

Summarised inspection findings

Seafield Primary School

West Lothian Council

19 December 2023

Key contextual information

Seafield Primary School is situated in the small village of Seafield in West Lothian. At the time of inspection, the school roll was 95 pupils, organised across five classes. The headteacher assumed post in an acting capacity in April 2021. She became the permanent headteacher of the school in January 2023 and is supported by a principal teacher.

In September 2022, 82% of the school roll lived in deciles six to eight of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) and 36% of P6-P7 pupils were registered for free school meals. Thirty-seven percent of the school roll had an additional support need.

1.3 Leadership of change

good

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- Seafield Primary School is at the centre of the community. The warm ethos has welcomed several generations of village families, and parents, grandparents and partners talk proudly about their ongoing connections. Children enjoy positive relationships with teachers, support staff and each other.
- The headteacher took up post when the school had faced several changes in staff, and the challenges of COVID-19. She has taken time to get to know the school community and is a reflective, calm leader. Led by the headteacher and the principal teacher, the school team has identified clear priorities for school improvement. All staff value the clear guidance and support provided by West Lothian Council processes and policies. This support includes a wide range of opportunities for professional learning for teaching and support staff. In addition, the school works very well with their school cluster group. Together they are active in developing and agreeing local plans to improve experiences and outcomes for all learners. The headteacher recognises that the school team may on occasion need to review participation in cluster activities to meet unique needs and priorities arising at Seafield Primary School.
- As a community, the school has developed a refreshed vision and values. These are evident in clear displays across the school and referred to in most classes during learning and teaching. Children enjoy and appreciate the recognition they receive for their efforts, achievements and for demonstrating school values.
- The staff team know the children, their families and the school community very well. They understand the social and economic context, and challenges children and families face in their daily lives. The headteacher has a plan in place to use Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) which supports learners to achieve. This is shared with parents and staff for consultation. The headteacher uses data well to monitor any children facing barriers to learning. She ensures individual children who may have gaps in their learning are supported well. Staff are developing a deeper understanding of the focus and reach of Scottish Attainment Challenge. School leaders

should support staff to better understand how poverty and financial challenges reach all communities, including children attending Seafield Primary School.

- The head teacher has a clear vision for leading and supporting staff, children and parents in school improvement. This has included a strong focus on improving literacy, numeracy and wellbeing. Refreshed approaches to literacy are improving children's experiences and progress in reading and writing. She has introduced appropriate approaches to monitor and evaluate the work of the school and the impact of changes on children's experiences and progress. She recognises the need to keep approaches under review to support an appropriate pace of change.
- The staff team makes time for professional dialogue both informally on a daily basis and during planned meetings. The whole staff team is committed to school improvement. They engage in a broad range of professional learning opportunities. This includes professional reading, practitioner enquiry and carrying out small tests of change with new ideas and approaches. For example, through a small test of change, staff have improved the quality of feedback to children. A number of staff embrace leadership opportunities. These include 'Champs' for literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing, and leads for inclusion, equity, assessment and digital skills. These staff lead learners attend local network meetings and have a role in sharing latest practice and guidance. All staff know that their views and ideas are welcome.
- Staff engage in regular self-evaluation activities in school, and in moderation activity across the cluster. This has included a focus on literacy which is supporting improvement in children's learning and progress. Self-evaluation activity could be enhanced further by increasing teachers' knowledge and understanding of practice beyond their local area, and across Scotland. Staff would benefit from engaging with effective practice from schools of a similar size /demographic, including from other local authorities. To support all children to access to progression across a broad curriculum, the team should also engage in robust self-evaluation. School leaders should monitor the quality of learning and teaching across all curriculum areas.
- The staff team seeks the views of children and parents regularly through a range of approaches including surveys and informal discussions. The headteacher has established opportunities for children to develop leadership skills as 'mini champs' and in pupil leadership groups. Children have begun to engage with How Good is OUR School? The headteacher has plans to increase the involvement of children in school improvement. She recognises also the need to include the nursery in wider school improvement. The headteacher intends to re-establish a Parent Council which will have a clear role in supporting improvement for Seafield Primary School.

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

- There are positive relationships between adults and children during learning experiences in all classes across the school and during social times. Children are polite and respectful to each other and to adults. Children play well together outdoors. Staff model nurturing approaches in their engagement with children. This promotes a caring culture across the school and demonstrates behaviours and relationships to and with all children. They have developed nurture spaces recently where children can enjoy a calm environment should they need time for personal support and reflection.
- Across the school, most children engage well in their learning. Most are diligent learners who complete tasks attentively as individuals and in pairs. Staff use class environments, including displays, to support children's learning in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. In most classes children understand the purpose of their learning and tasks. In a few classes, children and teachers work together to identify steps for success.
- Across the school, teachers plan a range of differentiated tasks to meet the different needs of learners. Children enjoy regular well planned opportunities to develop reading, writing and listening and talking each week. The staff team is developing and increasing children's participation in their learning through use of descriptive feedback and learner conversations. This is having a positive impact on children's progress across second level. In a few lessons, children complete very brief tasks and then move on to activities that do not provide challenge or enhance their learning. Support staff work well with children to consolidate and support learning. Staff with responsibility for support for learning work well with teachers to plan relevant, good quality and appropriate interventions based on ongoing assessment information. This includes a strong emphasis on reading and writing. Children who need extra help in their learning or who face barriers in their learning, are supported effectively, often in withdrawal groups. Staff should monitor the frequency of a few children's learning experiences outwith their class. This will ensure they experience a broad curriculum and enjoy time working alongside their peers.
- The early level classroom offers children well-chosen and well-resourced play opportunities. This is providing children with enhanced opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge in an engaging environment. Staff interactions support children well in their learning and play. There is a good balance of direct teaching and child-initiated play. The children can choose books from a well-resourced reading corner including using digital devices to scan digital codes to listen to stories. They are also able to apply writing skills to real life contexts during play.
- Children would benefit from more opportunities to make choices in their learning, and lead aspects of their experiences. This will support increased independence in their learning as they move through the school. Across the school, children use digital devices confidently to find

information and access digital applications for learning. Staff should monitor the relevance and challenge of the digital games a few children choose at the end of numeracy and literacy tasks.

- The headteacher has recently established a number of pupil groups. Participation in these groups offers children a range of responsibilities and opportunities to develop confidence in communication skills and to working alongside children from other classes and stages.
- In most classes, teachers' explanations and instructions are clear. In the most effective lessons, teachers use skilled questioning to engage the children and to promote curiosity, independence and confidence. Most staff have used knowledge gained through relevant educational research to improve learning and teaching within their classes. Senior leaders, working alongside staff, have developed processes to build consistency of learning and teaching across the school. This includes a shared approach to the structure of lessons, and a newly developed assessment of learning policy. These approaches are at an early stage of implementation. Senior leaders should continue to monitor and review practice to ensure children's experiences are of a consistently high quality. Lessons are often teacher directed using textbooks and worksheets. Staff should raise their expectations for the quality of children's presentation of their work, particularly handwriting in literacy and other written tasks.
- All staff are involved in developing the school's approaches to outdoor learning. They are supported by local authority guidance and effective partnership working. Children are positive about their regular opportunities to learn outdoors. As a next step, staff should ensure that they use the outdoor environment as a context for learning across the whole curriculum.
- All staff are using newly introduced online approaches to plan for children's learning. This includes the introduction of revised long term and medium term plans. Teachers should continue to build on this positive work to develop effective approaches to planning for progression in learning across all areas of the curriculum. As a team, staff should continue to review planning approaches regularly to support consistency, and reduce duplication of information. Monitoring discussions should include reflections on the need for better links between the planned outcomes for learners, and how staff record evaluations. Teacher evaluations record activities completed. Building on this, they should focus on recording the impact of these activities on children's learning and progress. As planned, across the school, opportunities for children to be involved in planning their own learning should be developed further.
- The staff team has recently reviewed whole school assessment procedures. Teachers include assessment in termly planning activity. Across the school, literacy feedback includes next steps in learning. Senior leaders should continue to work with teachers to use assessment information alongside progression pathways and benchmarks to support planning next steps for children's learning. This will ensure assessment is fully linked to planned learning and teaching across all curriculum areas. Teachers are growing in confidence in their use and understanding of data to plan children's next steps in learning. Children would benefit from more opportunities to demonstrate and apply their learning in unfamiliar contexts.
- All staff engage in moderation activities to support their professional judgement on progress of a level. Teachers have worked with their cluster colleagues to create a shared understanding of progression within a level, with a particular focus on literacy. This is supporting further their understanding of attainment and achievement.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- All staff use flexible curriculum pathways for literacy, numeracy and mathematics, health and wellbeing and outdoor learning. These are based on local authority progression pathways and support children to build on prior learning. Staff plan wider curriculum areas as lessons in cross-curricular topics and themes. Senior leaders have a strategic plan in place to develop and introduce progressive pathways that meet outcomes for other curricular areas across the broad general education. This plan should ensure that all children experience a broad and relevant curriculum and have regular learning opportunities to build on their prior learning across all curricular areas.
- The school is reviewing their curriculum rationale. In doing so they should build on the rich learning opportunities in the local area. Moving forward, there is a need for school leaders to support staff to consider continuity, progression, and equal opportunity in learning across the curriculum for children at all stages. Current practice relies too heavily on individual teacher interests and choices. The planned review of the curriculum will support this, ensuring all children receive their entitlements as they move through the school.
- Literacy has been a recent improvement focus within the curriculum. Collaborative work with cluster partner schools has supported teacher pedagogy, and a consistent approach to teaching of reading, writing, listening and talking is supporting improved attainment across the school.
- All classes have attractive class libraries where children can choose books to read for enjoyment. Digital books are available to access via digital codes. A pupil group, Reader Leaders, takes 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. They are also creating a mobile library for all children to use.
- All staff plan contexts for learning through interdisciplinary learning which are based on Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes at each level. There is scope to review this planning approach to ensure that children's learning experiences across the curriculum offer progression, breadth, relevance and depth.
- Children across the school can use appropriate digital devices to support their learning. They are able to access the internet for a variety of purposes and can use digital codes confidently. Children who require to use digital devices to record and evidence their learning are supported to do so. The pupil group Digital Directors, is sharing messages on online safety with the whole school. To improve children's learning in the digital world, there is a need to develop planned progression in digital skills for learners across the school.
- All children receive their entitlement to two hours of physical education a week. Senior leaders should continue to monitor this provision to evaluate the quality of the learning experiences and ensure it builds upon prior learning.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- The school makes use of a range of communication methods to share children's progress in learning, and information about school events. This includes a school newsletter and through online platforms. Parents evenings take place twice per year where children's progress is shared. During parents nights, parents are also consulted on the vision, values and aims of the school. The staff team has identified the need to support parents to understand current relationships and antibullying approaches in schools.
- Breakfast learning and sharing the learning sessions take place twice yearly. These learning sessions are linked to themes and topics such as recycling, countries and school values. Overall, parents value the opportunity to engage in these sessions as they feel involved in the life and work of the school. A few parents would like increased opportunities to engage with the work of the school.
- A few parents feel there is a lack of consistency in the communication methods used across years groups. The agreed communication tools are not consistently used regularly by all staff. The school should review its communication methods across all year groups to help improve consistency and purpose in its contact with parents. This will help to develop parents' understanding of the work of the school, how their children are progressing and how they can support their children learning at home.
- The staff team is very keen to involve parents more in school improvement. The headteacher has plans to re-establish a Parent Council to support this work.

2.1 Safeguarding

- 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.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- All staff have a shared commitment to supporting and improving the wellbeing of all children. They also extend their care and support to parents and the wider community. As a result, improving the health and wellbeing (HWB) of all is central to the work of the school. Within the warm and caring ethos, all children are valued and respected as individuals. Staff listen well to children and work very well as a team to find solutions to any challenges or issues children and their families may face. This includes seeking support to improve mental wellbeing and dealing with stress caused by the cost of living crisis.
- There are respectful relationships across the school. Children are well behaved. They demonstrate kindness in class when sharing resources and supporting each other in learning and at play. Older children model expected standards in their role as buddies with the younger children. Children can talk about their rights, and the ongoing work of the school to achieve accreditation.
- The school has developed a positive relationship policy, agreed by children, parents and staff. All classes have a daily check in system which allows prompt monitoring and appropriate action from any issues arising. Children's wellbeing is discussed at the school's regular excellence and equity meetings with school leaders. Information gathered is used to plan support as required.
- Children feel safe at school. If they have concerns, they can link with their 'trusted adult'. This includes if they feel they may have experienced bullying behaviours. The school has developed a 'mini hub', a calm space where children can chat to an adult and enjoy a nurturing environment. Children talk with confidence about how these approaches support their wellbeing. They find adults in school very approachable. Staff follow local authority safeguarding guidance when leading 'trusted adult' conversations.'
- Children enjoy active PE twice a week and have ample opportunities for physical activity in the playground and during after school activities. This is supporting them to improve their physical wellbeing. Children have identified the need to refresh playground equipment and activities.
- All children are included in the life of the school. This includes taking responsibilities in hub leadership teams and pupil voice groups. Children are beginning to develop an understanding of the purpose of the groups and how, for example the health and wellbeing group will support improvement in wellbeing across the school. There is a need to ensure all children have the opportunity to engage with this aspect of the school's vision. The 'mini health and wellbeing champs' represent the school at local authority networks. They share information with the school community. This ensures all children are up to date with ideas on how to keep healthy. They also organise related activities and events, for example, national fitness day.

- All staff ensure that children experience learning across the breadth of the health and wellbeing curriculum supported by local authority pathways. Two members of staff take responsibility for leading this work across the school and access a range of partners and resources to enhance learning. Children can describe in detail, the range of health and wellbeing activities they enjoy and have experienced. Older children talk with confidence about how to keep safe, and healthy through their diet and sport. Moving forward, the team should work together to evaluate the impact of planned activities, and assess children's understanding and progress across the health and wellbeing curriculum more effectively.
- Led by the headteacher, staff comply with relevant legislation and codes of practice. This includes in their management of attendance, care needs and in meeting the needs of children who require additional support with their learning. The support for learning team ensures all processes for the assessment and identification of need are managed well and within appropriate timescales. Children have clear targets, and parents and children are involved in decision making, plans and reviews. The support for learning teacher actively supports staff and is engaged in high-quality direct teaching. The approaches and interventions deployed are having a positive impact on children's confidence and learning. This includes targeted small group activities in literacy and numeracy.
- Children's attendance is in line with the national average. Staff rigorously follow local authority guidance for recording and monitoring the attendance of all children. A few children are being supported to improve attendance. School leaders link with appropriate local authority partners to support families. This includes offering home visits to support children to return to school.
- There is a strong commitment to ensuring inclusion and equality across the school. As a result, children feel encouraged in their learning and supported to do their best. Staff take steps to remove any barriers to learning, including the cost of participation in school activities. A few children need supported to engage in class activities. School leaders should continue to monitor participation in learning for a few children to ensure they are included, access a broad curriculum and learn alongside their peers. The principal teacher leads on developing racial literacy. This knowledge is being extended across the staff team and embraced by staff. The headteacher has a plan to include all stakeholders in a school equality and diversity strategy. Moving forward this will support all children and staff in their understanding of diversity in their community and beyond.

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

- The overall quality of children's attainment in literacy and English language, and numeracy and mathematics is good. Most children are making good progress from their prior learning. Data presented by the school provides an accurate record of children's progress. Attainment and progress will be expressed in 'overall' statements, rather than for specific year groups or Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. This is because of the very small numbers of children at each stage.
- Children with additional support needs are well supported and most are making appropriate progress towards their individual learning targets.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Most children are making good progress in listening and talking, reading and writing.

Listening and talking

- Across the school, children listen well when listening as part of whole class lessons and within a group. At early level, children follow and can give instructions well, and can take turns appropriately. Children working towards first level listen well to others, contribute to discussions, and can respond to others respectfully by nodding, agreeing, asking and answering questions. Older children can share their opinions in discussions, showing respect for the views of others and can build on other's contributions in positive ways. Across the school children use key listening skills and can apply the appropriate behaviours required to be a good listener. Across the school, children would benefit from more opportunities to practise and demonstrate listening and talking skills across the wider curriculum.

Reading

- At early level, children are beginning to use known sounds and familiar words to read sentences and stories. They can use context clues to help them to understand what they are reading. Children working towards first level are becoming increasingly skilled at reading aloud with fluency and expression. They decode unfamiliar words and use contextual clues to identify the main ideas. Children working towards second level select books regularly to read for enjoyment and can explain, using detail, their preferences for particular genres or authors. As they progress through second level, children can identify the purpose of books they are using. They can identify the main ideas and can comment on features of language such as vocabulary, sentence structure and punctuation. All children read for enjoyment in class daily. Children would enjoy access to a wider range of texts, including poetry, scripts and graphic novels. A few older children would benefit from increased challenge in their reading tasks across the curriculum.

Writing

- At early level, children are developing skills for writing effectively in a range of play experiences linked to the world of work and other real life contexts. They are beginning to form a few lower-case letters appropriately. Children working towards first level write sentences and texts using correct simple punctuation. By second level, children use an increasing range of sentence structures, vocabulary and punctuation to engage the reader. Children write for a range of purposes and genres across the year. Staff should ensure that children have opportunities to revisit writing genres regularly and apply their skills in writing activities across the curriculum. Children would like more opportunities to choose the context for their own writing. The gap between planning a piece of writing in class, and then completion, has an impact on their interest and motivation. Across the school, all children would benefit from writing at length more regularly. Senior leaders and staff should ensure that a more consistent approach to teaching handwriting is in place. This will ensure that all children learn to write in a fluid and legible way.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Most children working towards early and second level are making good progress in their learning. The progress of children working towards first level is satisfactory. Only a few children at first level are on target to achieve national expectations. A few children working towards second level could achieve more and need more challenge in their numeracy and mathematics learning.

Number, money and measure

- Most children working towards early level identify 'how many' when counting objects during their play. They are gaining confidence in using language such as 'before' and 'after' when talking about numbers from 0-10. Most children working towards first level need continued support to gain confidence in understanding simple multiplication activities. They have not yet embedded strategies to solve multiplication calculations and need support to understand and using simple place value. Children who have achieved first level are developing skills in creating and using equivalent fractions. Most children working towards second level can calculate profit and loss accurately. Children at first and second level would benefit from opportunities to apply numeracy skills in real life and unfamiliar contexts across the curriculum.

Shape, position and movement

- Most children working towards first level can identify two-dimensional shapes in their tasks and in the classroom environment. They are developing their knowledge about shapes that can create tiling patterns. Children who have achieved first level can identify and label different types of angles. Children working towards second level can describe three-dimensional objects and two-dimensional shapes. They use mathematical vocabulary accurately to describe properties.

Information handling

- Children at early level can apply their counting skills to answer questions about a pictorial chart. Children who have achieved first level are confident in extracting key information from a bar graph and table. Children working towards second level demonstrate skills in reading data from digital displays. They would benefit from developing confidence in collecting, organising and displaying data accurately in real life and meaningful contexts.

Attainment over time

- School achievement of a level data shows a varying picture across year groups and over time. Strategies which accelerate progress based on collaborative cluster working approaches have ensured attainment in literacy is improving. Attainment overall remains variable. Staff should

work together to ensure improved attainment in numeracy and mathematics, in particular for children working towards first level. The school has robust approaches to track children's progress in literacy and numeracy. This includes tracking individuals, and groups who may need additional support. Moving forward, senior leaders, as planned, should now look at systems to track attainment across all curricular areas. This will support staff to assess and record children's overall progress effectively.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Children's achievements are celebrated regularly through the life and work of the school. Staff celebrate individual children's commitment to the school values at assemblies and through class recognition systems. Children are proud of their own achievements and the achievements of others. Every child is part of a school pupil group. These groups are at early stages of development but are starting to make a significant contribution to the life and work of the school. Children enjoy participation in these multi-stage groups and feel their views are valued. They are developing confidence in presenting ideas. The headteacher has recently developed a tracking system to record children's achievements. This will help staff to identify gaps in participation. A next step is to support children to identify the skills they develop across their wider achievement.
- Children take part in after school clubs when they are available. The school has developed a system which monitors and tracks children's achievements at home and in school. They use this to ensure no-one is at risk of missing out.

Equity for all learners

- The school has a clear position statement regarding the cost of the school day. The headteacher ensures all equipment for learning is provided. Families are supported to ensure that all children can participate in attending after school clubs and excursions, and that there is no cost barrier. The headteacher meets costs through the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) and school funds.
- PEF has been allocated for additional teaching and support staff to ensure all pupils are included and supported well in their learning, particularly children with additional support needs. Senior leaders should now ensure that the effectiveness of support funded by PEF is tracked across time. They need to ensure that funding is used to support children impacted by their socio-economic circumstances to make accelerated progress in their learning.

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.