

# Summarised inspection findings

**Kilbarchan Primary School**

Renfrewshire Council

29 April 2025

## Key contextual information

Kilbarchan Primary School is a non denominational school situated in the village of Kilbarchan in Renfrewshire Council. At the time of inspection, 198 children are taught over 9 classes. Approximately 13% of children reside in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles 1 and 2 and 6% of children are entitled to free school meals. One fifth of children require additional support with their learning. Approximately one quarter of children attending the school do so as a result of placing requests.

The school has experienced a number of changes in staffing in recent years. The substantive headteacher is currently on secondment outwith the local authority. An acting headteacher has been in post since August 2023. She is supported by two depute headteachers and one principal teacher.

### 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

- All children and staff work well together in a climate of very positive and respectful relationships. Staff are committed to embedding children's rights and this can be seen in the class charters and the supportive ethos across the school. The school's values are well-embedded and underpin learning.
- Staff and senior leaders promote high expectations of children's behaviour. Staff use a nurturing approach which results in children learning in a calm and supportive environment. Most children interact very well with each other and are polite to staff and visitors. Senior leaders provide all staff with dedicated time each week to work with individual children to discuss their wellbeing. As a result, most children enjoy school and are ready to learn.
- In the majority of lessons, children participate well in learning activities. They are most engaged when learning is well-paced, with carefully considered tasks. However, this is not yet of a consistently high-quality across the school. In the majority of lessons, staff should ensure learning and teaching is delivered at an appropriate level for individuals and cohorts of children. In most classes, staff support effectively children who require additional support with their learning. In most lessons, higher-achieving children would benefit from greater levels of challenge.
- In the majority of lessons, teachers provide clear explanations and instructions. They share with children the purpose of learning and how they can demonstrate that they have been successful. In a few lessons, children are involved in creating the measures of success with staff. This is helping children reflect on how they can improve their work. The majority of teachers are beginning to share ongoing verbal and written feedback. Senior leaders should

continue to work with teachers to develop consistent approaches to providing written and verbal feedback to children, including for children's homework.

- The acting headteacher recently led a whole school approach to improving aspects of learning and teaching. Staff have undertaken professional learning to improve the quality of teaching and to ensure consistent approaches across the school. Senior leaders should continue to embed these recent improvements and share examples of highly-effective practice more widely across the school. This would help develop greater consistency of high-quality learning and teaching across all classes.
- Staff have a good understanding of play pedagogy in Primary 1. Most children engage well in play activities that are developing their creativity and curiosity. Staff in Primary 1 provide learning through play that challenges and supports all children to engage in learning. They ensure an appropriate balance of teacher-initiated and child-led play.
- Teachers are beginning to use the school grounds to provide outdoor learning experiences for children. In a few classes, children enjoy spending time outdoors and are keen to take a lead role in improving their environment. Staff should work together to ensure that children can build on their previous outdoor learning as they move through the school.
- Across the school, staff make good use of technology to motivate and engage learners. In the majority of lessons, staff make good use of digital devices to help children consolidate and reinforce learning. However, the lack of connectivity in some parts of the school, limits the development of children's digital skills.
- In the majority of lessons, teachers use a variety of assessment approaches. These are not always effective in informing teachers about children's learning or used to make improvements to children's progress during the lesson. Senior leaders have developed an annual assessment calendar that outlines regular planned use of assessment. Staff record a wide range of assessment information and have access to a range of informative data on individual children. Teachers should continue to use this information to plan for children's next steps in learning, to support them to make increased progress.
- Staff have recently adopted a new online planning system. Teachers are at the early stages of implementing planning using this format. They should continue to work together to ensure they plan using progression pathways for all curricular areas. To support the drive to raise attainment, staff should plan more effectively for the needs of children within each class.
- Senior leaders and staff discuss children's progress termly using the 'facts, story, action' approach. This is helping identify children who require particular support with their learning. Teachers should continue to use this tracking approach to identify and plan for all children's next steps in learning, including for those who require further challenge.
- All teachers engage in planned collaborative activities with colleagues from local schools, for example to moderate standards in writing. This is helping to develop a shared understanding of national standards. As a result, teachers' professional judgements are becoming increasingly robust.

## 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

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

- Overall, attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is good. Most children at early and second levels, and the majority of children at first level, are on track to achieve national standards in literacy and numeracy this session. Most children who require additional support with their learning are making good progress towards individual learning targets.

#### Attainment in literacy and English

- Most children at early and second levels are making good progress in all aspects of literacy and English. Most children at first level are making satisfactory progress. A few children are capable of making better progress.

#### Listening and talking

- At early level, most children are keen to talk about their learning through play. Most younger children listen well to each other and to their teacher. At first level, a majority of children communicate clearly and audibly. Children require adult support to listen to the ideas of others and concentrate for increased periods of time in group discussion. At second level, most children listen well to instructions and respond to the ideas of others appropriately. They offer their views confidently and are beginning to justify their opinions. Across the school, children need support to identify skills for group discussion and giving presentations to audiences. They would benefit from these skills being taught more explicitly.

#### Reading

- Children speak enthusiastically about the range of books they can read from their class and school library. Staff should continue to develop children's love of books and provide all children with books to take home. Older children would benefit from encouragement to read more challenging texts.
- Most children at early level, use their knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns to read words. They are beginning to read familiar texts with expression. A few children could be developing early reading skills at a faster pace. At first level, children read aloud fluently and show an understanding of different genres. At second level, children are enthusiastic about reading and answer comprehension questions with confidence. However, they lack skills in identifying aspects of the writer's style. Staff should ensure this becomes a more regular feature of reading lessons.

#### Writing

- At early level, the majority of children write one or two simple sentences independently. They identify sounds and are becoming more confident blending sounds to write unfamiliar words.

Children should develop their writing skills more frequently through play, using supports to help them write independently. At first level, a majority of children are beginning to use paragraphs to structure their writing and are becoming more confident using a range of punctuation. At second level, a majority of children use a range of interesting vocabulary and techniques to engage the reader. At first and second levels, children need to develop further their skills in creating extended pieces of writing. They would benefit from more frequent and regular opportunities to write for a variety of purposes.

### **Numeracy and mathematics**

- Overall, most children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. A few children are capable of making better progress. Across the school, most children have positive attitudes towards mathematics and numeracy.

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

- At early level, most children have a good understanding of number sequence and number processes. They solve addition and subtraction problems within 20, and a few beyond. At first level, the majority of children have a good understanding of place value. They require more support to work out mental calculations with greater speed and accuracy. At first level, children need to develop further skills in calculating multi-step problems and develop a stronger understanding of measure. At second level, most children show confidence with knowledge of multiplication, division, fractions, time and money.

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

- At early level, most children recognise two-dimensional (2D) shapes and three-dimensional (3D) objects. They are confident when using positional language and create simple patterns. At first level, children lack confidence describing the properties of 2D shapes and 3D objects. A few children are confident using compass directions and angles. At second level, most children are confident describing the properties of 3D objects. They can confidently identify a range of angles.

### **Information handling**

- At early level, most children sort items based on their own criteria. They interpret data from a graph and answer simple questions. At first level, most children ask and answer questions accurately about data sets. They require support to identify a range of ways to collect and present information. At second level, most children interpret information and collect, organise and display data in a range of ways, for example using bar charts, tables and graphs. Overall, children would benefit from further opportunities to develop their information handling skills using digital technology.

### **Attainment over time**

- Senior leaders track attainment in literacy and numeracy over time for individual children and groups of children, such as those who are care experienced. Senior leaders meet termly with class teachers to discuss the progress of children and approaches to raise attainment for children who are not on track to achieve expected levels. This is helping staff develop a stronger understanding of the attainment journey of children over time. Senior leaders should continue to support staff to make stronger links between planning for learning and the progress children make over time. As planned, senior leaders should now work with staff to establish a clear strategy to raise attainment in writing.
- Staff are not yet monitoring children's progress across all curricular areas. Senior leaders should work with staff to review how children's progress can be monitored and ensure that children are making progress in each curricular area as they move through school.

- Senior leaders promote well the importance of attendance at school through newsletters and communications with families. Senior leaders have effective systems to track and monitor children's attendance, including those at risk of low attendance. Overall children's attendance is higher than local authority and national averages. At the time of inspection, a few children's attendance is below 90%. Approaches to improve attendance include targeted support for children, arranging meetings with families to agree support, and making links with partners.

### **Overall quality of learners' achievements**

- Children's achievements within and outwith the school are celebrated at assemblies, in school newsletters and on wall displays. At assemblies, children are awarded certificates for demonstrating the school values.
- Across the school, children are involved in a range of activities which support them to develop well their skills, attributes and capacities. For example, children attend a range of sports clubs and participate in sporting competitions. Older children enjoy leadership roles as learning and reading buddies with younger children. Children in P6 have recently trained to be 'Young Leaders of Learning' in conjunction with a neighbouring school. This is helping children to contribute to whole school self-evaluation processes.
- All children in P1-3 attend weekly 'masterclasses' which support them to develop a range of skills such as creativity and music. All children in P4-7 are members of a committee focused on areas, such as fundraising and digital technology. Each committee develops a plan which details what action is to be taken, how this will improve the school or community, and what skills children are developing as a result of their participation. Children articulate well the benefit of all of these activities in helping them develop skills such as teamwork, leadership and communication.
- Staff track the involvement of different groups of children in achievement activities well. They are aware of those not participating and take steps to support children at risk of missing opportunities. A next step is for staff to link the tracking of children's achievements with their skills development.

### **Equity for all learners**

- Staff have a strong understanding of the social and economic circumstances of children and families. They take sensitive and effective action, working closely with local partners, to mitigate against barriers children face. For example, they ensure families have access to pre-loved school uniform.
- Senior leaders use a wide range of relevant data to identify and target interventions funded by Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). This session, PEF is mainly focused on the provision of staffing to accelerate identified children's progress in literacy and numeracy and improve attendance levels. Evaluations show the positive impact of focused interventions and approaches for most children receiving targeted support.

## Other relevant evidence

- Children have access to class libraries to access books for reading for pleasure. The selection of books should be widened to ensure that children can access a range of more challenging texts appropriate to their age and stage.
- Senior leaders should regularly review the planned learning of national entitlements across the school. Children do not receive consistently their full entitlement to modern languages in line with the 1+2 language policy.



## 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.