

Summarised inspection findings

Torryburn Primary School

Fife Council

21 January 2025

Key contextual information

Torryburn Primary School and Nursery Class is a rural, non-denominational school situated in the village of Newmills in Dunfermline, Fife. The school serves the areas of Torryburn, Newmills and High Valleyfield. Children have access to a large playground and a public park to the rear of the school. At the time of inspection, 93 children attended the school across four classes.

The majority of children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) decile 2. A minority of children live in deciles 3 to 6 with all other children living in decile nine. Just under 40% of children receive free school meals and a quarter of children have an identified support need. Last session, the overall attendance was 94.4% which is above both the local authority and national averages. There have been no exclusions in recent years.

The headteacher was appointed in August 2023. She has overall responsibility for Torryburn Primary School, the nursery class and a shared headship with another rural, cluster school. She is supported by an acting 0.5 depute headteacher who was appointed in term one of session 23/24. Over the last five years there have been a number of changes to the leadership team.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

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

- Staff, children and parents have developed a welcoming and nurturing ethos across the school. Children demonstrate kindness and care towards their peers. Most children are consistently well-behaved and engage positively in their learning. They are proud of their work and enjoy sharing what they are learning. The recently refreshed values underpin well the work of the school and reflect positively the commitment to the school community. The values are celebrated effectively during assemblies and on displays.
- All staff know the school context and the children well. There are positive relationships across the school and with partner agencies. Senior leaders have planned effectively the use of additional spaces to meet children's needs. All teachers now need to develop their planning for children with barriers to learning, maximising the potential for all to achieve.
- Senior leaders have worked effectively to ensure that children are being given increased opportunities to contribute to the life of the school through focus groups and leadership roles. Children describe clearly their roles and the work undertaken as part of the eco committee and as house captains. There is now an opportunity to increase children's voice across the school, and within learning, through meaningful engagement with self-evaluation activities.
- Most children show a keen interest in their learning. This is most apparent when children are leading and enjoying greater challenge in their learning. Overall, most children work well in pairs and small groups. A few children require more direction and adult support to enable them

to engage better in these types of experiences. Teachers should 'check in' more regularly with children as they undertake tasks with their peers. Across the school, support staff are deployed effectively and provide helpful assistance to individual children and groups. This is supporting children to remain on task and engage positively with learning experiences.

- In most lessons, children engage well in learning tasks. Senior leaders have worked with staff to create a shared standard for high-quality learning and teaching. This agreed standard is at the early stages of implementation. Supported by senior leaders, staff should continue to build on this to develop further a shared understanding of what constitutes high-quality learning and teaching. In doing so, they should identify and share good practice to secure greater consistency in learning and teaching across the school. All teachers now need to consistently plan learning with clear differentiation to increase the challenge for children and improve the pace of learning.
- In most lessons, teachers' explanations are clear. Most teachers share the purpose of the lessons resulting in children gaining an increased understanding of what they need to do to be successful. Teachers should continue to embed this across all classes to develop further children's knowledge and understanding of skills. In the majority of lessons, teachers use questioning effectively to elicit understanding. They refer to prior learning to help children make links across learning. Most teachers make effective use of interactive whiteboards as a teaching tool. In a few classes, children make use of digital technology through the use of apps to reinforce learning. They access websites to research, although the digital skills required could be taught more explicitly. Teachers should continue to develop the use of digital technologies across the curriculum.
- Most children are developing their understanding of their own progress in learning and discuss this with senior leaders. Teachers should now use self- and peer-assessment more regularly and provide written feedback on children's work that is of a consistently high standard. This will help children to understand their progress and support them to be more involved and informed when planning their next steps in their learning.
- All teachers create a simple plan of learning across the year. They use a termly overview of the curriculum, outlining the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) experiences and outcomes to be covered. Teachers now share this with families. They use local authority provided progressive frameworks for curricular areas to ensure children build on prior learning. However, teachers need to use these more effectively to plan progressive learning experiences for all children across the curriculum. Teachers use a variety of assessment approaches to measure children's progress across the curriculum. Assessment now needs to become an integral feature of teachers' planning for learning and teaching. Senior leaders now need to support staff to develop consistent approaches to planning.
- Currently moderation activity is limited and focuses on outcomes of assessment. Teachers would benefit from moderating planning for learning, teaching and assessment, and improve their understanding of the 'Learning, Teaching and Assessment Cycle'. Teachers should continue their engagement with national Benchmarks to strengthen their awareness of national standards and expectations. As planned, they would benefit from participation in a programme of moderation activities within their own school and with colleagues in other schools. This should help them develop a shared understanding of children's progress within and across CfE levels. It should also help to increase their confidence when making professional judgements about children's achievement of a level.
- The headteacher recognises that approaches to play-based learning are at a very early stage of development. As a next step, staff should engage with national practice guidance to support

their understanding and implementation of play. Staff should continue to improve effective interactions with children and the quality of play environments. This should support all children to experience learning that helps them to make appropriate progress.

- The headteacher monitors and tracks attainment across classes and this is used to inform decisions to support children's learning. Senior leaders are well placed to utilise the new digital tracking system with staff to develop further staff's understanding of children's progress. Overall, teachers' tracking and monitoring of children's learning is not yet sufficiently robust. Senior leaders should work with teachers to strengthen their professional judgements by taking greater account of assessment information. Teachers should use this to record children's needs and next steps more clearly. Building the capacity of teaching staff to interrogate and use the data to best meet the needs of children will be an important next step.

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

satisfactory

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, children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. Although in session 23/24 it was reported that most children achieved national expectations, there are children at all levels with significant gaps in their learning. A few children at each stage are capable of increased challenge and progress. Children with barriers to learning are making satisfactory progress. Teachers now need to plan learning more effectively to meet the needs of all children.

Attainment in literacy and English

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

Listening and talking

- Most children at early level listen appropriately to each other and take turns to contribute ideas to conversations. They share their ideas confidently when working as a group with the teacher. Most children, who are on track to achieve first and second levels, respond to a range of questions to share opinions. A few children require support to stay attentive during group activities.
- Children now need to apply learned skills to a progressive and more challenging range of contexts. Teachers need to promote a clear and sharper focus on developing higher-order thinking skills.

Reading

- At early level, the majority of children use their knowledge of sounds and letters to decode words. They talk with confidence about books they are reading and identify the title, cover and author of a book. At first level, the majority of children read aloud fluently and are starting to use expression. The majority of children are not yet confident in using appropriate comprehension strategies to identify techniques used by authors to engage the reader. At second level, children talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors and justify their choices. They respond to literal, inferential and evaluative questions to demonstrate their understanding of texts. A minority of children are less confident reading aloud with expression.

Writing

- At early level, the majority of children are beginning to write independently using known common words. The majority of children form most letters legibly. At first level, the majority of children use connectives and common sentence openers to suit the context. At second level, most children understand how word choice affects tone, style and context and they include vocabulary that is suitable for the reader. Children do not apply their writing skills across the curriculum.

- Teachers should ensure all children have regular opportunities to write more frequently, and at length, for a range of genres beyond the taught writing lesson. At all stages, children need regular opportunities to edit their work to apply taught punctuation accurately.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, children's progress in numeracy and mathematics is satisfactory.
- At all stages, children's ability to explain the strategies used in their calculations is limited. As planned, teachers should develop children's knowledge and application of mathematical language. Senior leaders should revisit the planning of numeracy and mathematics to provide regular opportunities to revisit key concepts to ensure breadth and depth of learning.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, almost all children recognise numbers to 20 and state the number before and after. They count on one more to find the next number in a sequence. At first level, the majority of children carry out mental calculations using the four operations accurately. Most children have a strong understanding of place value within three-digit numbers. Most children are not confident working with money to ten pounds and require support to understand the appropriate units of measure for length, volume and weight. At second level, most children have a secure understanding of numbers to one million and can round to the nearest 10,000. At both first and second levels, the majority of children do not confidently use fractions to solve given problems. Only a few children at second level confidently move between fractions, decimals and percentages and use this knowledge to solve calculations.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, most children match simple two-dimensional (2D) shapes and use these to continue a pattern. At first level, the majority of children identify simple 2D shapes in their environment. They use terms such as sides, faces and vertices accurately to describe three-dimensional (3D) objects. At second level, the majority of children use terms accurately to describe different angles. They use their knowledge of complementary and supplementary angles to calculate missing angles. Children at all stages now need progressively challenging experiences with 2D shape and 3D objects to build upon prior learning.

Information handling

- At early level, children have limited experience of information handling. At first level, most children understand the purpose of tally marks. They display information gathered in simple bar graphs and pictographs. At second level, children have experience of using graphs to display information but cannot identify which chart or graph would be appropriate for different data sets. Across the school, children do not experience increasingly complex data sets and have limited knowledge about the ways they can display data and information.

Attainment over time

- In recent years, attainment has fluctuated. Since their appointment, senior leaders have accurately identified the need to work with teachers to improve the robustness of attainment information in literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders provide teachers with important assessment data during termly attainment and progress meetings. This is supporting teachers to understand more clearly children's progress and the challenge required in their learning. Senior leaders also recognise that previous teacher professional judgements were not always based on reliable assessment evidence. Therefore, children's learning is not always progressive and built upon prior learning. Senior leaders should continue to deliver ongoing professional learning to ensure teacher judgements become more accurate around the use of data. As teachers' skills in assessing achievement of a level develops further, the data for each stage will become more robust and based on sound evaluative evidence.

- The headteacher monitors children's attendance effectively. This includes analysing data and identifying any children who show a pattern of absence. In session 23/24, overall attendance was 94.4% which was both above local and national averages. Senior leaders track the attendance of children at termly attainment meetings and address any concerns promptly. The headteacher shares information on the importance of good attendance with parents through school newsletters and leaflets. Furthermore, senior leaders use Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) and a close partnership with a local baker to offer a free breakfast club to support children into school each morning.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Senior leaders have re-introduced leadership opportunities for children across the school. Children enjoy these roles and responsibilities and are proud that they contribute positively to the school. For example, the digital leaders and Frankie's group are highly articulate and confidently share events and activities they have developed for their peers. Children develop communication skills when sharing updates with their peers. Staff should continue to help children understand the wide range of skills they develop as a result of these roles and the impact they have on school improvement.
- Staff value and celebrate regularly children's achievements beyond the school. Children are encouraged to share their achievements in class, at assemblies and through displays with this a consistent feature of staff's practice. Staff now record and track children's achievements in and out of school. They use this information well to plan for and support children who may be at risk of missing out.

Equity for all learners

- Senior leaders now use termly attainment and progress meetings to collate and analyse patterns of attainment for cohorts and groups of learners, such as children who experience care and those who have barriers to their learning. As a result, they have a sound understanding of the school community and have identified accurately where additional support is required to accelerate children's progress.
- Senior leaders use a range of appropriate data to plan the use of PEF to support children who face barriers to their learning. This includes projects that support children's wellbeing and participation as well as targeted interventions to accelerate children's progress in reading and numeracy. Senior leaders need to continue to support staff to evaluate the impact of all targeted interventions. This should help staff make decisions on which approaches become part of class practice. In addition, staff have a positive partnership with colleagues beyond the school for children who have placements with partner establishments. Staff now need to be more involved in developing plans for identified children in order to deliver learning that meets children's needs within the classroom.
- Staff work well with the community to identify areas to reduce the cost of the school day. They provide helpful initiatives, such as a uniform swap and snacks for children who require it. They use PEF where appropriate to provide transport to allow all children to experience events and festivals children from larger schools would experience. This ensures financial constraints do not prevent children from taking part in all aspects of school life.

Other relevant evidence

- Teachers use the local authority progression planners to plan the teaching of physical education (PE). They ensure children experience two hours of PE weekly. Senior leaders should continue to monitor children's learning in PE to ensure it is of a sufficiently high-quality.
- The headteacher uses participatory budgeting to consult stakeholders on the use of PEF. She should continue to involve staff, parents and children to review how this is accelerating children's progress and closing the poverty related attainment gap.
- Children experience their entitlement to 1+2 modern languages. All children learn French with children in P5 to P7 learning Mandarin. The school has close links with the link Confucious Centre and benefit from a strong partnership with the Mandarin teacher.

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.