

Summarised inspection findings

Wardie Primary School

The City of Edinburgh Council

5 November 2024

Key contextual information

Wardie Primary is a non-denominational, co-educational school situated in the city of Edinburgh. At the time of inspection, there are 409 children on the school roll across 16 classes. There is a main building and several annexe buildings within the school grounds. Most children live within Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data zones 7-10. Approximately 7% of children are registered for free school meals, which is below the national average. Twenty-six percent of children have additional support needs, including 11% with English as an additional language. Over the last three years, there have been a number of changes in the senior leadership team. A new substantive headteacher took up post in May 2024. The headteacher is supported by a depute headteacher (0.8 full-time equivalent) and an acting depute headteacher.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	good
<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">learning and engagementquality of teachingeffective use of assessmentplanning, tracking and monitoring	

- Staff know children and families well. Senior leaders and staff work very effectively together to ensure a positive ethos across the school. Most teachers use the school values to reinforce high expectations. They use well-timed praise and positive reinforcement effectively to ensure children understand clearly how to be a good learner. Most teachers have established calm, well organised and purposeful learning environments. Across the school, most children are well behaved, respectful towards others and listen and engage well with their learning, contributing with relevant opinions and ideas. A few children become involved in low-level disruptive behaviours. This is most often when tasks and activities are too easy. When this happens, teachers and support staff use encouragement and supportive conversations well to positively direct children’s focus back to learning.
- In literacy and numeracy lessons, teachers provide a well-considered balance of whole class and group teaching. This approach helps children make progress in their learning. Across the school, teachers provide a range of interesting activities and experiences across the curriculum which capture children’s interest and curiosity. The majority of teachers use their knowledge of children’s strengths and learning needs well to provide meaningful support and challenge. However, in a few classes there are children who require a faster pace of learning and an increased level of difficulty. As planned, staff should continue to develop and tailor their teaching approaches and lesson content to ensure these meet the needs of all children.
- Senior leaders and teachers use an agreed framework to ensure a shared understanding of what high-quality learning and teaching looks like. Established staff also provide helpful support for teachers who join the school. As a result, more consistently high-quality teaching approaches are becoming embedded across the school. Teachers provide opportunities for children to practise their skills in different contexts, including the outdoor environment and in the community. Children take responsibility for aspects of their own learning and make decisions regularly about what and how to learn.

- In most lessons, teachers' explanations and instructions are clear. They share the purpose of learning and support children to understand how they will be successful. This supports children's learning well and most complete tasks and activities with confidence. A few teachers use the language of learning and success throughout lessons highly effectively. This encourages children to reflect on their progress and extends their thinking. In almost all lessons, teachers use questioning well to help children recall facts, revisit prior learning and to check for understanding. A few teachers use highly effective open-ended questioning and build on children's responses skilfully to deepen children's understanding of concepts. This high quality approach to questioning should be shared to support all staff in extending further children's thinking and learning.
- Children who require additional support in their learning are assisted well by skilled support staff. Helpful explanations and prompts from support staff help children to participate in class lessons and remain engaged in their learning. Support staff also provide valuable literacy and numeracy interventions which are helping children to build important skills.
- All staff working at Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) early level are developing well their approach to play. They have planned spaces well indoors to create a range of play areas. As a result, children make choices and sustain their concentration well during their play. Staff plan direct teaching inputs effectively to ensure all children receive the right support and make progress. They are developing well their interactions with children to enhance and extend learning. Teachers are highly-responsive and help children make links with literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. Staff should continue to develop experiences that help children build further independence in their learning.
- Across the school, all teachers use interactive boards well during teaching. For example, in music, teachers provide high-quality demonstrations using a range of digital content effectively to help children understand rhythm and beat. Teachers use individual class devices effectively to enhance learning, demonstrate teaching points and develop children's digital literacy. Older children confidently program toys and write code through relevant and meaningful contexts.
- Almost all teachers use a range of strategies well to check children's understanding during lessons. Across the school, all teachers employ similar effective approaches, such as the use of talking partners to support children to share ideas and opinions. They plan well interactive techniques that encourage participation from all children. This includes providing opportunities for children to self and peer assess their work. P7 children engage well with structured self-assessment in literacy. They evaluate their progress against given criteria and identify any gaps in their learning.
- Most teachers use plenaries well at the end of lessons to summarise learning and provide feedback for children. They also provide ongoing verbal feedback during lessons that helps children understand their strengths and how to improve further. In a few classes, teachers provide quality written feedback, however, this is not yet consistent across all classes. Teachers should develop ways to provide high-quality feedback about learning and progress across the school. This should help children to set and evaluate their own targets for learning.
- All teachers assess children's learning regularly and gather important evidence of their progress across the year. Teachers are now using a recently created school assessment calendar to plan and use a wider range of assessments, including observations, formative and summative assessments. They should ensure this includes robust approaches to assess children's skills in listening and talking. A few teachers make effective use of diagnostic information gained from Scottish national standardised assessments (SNSA) to understand children's strengths and gaps in learning. Senior leaders and staff should now use information

gained from assessment evidence, including SNSA, to identify in more detail whole school strengths and areas for improvement in literacy and numeracy.

- All teachers use local authority progression pathways well to guide their planning. They plan collaboratively across different timescales and make use of information shared by staff at points of transition. All teachers seek and use children's views well when planning learning experiences and curriculum content. Staff should continue to develop planning approaches to ensure children's existing knowledge and understanding is informing future plans more effectively.
- All teachers are engaging in helpful moderation activities that are supporting a shared understanding of national standards and expectations. This includes CfE second level staff working collaboratively with secondary colleagues. As a result, almost all teachers are increasingly confident in using a range of data to make accurate professional judgements on children's achievement of CfE levels in reading, writing and numeracy. As planned, senior leaders and teachers should continue to develop this work to discuss listening and talking, and other curricular areas.
- Teachers discuss class, group and individual children's progress in literacy and numeracy with senior leaders during regular tracking meetings. Processes for monitoring children's progress have been in place, however these did not offer a clear overview of children's progress over time. The school have now become 'early adopters' of a new local authority wide system to help improve recording processes and support staff to monitor progress in more detail.

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 numeracy is good. In June 2023, by the end of P1, almost all children attained nationally expected CfE levels for literacy and numeracy. Most children achieved expected levels for literacy and numeracy by the end of P4 and P7. Attainment is strongest in listening and talking, with almost all children across the school achieving the nationally expected levels.
- Overall, most children who receive additional support for their learning are making good progress from prior levels of learning. Staff should ensure tracking information and evaluations capture the smaller positive steps these children make in their learning.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, most children are making good progress in literacy and English.

Listening and talking

- At the end of early level, almost all children share their ideas and opinions. They respond well to instructions and questions. They communicate well with others during play. Children should develop further their skills in turn taking. At the end of first level, most children contribute ideas during class discussions. They understand and respond to different types of questions. A minority of children need to develop skills in active listening when working in groups and responding appropriately to peers and adults. Most children working towards second level are articulate and offer their opinions respectfully. They listen to and build on the views of others. They should now apply these skills to a wider range of purposes and audiences.

Reading

- At the end of early level, almost all children use their letter knowledge to sound out short words. They use picture clues to help to read and understand simple text. At the end of first level, most children answer confidently a range of questions. They identify and discuss the main ideas of a text. Most children read aloud with confidence, using known strategies to tackle any challenging and unfamiliar words. Most children working towards second level demonstrate fluency and use expression when reading. They explain preferences for particular texts or authors and identify and discuss features of language. Across the school, all children should more regularly find and use information from non-fiction books and texts appropriate to their age and stage.

Writing

- At the end of early level, most children write short sentences with growing confidence using simple words. They write for a variety of purposes, for example, adding simple labels to diagrams. At the end of first level, children convey information, describe events and combine

ideas in their writing. Most children use punctuation and paragraphs well to create short texts. Most children working towards second level make considered choices about their layout. They use appropriate vocabulary to suit their audience. Across the school, children should benefit from regularly writing across a wider range of genres, and at increasing length.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, most children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics and a few children are making very good progress. Across the school, children require further support to understand and use subject-specific mathematical terminology and vocabulary.

Number, money and measure

- By the end of early level, most children are confident with simple addition and subtraction. They count accurately forwards and backwards in sequence. Most children will benefit from explaining their thinking and presenting their solutions more regularly in a variety of ways. By the end of first level, most children demonstrate mental agility appropriate for their stage. They use estimation and rounding skills well and explain their processes for solving number operations, such as addition and multiplication. Children are less confident working with division. Most children working towards second level, identify the steps needed when solving word problems and complete calculations confidently and accurately. They apply their knowledge and skills in number and money well in context, such as budgeting. They will benefit from further practice linking mathematical concepts such as fractions, decimals and percentages.

Shape, position and movement

- By the end of early level, most children recognise a range of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. They use language of position and movement when playing games. By the end of first level, most children identify more than one line of symmetry and create their own symmetrical pictures and designs. Most children working towards second level, confidently classify a range of angles including acute, obtuse, straight and reflex. Across the school, children should benefit from regularly applying their learning and skills in shape, position and movement to real-life, practical contexts.

Information handling

- Across early and first level, most children sort objects correctly using Venn diagrams. They record information accurately with tallies and discuss pictograms and bar graphs. Most children working towards second level are confident with a range of methods used to gather and classify information. Across the school, children should continue to build and apply their skills regularly in information handling for meaningful and authentic purposes. This should include using digital technologies.

Attainment over time

- In recent years, senior leaders and teachers have worked closely together to increase the rigour and robustness of attainment information in reading, writing and numeracy. Senior leaders collate and analyse patterns of attainment over time for cohorts and groups of learners, such as children who have experienced care and those for whom English is an additional language. School data shows that high levels of achievement at CfE early level are often not maintained as children move through first and second level. Staff are beginning to use attainment information better to help plan targeted interventions and school-wide improvements, for example improved approaches to reading. There is evidence of positive impact on children's progress as a result of this work. Staff should continue to focus on raising attainment to ensure children build on and maintain their progress over time.

- The headteacher monitors children's attendance effectively. This includes analysing data and identifying any children who show a pattern of absence. Overall, attendance is good and is above the national average. Currently, 12% of children have attendance levels below 90%. This is mostly as a result of term-time family holidays. A few children have part-time timetables or flexi-school hours paired with home schooling. These arrangements are closely monitored. Senior leaders, together with partners and secondary colleagues, provide a range of interventions to support children who have patterns of absence. As a result, attendance and engagement in classroom learning has increased for a few children. Staff should continue to work with families to support them to sustain expected levels of attendance.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Staff value and regularly celebrate the skills children gain from hobbies, interests, clubs and competitions. These achievements are shared in class, at assemblies and through displays. Healthy lifestyles are promoted well through work with Active Schools partners and many children experience success through participation in sports clubs. Staff are beginning to record and track children's achievements in and out of school. They are using this information well to plan for and support children who may be at risk of missing out. Older children speak proudly about school responsibilities, such as house captains, sports leaders and buddy roles, and each year P7 children attend a residential excursion. Through these experiences, children build valuable skills, such as teamwork and communication. Staff should consider ways to support more children across the school to experience meaningful achievement through roles of responsibility or leadership. They should also support children to identify and discuss the attributes and skills they develop through their achievements.

Equity for all learners

- Senior leaders work well with the Wardie Family Forum to reduce 'the cost of the school day'. They provide helpful initiatives, such as a uniform bank and provision of outdoor clothing. They also offer a 'pay what you can' approach towards activities and excursions. This is helping to ensure financial constraints do not prevent children from taking part in opportunities for learning and achievement.
- Senior leaders identify attainment gaps using a range of appropriate data. They use this information to plan interventions to support children who may be facing potential barriers to their learning. Last session, most of the school's Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) was allocated to projects supporting children's wellbeing and participation. This targeted support increased school attendance and children's level of engagement in classroom learning. Senior leaders have not yet clearly measured how this work has impacted on children's attainment. Staff and partners now need to plan and evaluate the impact of all targeted interventions more rigorously. This should support senior leaders to clearly show how PEF is raising attainment and accelerating children's learning progress.

Other relevant evidence

- Senior leaders should develop approaches to consult and engage with parents on the school's use of Pupil Equity Funding. This will allow parents to share their thoughts and ideas on how this funding could be spent.
- All classes experience two hours of physical education (PE) weekly. Across the year, all children benefit from high-quality PE lessons delivered by a visiting PE specialist. Senior leaders should review the balance of PE provision across the week to ensure all children receive consistently high-quality learning in this curricular area.

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.