first level can interpret a pictograph and create appropriate questions for others. They need to develop their knowledge of the ways that information can be gathered and improve their ability to extract and use data from a range of sources. Children at second level need to develop their understanding of different ways to capture, display and analyse data. They are unfamiliar with the concept of spreadsheets.

## Attainment over time

- There are important weaknesses in the reliability of the school's attainment data. Children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is significantly lower than reported. The headteacher must ensure that professional judgements about achievement of a level are based on sound assessment information. Staff do not track progress over time in other curriculum areas.

## **Overall quality of learner's achievements**

- Staff celebrate children's achievements both in and out with school through assemblies, the school website, displays and local newspapers. Children are keen to contribute to the life of the school. Older children have designated individual leadership roles such as house captains and younger children have specific classroom responsibilities. As a next step, staff should ensure that all children have opportunities to take on meaningful leadership roles that support school improvement. Staff need to identify and monitor the skills children are developing when they engage with leadership opportunities. This will help children to understand which skills for learning, life and work they are developing.
- Staff offer a range of lunch-time clubs including sports, music and press club. Most children participate enthusiastically in these activities. Staff have recently started to track children's participation in clubs within the school and local community. This is helping them to identify children who are missing out, including those who are impacted by their socio-economic circumstances.

## **Equity for all learners**

- The headteacher has taken appropriate steps to reduce the cost of the school day. Staff use their in-depth knowledge of families' circumstances to identify needs and address them in a practical and sensitive manner. They use additional funding, including the PEF allocation and charitable grants, to reduce or negate the cost of school activities such as trips. This helps to provide equity of opportunity and reduce financial barriers to participation. The headteacher should continue to develop further approaches to addressing this important area in collaboration with the whole school community.
- Staff have allocated PEF funding to increase attainment in writing, with a specific focus on children who are adversely affected by their socio-economic circumstances. The headteacher now needs to ensure that the planning, implementation and impact of this support is closely monitored. The extent to which this intervention is closing the poverty related attainment gap and accelerating the progress of identified children cannot currently be evidenced.

## 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.