

Summarised inspection findings

Thornliebank Primary School - Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Thornliebank

East Renfrewshire Council

19 August 2025

Key contextual information

Thornliebank Primary School – Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Thornliebank is a non-denominational school situated in the Thornliebank area of East Renfrewshire. It is on the boundary of Glasgow City. The school roll is 185 children, arranged over 7 classes. Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Thornliebank, the Gàidhlig (Gaelic) Medium Education provision for the whole of East Renfrewshire is also part of the school. The Gàidhlig Medium provision opened in August 2023. There are 11 children in a P1/2 multi-stage class. The Gàidhlig Medium provision has capacity for enrolments to be higher.

A minority of children live within SIMD deciles 1 and 2. Just less than half of the children live within SIMD deciles 3 to 7 and a minority of children live within SIMD deciles 8 to 9. Sixty-seven percent of children have an additional support need. Approximately 20% of children have English as an additional language. Sixty-six percent of children on the school roll are placing requests.

The headteacher has been in post since April 2019, following a period of significant change to the leadership of the school. She is supported by a deputy headteacher, two principal teachers, one of whom has the responsibility for Gàidhlig Medium Education.

Thornliebank nursery class was inspected by the Care Inspectorate within the past 18 months, therefore, the local authority and headteacher had the option to include the nursery class as part of this inspection. We have agreed with the local authority and school that the nursery class is not part of this inspection. The findings set out below are for the primary school stages.

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

- The headteacher and all staff work together effectively to create and maintain a welcoming and nurturing ethos, which is supporting children very well. They have developed a clear vision in consultation with children and parents which is 'nurturing a thriving community of lifelong learners'. In English and Gàidhlig Medium classes and around the school, children demonstrate and model very well the school values of nurture, kindness, respect and effort.
- Children's rights are understood well by staff and children. Staff have worked successfully with children to create meaningful classroom, dining room and playground charters. Most children are able to identify a few of their rights and talk about why these are important. All staff know the children very well and have a clear understanding of the school and the local community context. As a result, there are warm and positive relationships between children and staff.
- Children experience calm, inclusive and purposeful learning environments. Staff plan carefully selecting approaches and environments to support children's learning. Teachers make very good use of classroom learning walls to support and extend learning. They provide regular opportunities for children to work together in pairs and groups. Almost all children engage and

interact positively with each other when completing tasks. Staff sensitively and effectively engage and encourage a few children when they become less focused. They use a range of agreed strategies and supports well to reengage these children in their learning. As a result, almost all children's behaviour across the school is very good. A few children require more intensive support to manage their behaviour. Staff create individual plans for identified children. These plans set out clearly the strategies for staff to follow, early signs and triggers and preventative strategies. As a result, children's behaviour is supported and managed well across the school.

- The quality of learning and teaching is strong across the school. Senior leaders work well with staff and children to agree the key features of high-quality learning and teaching. This includes what key features should be evident at the beginning, during and following a lesson. Teachers talk confidently about the features of high-quality learning and what this looks like in practice. All staff engage effectively in professional learning and in peer support sessions to develop further their practice. This is leading to a more consistent approach to learning and teaching across the school.
- In almost all lessons, teacher's explanations and instructions are clear. Almost all teachers share the purpose of lessons routinely to support children's learning. In the most successful lessons, children are involved in identifying what success will look like. Most children experience learning that is well matched to their needs. Children respond well when given opportunities to lead and direct aspects of their learning. However, at times, lessons are too teacher directed. Teachers should provide children with increased opportunities to lead their own learning and apply new skills in meaningful, relevant contexts.
- Most teachers use questioning well to check children's understanding and to clarify teaching points. In the majority of lessons, teachers extend these questioning techniques to support and challenge children's thinking. Staff should continue to work together to develop the use of questioning across the school. This should help to develop further children's higher-order thinking skills and extend their learning.
- Children in P1 and P2 experience a range of well-planned opportunities to learn through play. Staff have undertaken professional learning and have worked together effectively to develop their understanding of play pedagogy. They use this professional learning well to provide an appropriate balance of adult-initiated and child-led learning. Teachers' careful planning of the experiences, spaces and interactions is supporting children to make increased choice in their learning. Almost all children remain engaged and focused during play. Teachers should continue to work together as planned to share good practice and build on their successes.
- Teachers use an increasing range of digital technology effectively to support and enhance children's learning activities. This includes using programmable toys to support children's learning about position and direction, and digital games to enhance literacy and numeracy learning. Children use online platforms to share their learning with their parents successfully. This work is supported further by the pupil digital leadership group who are helping children and teachers to develop further their digital skills. Teachers should continue to provide a range of rich learning contexts to help children develop further their digital skills.
- Almost all teachers provide 'in the moment' helpful feedback to support and encourage children's learning. Teachers should develop further the quality of their written feedback. This should support children's understanding of their next steps in learning. In most classes, children are given well-considered opportunities to self- and peer-assess aspects of their work. Most teachers use plenary sessions well to support children to review their learning. In a minority of lessons, teachers help children to reflect on the skills they developed during

learning. Teachers recognise the need to plan appropriately to incorporate the language of skills in the delivery of lessons. This should help children to make better connections between what they are learning and the skills they are developing.

- There is a very strong sense of teamwork across the whole staff team to improve outcomes for children. Staff work closely together to share ideas and good practice. Senior leaders plan regular high-quality professional learning opportunities for all staff to improve pedagogy. This includes areas such as nurture, writing and numeracy. Staff use this professional learning effectively to reflect on how best to support children's progress.
- Senior leaders and teachers have developed a clear assessment policy to ensure an agreed approach to assessment across the school. Teachers use a range of formative, summative and standardised assessments including National Standardised Assessments. This supports teachers well to gather reliable evidence of children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Senior leaders and staff work together to analyse assessment data. They use this data effectively to help them identify gaps in children's learning and plan appropriate support. All teachers engage in appropriate moderation activities with colleagues in school, across the learning community and at a local authority level. Teachers value the opportunity to share practice with colleagues from other schools to improve the quality of learning and teaching. Teachers should continue to engage in regular high-quality moderation activities both within and beyond the school. This should support teachers to develop further their knowledge of national standards.
- Teachers plan children's learning across a range of timescales. They use learning pathways in literacy, numeracy and other aspects of the curriculum to plan progressive and relevant learning experiences. The pathways link to the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) and national Benchmarks. This helps to ensure that children experience breadth and depth in their learning. Teachers involve children in the planning of learning by gathering their views on what they already know and what they would like to find out. This helps ensure learning motivates and engages most learners. Senior leaders plan appropriately to work with teachers to develop progression pathways for all curricular areas. This should help to ensure that all children experience breadth and depth in all aspects of their learning as they move through the schools.
- Senior leaders meet with teachers termly to monitor and track children's progress and attainment in literacy and numeracy. They discuss the progress of individual children and make predictions of children's projected levels of attainment. Senior leaders and teachers identify successfully those children requiring additional support to progress their learning. The support for learning team provides a range of high-quality interventions for individual children. Senior leaders and teachers monitor closely all interventions for children who require more support. They adapt these interventions where required to maximise the impact on children's progress. This approach ensures that almost all children receiving an intervention are improving their outcomes and making very good progress.

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, children's attainment is good. Most children at P1 and P7 will achieve the expected CfE level in literacy and numeracy in June 2025. The majority of children at P4 will achieve expected CfE levels for literacy and numeracy in June 2025. Across the school a few children are working beyond national expectations in literacy and numeracy.
- Almost all children who receive additional support with their learning are making very good progress from their prior levels of attainment.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Across all stages, most children are making good progress in literacy and English.

Listening and talking

- At early level, most children listen well and follow simple instructions. They participate actively in songs and stories. Children share their ideas enthusiastically within group discussions. They are developing skills in taking turns. At first level, the majority of children contribute their ideas and opinions in group and class discussions well, taking turns appropriately. They need to develop further their non-verbal techniques when participating in groups discussions, for example, eye contact and body language. At second level, most children engage enthusiastically in discussions, sharing their ideas and views well. They build confidently on the contributions of others by asking relevant questions and clarifying their views.

Reading

- At early level, most children are developing well their knowledge of sounds and letters. They recognise these within books and in classroom displays. They make personal choices about what they like to read and explain their reasons confidently. At first level, the majority of children read familiar texts aloud with increasing fluency and expression. They would benefit from revisiting the key features of non-fiction texts. At second level, most children explain confidently their preferences for particular authors. Most children read unfamiliar texts confidently using appropriate pace and tone. They are less confident in recognising and explaining which sources are most useful/accurate.

Writing

- At early level, most children are learning to form letters correctly. They use their knowledge of letters and sounds effectively to write simple words. Children use a capital letter and a full stop correctly in at least one sentence. At first level, the majority of children write using punctuation accurately. They use conjunctions well to link ideas together. Children would benefit from further experience in learning the structure and format of a wider variety of genres. At second level, most children write for a range of purposes and audiences. They make effective use of

vocabulary choice to engage the reader. Children would benefit from further support to use a range of language techniques such as simile and metaphors.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, most children are making good progress in numeracy and maths.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, most children are working well with numbers to 20. They are developing confidence in adding and subtracting within 10. They name the days of the week and months of the year in sequence. Children identify different coins to £2 through relevant play contexts. At first level, the majority of children round numbers successfully to the nearest 10 and 100. They are developing confidence in performing a variety of calculations, including addition and subtractions using three-digits numbers. At second level, most children are confident in comparing fractions, percentages and decimals. Children identify a variety of methods for payment. They need to develop their skills further in calculating the area of shapes.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, most children recognise 2D shapes and three-dimensional (3D) objects. Children develop confidence in using the correct mathematical language to describe these. They understand and use correctly the language of position and direction including, in front, behind, left and right. At first level, the majority of children name, identify and classify an increasing range of 2D shapes and 3D objects. A few children are confident in creating pictures with more than one line of symmetry. They are not yet confident in finding right angles in the environment and in well-known 2D shapes. At second level, most children describe 2D shapes and 3D objects well using specific vocabulary including radius, diameter and circumference. Children should develop further their knowledge of the relationship between 3D objects and their nets. They identify and measure a range of angles with accuracy.

Information handling

- At early level, most children sort items in a variety of different ways according to colour, shape, and size. They are developing confidence in interpreting simple graphs. At first level, the majority of children interpret data well from simple graphs and charts. They are less confident in creating different methods to display data, for example, bar graphs, Carroll diagrams and Venn diagrams. At second level, most children are developing the ability to extract, analyse, interpret and draw conclusions from a variety of data. Children use the language of probability accurately to describe the likelihood of simple events occurring.

Attainment over time

- Senior leaders track children's attainment in literacy and numeracy over time effectively using a local authority tracking system. Senior leaders work closely with teachers to interrogate attainment information and identify children who require additional support with their learning. Senior leaders monitor well the impact of targeted interventions. They make very good use of data to demonstrate clearly children's progress as a result of interventions. Almost all children who receive targeted interventions are making very good progress against the measures of the intervention. Senior leaders and teachers are working well to improve children's progress in writing and numeracy at all stages. They are currently making good use of commercially produced tools and assessments. They are also working well with the local authority's raising attainment team to improving literacy and numeracy.
- In session 2023/24, overall attendance at the school was 92.4%, which is in line with the national average. There are no recorded exclusions, and no children are on part-time timetables. Senior leaders monitor children's attendance well. This includes analysing robust data and identifying any children who show a dip in attendance or have patterns of absence.

Senior leaders implemented a range of interventions to improve attendance, including building positive relationships with parents, providing pastoral support, working with partner agencies and signposting support services. Their approaches are having a positive impact on the attendance of individual children and the overall attendance rate.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Children's achievements are celebrated well through assemblies, displays and on digital platforms. Children feel proud when they share their achievements and receive recognition for their efforts. Children who demonstrate the school values are presented with certificates and badges at assembly and have the opportunity to become values ambassadors. Children talk positively about the sense of responsibility they feel when they become a values ambassador.
- The majority of children are members of a pupil leadership group. These include house captains, pupil council, reading committee, digital leaders and the young leaders of learning. Children are developing a wide range of skills in leadership, teamwork and communication. Children are proud of the contribution they make to the life of the school, including suggested playground improvements.
- Children are offered a wide range of activities at lunchtime and after school including, coding, crafts, choir, ukelele, netball, gymnastics and cricket. Children enjoy attending these clubs and identify that they are learning a variety of new skills. These opportunities are extended further by pupil-led clubs. Children from P4-P7 volunteer to run a wide range of lunch-time clubs for children across the school. Children identify that through these opportunities they are developing skills including, organisation, cooperation and resilience.
- Staff track and monitor children's participation in school and out of school activities. Senior leaders should develop these systems further. This should support them to track better children's participation over time. Senior leaders are proactive in addressing barriers to participation through extending clubs on offer at school. Senior leaders rightly identify the need to develop a progressive approach to skills across the school. This will support children to articulate and share more fully the various skills they develop for learning, life and work.

Equity for all learners

- Senior leaders and all staff have a very clear understanding of the socio-economic context of the school. They work closely with the Parent Council to minimise the cost of school trips, provide free high-quality school uniform and access to a food larder. Together, they are aware of the challenges families may face and work collaboratively and successfully in reducing the cost of the school day.
- Senior leaders have implemented a nurture classroom and spaces around the school to provide calm environments for a few children. Staff provide nurturing and secure relationships with children who access these spaces. Staff support effectively children's wellbeing and enable them to re-engage successfully with learning.
- The headteacher uses data effectively to identify children who experience barriers to learning to ensure equity for all. The headteacher consults with the Parent Council and staff on how best to invest Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). The headteacher uses PEF appropriately to support children with their wellbeing and learning. Additional staff deliver literacy, numeracy, attendance and health and wellbeing interventions. The headteacher and staff have robust evidence which shows the positive impact of PEF interventions on individual children's progress.

Quality of provision of Gaelic Medium Education

Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Thornliebank – Thornliebank Primary School is the designated primary school for Gàidhlig (Gaelic) Medium Education in East Renfrewshire. It opened in 2023 and currently 11 children are taught within Clas (Primary) 1 and 2. The headteacher is supported well by a principal teacher who is the lead for the Gàidhlig Medium provision. Both part-time teaching staff are fluent speakers. Staff are making very good progress with establishing Gàidhlig Medium Education within the school.

A few Gaelic (Learners) activities are offered across the English Medium classes within the 1+2 languages provision. These are to celebrate calendar events, or as part of the third additional language.

QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

- Staff and children are proud of the school's Gàidhlig provision. They present regularly at whole school assemblies and share information about the language and culture. This is helpful in promoting an interest in Gàidhlig within the school. Children enjoy very positive relationships and interact well with staff, with each other and with visitors to the school. They are well behaved, confident and feel included. Children are motivated and engage well in their learning and play collaboratively in class and outdoors. They demonstrate very well the school values: 'altram, coibhneas, urram, oidhirp - nurture, kindness, respect, effort'.
- Senior leaders and staff are implementing well the local authority's Gàidhlig Medium and Learners Education strategic plan. They have used advice on Gaelic Education to create a policy on immersion and assist with measuring their successes. Teachers are effective role models in their use of Gàidhlig. They create an ethos where the language is valued and is used increasingly by staff and children for greetings across the whole school. Teachers skilfully implement total immersion play pedagogy across Clas 1 and Clas 2. They interact with children regularly during play, building communication, phrases and vocabulary well through Gàidhlig. Teachers use a range of approaches effectively, for example songs and repetitive stories, to develop and enhance children's language learning through total immersion.
- Teachers give children helpful feedback and engage them in regular learning conversations, for example during reflection weeks. Teachers use formative assessment approaches consistently to build children's skills in self- and peer-assessment.
- Children use digital devices well, for example games to develop skills in numeracy. Teachers make consistent use of an online platform to facilitate the sharing of learning between school and home. This is increasing parents' engagement with their child's learning. Teachers also encourage children and families to attend activities beyond the school such as Saturday Fèis or a lunch time coding club at school. This is helping children and their parents to learn new vocabulary.
- Teachers involve children regularly in planning what they would like to learn, using floorbooks. Teachers plan learning and tasks appropriately in order to provide support and challenge for all children. Teachers' planning is informed by a range of assessment information, for example standardised assessments in Gàidhlig (MCNG) and literacy assessments. These are assisting in measuring children's progress in understanding Gàidhlig phrases and developing phonological awareness. Teachers have established cross-school links to support them in creating and sharing assessment resources and for moderation in Gàidhlig.

- Senior leaders use tracking systems very well to monitor and track children's progress and attainment in literacy and numeracy through Gàidhlig. This data is used diagnostically by teachers and is used in conjunction with language and numeracy progression frameworks to support learning.

QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

- Due to the small numbers of children within Clas 1 and Clas 2, broad statements about progress have been made to ensure the anonymity of individual children. Almost all children are on track to achieve early expected CfE levels in literacy and Gàidhlig and numeracy and mathematics.
- Children begin Gàidhlig Medium Education through total immersion at early level in Clas 1. This results in children having to show progress towards a curriculum that is designed to best be commenced from age three. Almost all children are making very good progress, given children's starting point and not having benefitted from learning Gàidhlig through total immersion play in a nursery setting.
- In literacy and Gàidhlig, most children demonstrate a very good understanding of Gàidhlig used through total immersion during listening and talking activities. They successfully follow instructions during physical education (PE). Children are beginning to use common Gàidhlig phrases in their responses at morning gather time. Most children listen well to familiar stories. They enjoy fiction and non-fiction picture books from their class library. Children confidently retell stories using actions, picture prompts and by following story maps. This supports their early reading and writing skills. Most children create simple sentences about characters and use words to describe their character. Children's skills in writing independently should be increased through a range of play contexts.
- In numeracy and mathematics, most children discuss addition and subtraction calculations to match given answers during number talks. A few children confidently multiply numbers, for example 2×10 and 3×5 . By the end of Clas 2, children are confident with place value up to 100. Most children are beginning to apply the language of time as they discuss the day's timetabled activities. Children use measurement phrases as they choose to play in the sand and compare weights of objects using balance scales. For shape, position and movement, most children name two-dimensional shapes correctly. They show their understanding of positional language at coding club as they describe the direction and movement of a programmable toy. Children are increasing their information handling skills through simple surveys and constructing picture graphs.
- Senior leaders and teachers track individual children's progress effectively in literacy and Gàidhlig and in numeracy and mathematics. Teachers also capture some aspects of progress across other curriculum areas using online platforms. Almost all children have made appropriate progress over time as a result of the effective total immersion approaches used. Teachers support individuals requiring additional support with their learning very well.
- Almost all children actively participate in a wide range of opportunities for achievements. These include lunch-time clubs and activities such as Fèis and dancing. Children receive badges and house points in school for demonstrating well the school values. Their successes are celebrated on a regular basis through online platforms and school displays. Children are proud to talk about their achievements at assembly and share these through displays and photographs. Children's confidence and interest in Gàidhlig was developed further through participation in Seachdain na Gàidhlig - World Gaelic Week. A majority of children enjoy competing at a local Mòd.

Other relevant evidence

- The headteacher provides effective leadership for the school community. She has a clear vision for the school. She is ambitious and relentless in her aim to improve outcomes for all children. She is leading and managing the direction and pace of change very successfully, supported very well by the senior leadership team. Together, their enthusiasm and determination motivate and empower staff and the wider community to improve outcomes for children.
- All children receive their full entitlement of two hours of high-quality physical education each week. Teachers make effective use of indoor and outdoor spaces to deliver this.
- Children and staff celebrate diversity well. The diversity and equalities pupil leadership group lead successfully assemblies and school events. They recently created a video celebrating the women of colour within the local community. Children learn about Christianity and other world religions through their religious and moral education programme. Teachers provide planned lessons and experiences to learn about and celebrate a range of religious festivals and events that are important to individual children within the school. These experiences support children well to value and explore diversity, and respect other cultures.
- Children at all stages, outwith the Gàidhlig provision, learn French. From early level onwards, they experience progressive lessons that develop their knowledge of the French language. Older children also learn Urdu. Senior leaders should capture in the school improvement plan how they plan to promote further Gàidhlig across the whole school. Current outcomes for Gaelic (Learners) include children learning Gàidhlig through singing songs at assembly and participating in events including National Gaelic week. Staff should continue to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding of Gàidhlig language and culture across the school.
- Staff are making good progress in implementing the Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education, 2017. They should continue to increase the promotion and provision of Gàidhlig Medium Education with support from the local authority, across the school community.
- Children benefit from well-stocked class libraries and a school library that provides a range of fiction and non-fiction texts. Classes visit the school library weekly and children are encouraged to borrow texts to read for pleasure. The reading committee, take responsibility for promoting reading for enjoyment across the school and plan special events to encourage reading such as 'book week' and a reading accreditation scheme. Staff should consider how texts in Gàidhlig could feature more prominently in these collections.
- The school submitted information relating to compliance with the revised Nutritional Regulations 2020 and key duties as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007. The Health and Nutrition Inspector (HNI) discussed this information with relevant staff and children. In addition, the HNI examined documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole school approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of children through food in school. A few areas for improvement have been agreed with education.

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.