

Summarised inspection findings

Morebattle Primary School

Scottish Borders Council

23 April 2019

Key contextual information

Morebattle Primary School is a non-denominational school, which serves the picturesque village of Morebattle and the surrounding area. The village is located near Kelso in the Scottish Borders. The school's provision comprises three primary classes and a morning nursery class. In March 2019, the primary school roll was 47. The headteacher was appointed in August 2016. He is joint headteacher with another local primary school. He is supported by a principal teacher who works across both schools.

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

- Across the school, children experience positive relationships with staff and each other. They take pride in their school and speak confidently about the school vision, values and aims. The headteacher and staff have developed a positive and nurturing environment, which results in a caring, warm and calm ethos. Children are polite, well behaved and respectful of others. They are enthusiastic, motivated and enjoy school.
- In most lessons, children are actively engaged in learning. They are eager participants, and interact positively during activities. They support one another well during group work and, when given the opportunity, show skills in collaboration. Children should now become more involved in the planning of learning, making informed choices and leading their own learning. This will include developing further the use of children's learning journals to enable them to take more ownership of their learning.
- Displays in classrooms, and around the school, reflect current curriculum focus, initiatives and achievements across the school community. Teachers use displays effectively to enhance teaching and learning, revisit prior learning and demonstrate progression in learning.
- Children contribute well to the life of the school through their involvement in pupil council, Rights Respecting Schools, the positive press group and as Junior Road Safety Officers. There are a number of pupil leadership roles across the school such as house captains, prefects, junior janitors, dining hall helpers and general monitoring duties. This is helping children to develop key skills for learning, life and work.
- The school is at the early stages of developing learning through play. Staff should continue to engage in further professional learning of this approach to ensure it is used effectively to support children's learning.
- The use of digital technologies to engage learners is visible across the school with interactive whiteboards, individual laptops and a few tablet devices contributing to learners' experiences. The use of these resources should be developed further in order to support learners more effectively.

- Overall, the quality of teaching across the school is good. In the majority of lessons, learning is well planned and organised. Teachers listen well to children and respond appropriately to their comments. They give clear explanations and instructions and provide helpful feedback through effective use of praise. As planned, staff should develop a shared understanding of what constitutes effective teaching, learning and assessment at Morebattle Primary School.
- In almost all lessons, staff share the purpose of lessons. As a result, most children are clear about what they are learning and how they can achieve success in relation to a particular lesson. Children respond very well to opportunities for active learning which includes practical tasks, group discussions, challenges and games. Staff are developing skills in asking questions that are open ended and allow children to demonstrate higher order thinking skills. They should continue to raise expectations of what children can achieve through increased pace, challenge and differentiation.
- The school uses national standardised assessments and diagnostic and summative assessments to support teachers' professional judgements. Over recent years, staff have worked together to develop more confidence in making reliable judgements about children's attainment, including the use of National Benchmarks. Staff work with other schools to moderate standards. They report that this is helping them to have a better understanding of standards. Positively, they now plan to deepen their understanding of the National Benchmarks and establish further the process of moderation.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and direction to support staff in planning the curriculum. Staff show a strong commitment to collegiality and collaborative working practice, and there is a clear sense and commitment to working together to improve outcomes for children and families. Staff make increasing use of progression pathways when planning learning in literacy and numeracy
- Teachers are beginning to develop more confidence in interpreting and responding to attainment data. Regular tracking meetings between teachers and the headteacher have an increasing focus on children's progress and attainment. Staff are at the early stages of creating a whole school overview of the tracking and monitoring of children's attainment. This will enable the school to track and monitor better different groups of learners.

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

- It is important to note that the number of children in cohorts is variable and often fewer than ten, therefore, overall statements about progress have been made to ensure the anonymity of individuals.
- Overall, children's attainment and progress in literacy and numeracy is good. Staff are continuing to develop confidence in making professional judgements about children's progress through Curriculum for Excellence levels. They plan to support this work further by taking forward refined approaches to moderation, assessment, planning and tracking and monitoring. This will improve further the accuracy of teachers' professional judgements.

Attainment in literacy

- Attainment in literacy and English is good overall. Most children are making good progress in listening and talking, reading and writing.

Listening and talking

- Attainment in listening and talking is good. Overall, most children are making good progress. Across the school a few children can be over-assertive with their peers and find difficulty taking turns or being ready to listen well to others. At early level, children listen and talk in a range of contexts and can follow simple instructions about their learning. They listen well to their teacher and respond appropriately when questioned. At first level, children talk about texts and share their own ideas and express themselves with confidence. By second level, children can interact well with each other. They build confidently on the ideas of others and demonstrate courtesy when sharing these with others. Children speak with confidence and are articulate when speaking about a wide range of issues. They collaborate effectively in groups and show empathy for one another's point of view. More opportunities to participate in school decision making and leadership roles would develop further children's talking and listening skills.

Reading

- Overall, attainment in reading is good and most children are making good progress. At early level, children engage enthusiastically in activities linked to developing their use of sounds. They are developing their word attack skills to read unfamiliar words with confidence. At first level, children read with fluency and expression and can discuss authors, characters in books and their preferred genre in reading for enjoyment. They enjoy a wide range of texts and can discuss plot, recall sequence and predict outcomes confidently. By second level, children are fluent and expressive in their reading. They can list a number of contemporary authors, summarise their work and explain how certain texts make them feel or react. They are enthusiastic readers who would benefit from increased pace and challenge in reading activities.

Writing

- Overall, children's attainment and progress in writing is good. At early level, children make effective use of approaches which promote early writing. There are regular opportunities for writing in class and children enjoy the creative contexts for writing. At first level, there is now greater focus on the teaching of key skills in writing including use of different writing styles, ambitious vocabulary, connectives, spelling, grammar and punctuation. At second level, children can create texts for a range of purposes and audiences selecting appropriate genre, form, structure and style. There is scope for children to further develop, apply and celebrate their writing skills in real life and other meaningful contexts.

Attainment in numeracy

- Overall, attainment in numeracy is good. Most children are making good progress. The introduction of strategies to improve mental agility is improving children's engagement and confidence. Staff should continue to develop further interesting contexts where children can apply their numeracy knowledge.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, children add and subtract within ten and can sequence numbers to 20. They are confident in reading analogue and digital o'clock times and can represent these on a digital display or clock face. Children are confident handling coins to the value of 10 pence and use coins readily to pay for items. At first level, children add and subtract confidently with two digit calculations. They are confident rounding to the nearest 10 or 100 and count forwards or backwards in twos, fives and tens. They can tell the time using half past, quarter past and quarter to using analogue and digital 12 hour clocks. At second level, children convert confidently between fractions and percentages. They use formal methods well to accurately set out and calculate addition and subtraction of up to six digit numbers. They can carry out money calculations involving the four operations and can compare costs and determine affordability within a given budget. They are developing an understanding of mathematical language when measuring lengths and weights.

Shape, position and movement

- Children working at early level are able to identify common 2D shapes. At first level, children are becoming more confident in finding and demonstrating symmetry in shapes. Older children confidently use mathematical language including acute, obtuse, straight and reflex, to describe and classify a range of angles in the classroom environment.

Information handling

- Across the school, children have good understanding of types of graphs and how to interpret data as appropriate to their age. There is scope to develop children's understanding of uncertainty and chance as appropriate to their stage.

Problem solving

- Children expressed enjoyment when presented with challenging problems to solve. Across the school children would benefit from more regular and varied problem-solving challenges which require them to apply their numeracy and mathematical knowledge.

Attainment over time

- Due to the small numbers of children at each stage within the school, data cannot accurately define trends over time in attainment. However, based on teachers' judgements, data from standardised assessments, and tracking, there is evidence that most children have made good progress over time in their attainments in literacy and numeracy. This is more evident in recent years.

- The school tracks children's attainment in literacy and numeracy. Regular tracking meetings between teachers and the headteacher have an increasing focus on children's progress and attainment. Staff need to track progress in all curricular areas in line with the school improvement plan. This will ensure a clear view of children's progress across the curriculum.
- Staff have gathered evidence over recent sessions from a range of assessments. They use this information to identify learners who are attaining well and those who are not attaining expected levels. The school has interventions in place to support these children. Children with additional support needs make appropriate progress towards achieving their targets.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Children at Morebattle Primary School speak enthusiastically about the range of opportunities for wider achievement, both in and out of school. This includes a variety of lunchtime and after-school clubs and activities, such as badminton, curling, chanter, basketball, swimming and tennis. All children are encouraged to participate in activities and wider achievement is celebrated at assemblies, and on attractive displays around the school.
- The school recognises the importance of tracking children's participation in wider achievements to identify children for whom further support and encouragement is needed. The headteacher and staff should continue with plans to track children's wider achievements in a more cohesive way to ensure that all children are achieving as successfully as possible.

Equity for all learners

- The school is aware of the social and economic context of their school community. The headteacher and staff have good knowledge of children and families. They have worked with stakeholders to identify the priorities for the use of Pupil Equity Funding and to raise attainment. This includes a focus on the cost of the school day.
- Children and staff demonstrate, in their daily work around the school, the importance they attach to promoting a positive view of children's differences. Resources and interventions are targeted effectively to support children who are facing additional challenges to their learning.
- The headteacher and staff are aware of the need to continue to gather robust evidence on interventions and measure the impact on outcomes for all children. The school recognises the importance of analysing data to demonstrate whether interventions are closing any identified attainment gap.

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.