

Summarised inspection findings

St Cadoc's Primary School

East Renfrewshire Council

29 October 2024

Key contextual information

St Cadoc's Primary School is a Roman Catholic school serving Newton Mearns, East Renfrewshire. The school has a non-denominational nursery class which opened in August 2019. The headteacher has been in post for nine years and is supported by two deputy headteachers and a principal teacher. The school roll is 490 children in the primary, organised across eighteen classes, and 59 children in the nursery. Almost all children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles 8 – 10. Children's attendance is generally above the national average. There have been no children excluded from the school in recent years. In September 2024, the school reported that 5% of children had an identified additional support need. A minority of children have English as an additional language (EAL).

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very 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

- All staff create a calm and purposeful learning environment. Children's learning experiences are based on a very strong ethos. This is supported by the school values of Love, Achieve, Respect and Kindness, underpinned by the Gospel Values. Staff and children enjoy mutually respectful relationships. These relationships help almost all children to demonstrate appropriate behaviours consistently and to interact with adults and their peers positively. Almost all children are polite, friendly and proud of their school. They routinely explore children's rights when learning and most can relate them back to their daily lives confidently.
- Almost all children have a positive attitude towards learning. They listen well to instructions and take part in activities with enthusiasm. Most children work together purposefully when in pairs and groups and support others well. Most teachers encourage children to learn from errors and to explore a range of strategies to find the correct answer. This helps most children to recognise the value of making a mistake as an important step towards success in learning.
- Children respond positively to the stimulating classrooms and enjoy learning in shared open areas. They are particularly motivated during well-planned and regular opportunities to learn outdoors. Teachers plan meaningful learning across the curriculum, such as numeracy in nature, utilising the local woodland. This helps children understand the relevance of learning as they make helpful connections between learning and real-life contexts. A few children disengage at times when tasks are overly teacher led. A few teachers should continue to review the balance of teacher-directed and active learning experienced by children across a school day.
- Senior leaders and staff's use of play in the early and beginnings of first level is a major strength of the school. Children are highly motivated and engage very well in their play

following Froebelian play principles. Teachers use learning spaces creatively and continue to make improvements to enhance children's experiences. As a result, children are curious and creative and develop effective collaboration with peers. They are independent and resilient learners. The current balance of child-initiated, teacher-initiated and teacher-directed play ensures children progress in their learning successfully. Staff should, as planned, continue to develop how they observe children play. This will help staff to understand fully what children are learning and to identify opportunities to deepen learning further.

- All teachers' explanations and instructions are clear. Most teachers make explicit reference to prior learning and help children connect their learning through effective starter tasks. Almost all teachers share with children the purpose of learning and measures of success in learning. Teachers should involve children further in co-creating their measures of success. This will help children to understand more fully their progress and next steps in learning.
- Almost all teachers provide children with differentiated activities during literacy and numeracy lessons, offering support to children who require it. Most teachers provide tasks and activities which are well-matched to children's needs, interests and abilities. A few children working at first and second levels require further challenge in their learning. Teachers should continue to explore how they support their most able learners to reach their full potential.
- Teachers' highly-effective use of questioning in the classroom is a major strength. Almost all teachers use very well-considered questions to check children's understanding and progress with learning. Most teachers use children's responses to adapt the learning skilfully and support progress further. Most teachers develop children's higher order thinking skills successfully by encouraging children to think deeply about what and how they learn.
- All teachers provide helpful feedback verbally and in writing which provides clear next steps for children. Almost all children have strong skills in self-assessment. Teachers plan learning, teaching and assessment in an integral way. They use a range of standardised, summative and formative assessment strategies very well. These strategies offer a range of evidence to demonstrate children's progress. Teachers use assessment data very effectively to plan interventions for children requiring them. They are beginning to collaborate with a local secondary school to develop their use of assessment across all curricular areas. They should continue this positive work to gather a fuller picture of a child's progress across the curriculum.
- All teachers plan very effectively over the short, medium and long term. Teachers seek regularly children's ideas to plan interesting lessons. Teachers use expeditionary learning effectively to encourage children to plan and execute their own learning. This increases children's motivation and engagement in learning.
- Senior leaders and staff track learner progress robustly at whole school, stage and individual levels. Teachers use improved systems effectively, to maintain an overview of children's progress, including data relating to their wellbeing or support needs. Senior leaders and teachers meet regularly to discuss children's learning and progress. They review the data gathered on attainment in literacy and numeracy systematically. They identify individuals who have gaps in their learning and plan appropriate support and interventions. Senior leaders work closely with teachers to monitor interventions and make adjustments as required.

- All teachers benefit from moderation and sharing standards in assessment in the school and across the local authority. Teachers use national Benchmarks very well to support their understanding of national standards. As a result, teacher judgements of children's progress in literacy and numeracy are accurate. Senior leaders should develop further opportunities for moderation of planning, learning and assessment across other curricular areas.
- All teachers work collaboratively to improve the quality of learning experienced by children. They participate enthusiastically in professional learning, share practice with other schools, and engage in professional enquiry to develop their teaching approaches. A few children who serve as 'Leaders of Learning' work with staff to evaluate aspects of their experiences. Staff use a local authority learning and teaching framework well to evaluate the quality of their teaching. The headteacher is working collaboratively with all stakeholders to update the school's planning, assessment and reporting guidance. This will ensure all staff have a shared understanding of the expectations for high-quality learning, teaching and assessment across St. Cadoc's Primary School.

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

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Overall, children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is very good. Across all stages, a significant minority of children are exceeding expectations in reading, writing, numeracy, and most children exceed expectations in listening and talking. Children who require additional support are making appropriate progress towards their individual specific learning targets.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, children make very good progress in literacy and English.

Listening and talking

- Almost all children make very good progress in listening and talking across all stages. At early level, almost all children communicate with growing confidence. They are increasingly able to take turns and share ideas. At first level, almost all children listen well to each other and are articulate when talking to others. Most answer questions well. At second level, almost all children debate confidently, sharing their opinions, listening and responding appropriately to the views of others. Across the school, children demonstrate well-developed presenting skills during assemblies and when sharing their learning with others.

Reading

- Almost all children at early level answer simple literal questions about a text correctly. At first level, almost all children read texts with fluency and expression. They use strategies well to help them understand the meaning of a word, such as a dictionary. They need further practice in answering inferential questions. At second level, almost all children identify their preferred author with reasons. They identify the techniques writers use to influence or engage a reader. Most children read a variety of genres and answer literal and inferential questions ably. A few children should read a wider range of texts regularly, including non-fiction.

Writing

- Almost all children at early level write simple sentences using finger spaces, capital letters and full stops. Most form their letters correctly. At first level almost all children write stories confidently, using a range of characters and situations successfully. As they progress in first level, most children write at length in a variety of genres and use appropriate punctuation. At second level, almost all children write effectively in a variety of genres and for a range of purposes. They routinely use note-taking and planning tools to prepare for writing. A majority of children should continue to explore approaches to making their writing more engaging for a reader, such as extending the use of figurative language.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, almost all children make very good progress in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, almost all children recall number sequences forward and backwards from within the range 0-30. They have a very good knowledge of number facts. At first level, almost all children round numbers to the nearest 10 and 100. They tell the time using half past, quarter past and quarter to, using analogue and digital clocks. At second level, almost all children have a very good understanding of money and finance. They use a range of strategies effectively to solve real-life problems like foreign exchange rates. At first and second levels, children need further exposure to aspects of measure, such as capacity.

Shape, position and movement

- Children at all stages have a very good understanding of appropriate mathematical vocabulary. At early level, almost all children recognise common two-dimensional shapes. They use positional language, such as forwards and backwards appropriately. At first level, almost all children use mathematical language accurately to describe common three-dimensional objects. At second level, children classify angles confidently using language such as acute, obtuse, straight, and reflex. At first and second levels, children need further experience of interpreting maps, models or plans, using simple scales.

Information handling

- At early level, almost all children interpret simple charts and answer questions correctly. At first level, almost all children extract key information from data linked to real-life contexts, including tally marks and bar graphs. At second level, almost all children interpret questions effectively by highlighting keywords, making notes, or drawing diagrams. All children need to apply their skills in displaying data in a variety of ways, including using digital technologies.

Attainment over time

- The profile of children's attainment shows sustained high attainment at key stages over the last five years. Almost all children maintain very good progress in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics as they move through the school. Senior leaders and staff have well-established systems to monitor and track standards of attainment over time. Senior leaders and staff use data very effectively to track the progress of different cohorts across the school. As a result, most staff take prompt action to ensure appropriate interventions are in place for children requiring support with their learning. Staff recognise that there is potential to develop the tracking of children's progress further across all areas of the curriculum.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Senior leaders and staff place significant value on, and celebrate, the achievements of children in and outwith school. They use a range of meaningful approaches to celebrate children's successes, such as digital displays, social media, assemblies, awards and house points. Children are encouraged to identify the skills they gain through achievements and use them to help others, such as modelling during learning or supporting their peers.
- All children demonstrate leadership skills through committees or monthly Global Citizenship activities. Children apply for committees tasked with different aspects of school improvements. They develop communication skills and the ability to work in groups to achieve set goals.
- Almost all children in P7 attend a residential camp where they participate in team sports and adventures. They improve their teamwork, build trust and become more independent. All children regularly participate in school performances for parents and families. Children enjoy showing their creativity, as well as sharing aspects of their learning. Children in the upper primaries, stage a popular annual musical show. Children demonstrate enhanced performance skills, as well as a range of backstage roles showcasing children's responsibility and organisational skills.

- Staff offer a wide choice of achievement clubs at interval and after school. These are responsive to children's interests and include areas such as sport, digital, STEAM and performing arts. The sports committee worked with Active Schools offering targeted activities for children. These children achieved success in football and dance tournaments as a result.
- Senior leaders track children's achievements. They use this data to target children who may be missing out on opportunities. Children speak confidently about the skills they are developing through achievements and their relevance to their learning, life and future work aspirations.

Equity for all learners

- The headteacher, supported by all staff, is committed to ensuring equity for all learners. The headteacher uses Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) effectively to provide additional staffing and interventions for targeted groups of children in numeracy, literacy and parental partnership. They seek the views of parents to influence and inform the plans for PEF. Senior leaders and staff use data rigorously to review the impact of interventions on outcomes for children. This has led to almost all targeted children making progress towards their individual targets.
- Senior leaders identified the need to support children who join the school during the academic year. Staff use well-planned reading and numeracy interventions to ensure these children are able to progress their learning well and achieve appropriate milestones.
- Overall, school attendance is above the national average. The headteacher recognised the need to support improvement in children's regular attendance at school, as attendance data declined during the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff are rigorous in identifying and supporting children who have lower attendance to make improvements. They work in partnership with parents effectively to identify the reasons for absence and plan interventions to support improvement. As a result, overall attendance has steadily increased over the last three years.

Other relevant evidence

- Across the school, children experience a progressive learning pathway in religious education which is linked to the Gospel values. They receive their entitlement to two hours of high-quality physical education per week. All children from nursery to P7 learn French and children from P4 to P7 learn Mandarin.
- Senior leaders and staff are committed to encouraging children to read regularly for enjoyment. Children have regular access to a well-stocked school library where they select books to take home to read. Staff have ensured a diverse range of texts are available to children which reflects and celebrates the school community's ethnic and cultural heritage.

Practice worth sharing more widely

- Senior leaders and staff have embedded play in the early years of the school successfully. Teachers use learning spaces creatively and understand the key role of the adult in initiating, facilitating and observing play. As a result, children are curious and creative and are independent and resilient learners.
- Teachers' skilled use of well-considered and appropriate questioning during learning. They use children's responses to questions to adapt learning very effectively and to enhance learner's progress. Teachers develop children's higher order thinking skills very well by encouraging children to think deeply about what and how they learn.

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.