Summarised inspection findings

Bruntsfield Primary School

The City of Edinburgh Council

10 March 2020

Key contextual information

Bruntsfield Primary School is a large, non-denominational school situated in the Bruntsfield area of Edinburgh City. It is part of the Boroughmuir High School cluster. The senior management team comprises the headteacher, who has been in post for 13 years, two full time depute headteachers and two part time depute headteachers. Over 75% of children live within Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles 9 or 10. There are 21 classes from Primary 1 to Primary 7. At the time of inspection, the school roll is 620 of which 104 children have English as an additional language.

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	

■ Children are friendly, articulate, and eager to learn. Staff and children enjoy positive relationships, which are set within a caring and supportive ethos. The school's recent focus on building relationships and resilience is supporting children to become more adaptable and able to problem solve. Children independently apply strategies for maintaining good relationships among each other. Older children support others to find solutions and compromise, particularly in the playground. This supports children's awareness of their rights and links to the school's work on the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child.

■ Children take on roles of responsibility in a range of pupil participation groups. Through these groups, children contribute well to the life of the school and develop a range of skills. Most children can relate these skills to the world of work. A progressive skills framework, linked to developing key skills for learning, life and work would be beneficial in this regard. Following a recent survey of children's views by the depute headteachers, there is a plan to extend leadership opportunities for children to include identifying and leading areas of school improvement.

■ In most classes, children's views inform planning. In a few classes, children's leadership of learning is most effective when they have the opportunity to contribute to the planning and delivery of learning and exercise choice. They demonstrate a higher level of motivation and interest as a result. In most lessons, children experience a range of differentiated tasks which are at the right level of difficulty and help them make the best possible progress. In a minority of lessons, the pace of learning needs to be more brisk. Teachers provide opportunities for engaging, play based learning in the early stages. This is well matched to children's learning needs and enables children to lead their own learning effectively. Across the school, there should be more opportunities for children to lead and make choices in their learning. In moving forward, senior leaders and staff should ensure learning has a greater focus on creativity, enabling all children to be responsible for, and independent in, their learning.

■ Overall, the quality of teaching is good. The school has developed a learning, teaching and assessment policy. This supports teachers to provide a consistent approach to learning across

the school. Senior leaders should continue to share good practice across the school, supporting all staff to plan high quality learning, teaching and assessment for all learners. The majority of teachers plan a range of exciting learning experiences in real-life contexts to motivate children, making good use of the local community. Children value visits to museums, the theatre and local amenities. Most teachers use these opportunities well to make links across the curriculum, particularly in literacy and numeracy. A few children enjoy visits to special outdoor learning facilities to support their emotional development further. Staff recognise the need to extend opportunities for outdoor learning for all children using a planned, progressive, skills-based approach.

■ Teachers make regular use of technology to support their teaching and engage children in their learning. They should continue to increase the range of ways digital technology is used. Children confidently use laptop and tablet technology to carry out research, record their work and consolidate their learning. The majority of children are capable of increased challenge in their use of digital technology. Senior leaders and staff should ensure the progressive development of children's digital learning skills. Children should take a greater role in leading digital learning across the school.

■ Staff use effectively assessment strategies across the school. Teachers share the purpose of learning and steps to success with children. Most children can articulate confidently what they are learning. In most classes, teachers align oral and written feedback closely to the purpose of learning, enabling children to identify what they need to do to improve. In most lessons, teachers demonstrate the effective use of quality questioning to promote children's curiosity, confidence, and higher order thinking skills. Children assess their own and each other's work using a variety of strategies. In most lessons, plenary sessions enable children to reflect on their learning and recap on skills learned.

■ Teachers use a range of assessment approaches to allow children to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. Working closely with colleagues from associated schools, teachers develop high quality assessments which give children an opportunity to apply their learning. Most teachers use assessment information well to plan appropriately for the needs of children. A few teachers should develop further the use of assessment to inform planning better-matched to children's needs.

■ Teachers plan together with stage partners to increase consistency in learning across classes. This supports a shared understanding of standards. Staff engage in moderation across different areas of the curriculum at an associated schools level, increasing their confidence in making judgements of children's progress. Teachers need further whole-school moderation activity, including planned professional dialogue with colleagues across stages and levels within the school, to develop further their shared understanding of children's progress within and across Curriculum for Excellence levels.

■ Snapshots of children's progress across all areas of the curriculum are captured and shared with parents through pupil profile jotters. Children and parents could be involved further in learning, by developing and sharing clear, relevant next steps as part of this process.

■ Clear tracking systems are in place at department level to support the depute headteachers to monitor children's attainment. These reflect and support children's progress at times of transition as they move through the school. Teachers have regular planning and tracking meetings with the depute headteachers to discuss children's learning and progress. They value the advice and support they receive during these discussions. The depute headteachers make use increasingly of data to support appropriately robust dialogue with each member of staff. Teachers should develop further skills in data analysis to support them in planning effectively and securing improvement for all children.

■ The headteacher uses standardised assessments to provide a means of tracking the progress of all children across the school. She has a good overview of pupil progress and monitors the attainment of individuals, however there is a need to review and track children's progress more strategically at a whole-school level. The use of standardised assessment data should be reviewed to ensure it is proportionate to other relevant data teachers gather on children's progress within Curriculum for Excellence, especially in the allocation of resources. Relevant, whole-school tracking would provide clarity, and support senior leaders and staff to identify more accurately the gaps in learning and progress. Senior leaders should ensure that all children, including those facing additional challenges, are appropriately supported to make the best progress possible.

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

- Across the school, most children make very good progress from prior levels of attainment.

- The school's data indicates that almost all children have achieved appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy. Based on increasingly accurate teacher judgement, predictions indicate that almost all Primary 1 children are on track to attain early level in literacy and numeracy by the end this school session. Most children at first and second level are on track to achieve appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels in both literacy and numeracy. A minority of children currently exceed expected levels at first and second level. The number of children exceeding expected levels increases as children progress through the school in both literacy and numeracy.

- Most children with additional barriers to learning, attain appropriately against their own targets. Most children in receipt of additional support in literacy and numeracy funded by Pupil Equity Fund (PEF), are working at, or beyond, expected levels.

Literacy and English

- Overall, most children are making very good progress from prior levels of attainment in reading, writing and listening and talking.

Reading

- Across the school children make effective use of a range of texts, including digital sources, for a variety of purposes. At early level, almost all children use their knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns to read words very well. At first level, most children explain their preference for particular texts or authors. Children justify their personal preference between specific texts and their portrayal in film, identifying differences between them. At second level, most children discuss the writer's style and other features appropriate to genre very well. Across the school, a significant minority of children are reading beyond expected levels. The most able readers in senior classes should continue to be challenged through appropriate texts.

Writing

- Across the school children write increasingly for a variety of purposes and audiences. At early level, most children write to convey their own experiences and feelings using appropriate vocabulary. At first level, children organise their writing in an appropriate format and use vocabulary relevant to the context. At second level, children apply appropriately the features of the chosen genre to create a range of short and extended texts.

Listening and talking

■ Throughout the school, children speak with clarity and confidence. At early level, they listen and respond appropriately to others. They follow and give simple instructions. At first level, children build on the contributions of others during discussions very well to convey their own thoughts and ideas. More formal debating skills develop as children progress through the school. At second level, children confidently present their work, such as a topic of investigation, to an audience. Across the school, a few children need to develop confidence in speaking to a large group.

Numeracy and mathematics

■ Overall, most children are making very good progress in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure

■ At early level, almost all children add to ten and can count forwards and backwards within 20. At first level, almost all children solve addition and subtraction problems with three digit whole numbers. Across the school, most children budget well using money and tell the time using digital and analogue clocks. At second level, almost all children are confident rounding numbers and can correctly select the most appropriate units for measurement. Most children can utilise 24-hour timetables to plan journeys related to real life contexts. Children should continue to extend their mental agility skills, particularly in division.

Shape, position and movement

■ Across the school, almost all children use mathematical language well to describe properties of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. At first and second level, most children have a good understanding of angles and directions. They can plot points using co-ordinates well and apply these skills across learning. A few children require support to use a protractor or compass accurately.

Information handling

■ Across the school, children undertake surveys and display and interpret information in a range of ways. At early level, children use tally marks to record information accurately. At first level, children understand and can use Venn diagrams. At second level, children can draw bar and line graphs and can interpret information from graphs and charts. Overall, children need more opportunities to develop and apply across the curriculum, skills in gathering, recording, displaying and analysing data, in different contexts, including through digital technology.

Attainment over time

■ The school's data demonstrates sustained high levels of attainment in reading, writing, listening and talking and numeracy over time. Over the past three years, data provided by the school shows that almost all children attain expected levels in literacy and numeracy.

■ The school uses personal learning journeys in early years, and individual pupil profiles from P3, to track effectively the development of children's skills across a range of curricular areas.

Overall quality of learner's achievement

■ Almost all children are successful, confident and contribute to the life of the school. Children achieve many successes through the wide range of opportunities within and outwith the classroom, including residential stays. Children are rightly proud of their many successes which are shared and celebrated. Across the school, children develop skills, for example, teamwork and communication, through participation in pupil voice committees and a wealth of clubs led by staff, parents and partners.

- Senior leaders track and monitor achievement and participation in activities. As a next step, they should support children to identify and track the skills they are developing and link these to their learning. Staff should monitor and track these to support progression.

Equity for all learners

- Staff use their knowledge of children and their families to offer support that is specific to each situation. Senior leaders are proactive in ensuring no child is in danger of missing out. They work creatively with families to achieve this by providing targeted support to enable all children to benefit from a range of activities. This includes through sustained high levels of attendance at school and high levels of participation at the range of clubs or activities on offer.

- Senior leaders plan carefully for the use of monies received through the PEF. This fund provides additional staff who offer targeted support for individuals and groups of children to support literacy and numeracy. Access to art and play activities, including specialist multi-sensory provision outwith school, is also supported by the use of PEF. Additional targeted approaches are resulting in most children achieving well in relation to literacy and numeracy attainment. The school should continue to evaluate each intervention to measure the impact of approaches.

Other relevant evidence

■ The Parent Council is very effective in keeping the wider parent body informed, and in supporting the school. They provide significant additional benefits through extensive fundraising to support the curriculum and additional resources. Commendably, parents also support children's achievement through the provision and running of a wide range of after school clubs and activities. These activities are popular with children and contribute to the positive ethos of the school community. The Parent Council is well placed to support senior leaders in involving parents further in self-evaluation and improvement planning.

■ The wider parent body is very supportive of school events and attendance at learning 'showcases' is very high. Parents are keen to support learning and, in particular, the work around careers education by sharing the skills they need in their jobs. This supports children to make links between their learning and skills for learning, life and work.

■ There is a need to improve communication between members of the senior leadership team, as well as with all staff to ensure consistency of key messages and harmonious working across the school. The school communicates with parents in a variety of ways, however a few parents would like information to be provided more timeously.

■ Space is at a premium across the school with a few learning environments offering limited opportunity for creativity. Senior leaders and staff should review the use of available areas and rooms to ensure their use is maximised to support children in their learning. This includes providing breakout spaces or quiet rooms for groups of children including those with additional support needs. Increased use of the school grounds as a learning environment would increase the available space as well as provide further opportunities for creativity and exploration.

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.