Summarised inspection findings

Manor Park School

Aberdeen City Council

25 February 2025

Key contextual information

Manor Park School is a non-denominational primary school located in the north of Aberdeen and is a member of the Northfield Academy Association Schools Group (ASG). The building was opened in 2010 and benefits from large playgrounds, a multisport pitch and natural areas.

The headteacher has been in post for seven years. She is supported by a depute headteacher and two principal teachers.

At the time of inspection, the school roll was 237 children, organised across 10 classes. The school reports that the majority of children across the school have additional support needs. In February 2024, the majority of children at P6 and P7 were registered for free school meals. Most children live in quintile one of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. A minority of children have English as an additional language.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	weak
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	

■ Almost all staff ensure children learn in a warm, trusting and caring environment which reflects effectively the school values of 'respect, aspiration, resilience, safe and healthy.' All staff know children and their families very well and demonstrate care and compassion in all their interactions with children. As a result, most children enjoy learning at school and feel confident approaching adults for support. Almost all parents feel staff treat their children fairly and with respect. Most children are respectful to staff in school and welcoming to visitors. In all classes, teachers and children have established relationship agreements linked to children's rights. Staff should now refer more regularly to these during day-to-day activities in school.

■ All staff ensure that children's wellbeing lies at the heart of all that they do. They demonstrate well the key features of effective relationships. All staff strive to create a positive ethos that supports the majority of children to regulate and manage their behaviour. Most children say they have someone to talk to if they are worried or upset. Staff and partners provide a variety of emotional wellbeing supports for children. For example, a few children benefit from support from play therapists and social work partners as well as through targeted nurture interventions. As a result, relationships are positive between a majority of children, and between most children and adults. Staff have a strong knowledge of trauma-informed practices and utilise this well to help children who have experienced trauma and adversity in their lives. This encourages a majority of children to behave well and engage in their learning. However, a minority of children display dysregulated behaviour. This has a significantly negative impact on their learning and that of their peers. Senior leaders now need to continue to work with all teachers to raise expectations of behaviour and ensure these shared expectations and boundaries are consistently applied.

- Teachers must review the use of time across the school day to increase quality learning time. In addition, they need to improve the consistency of children's learning experiences across all classes. Senior leaders have rightly recognised the need to ensure that the pace of learning increases, and that children's experiences and tasks are effectively matched to the needs of all children.

- Staff use 'Learning and Teaching Expectations' documents to gather evidence of individual and whole school progress in improving the quality of learning and teaching. However, this is not yet being used effectively and there are significant inconsistencies in practice across the school. Most teachers provide clear explanations and instructions to support children to undertake learning activities. They should now consider how questions can support children to deepen their learning. A majority of teachers share the purpose of lessons regularly with children and use a 'three and five star' approach to identify how children can be successful in their learning. Teachers now need to review and improve the consistency of these approaches and ensure they are implemented consistently by staff across all classes. This should support children to gain a clearer understanding of what they are learning and how they can be successful. As planned, staff need to make greater links to the skills children are learning during lessons.

- Most children enjoy reflecting on their learning and are proud to share their successes with their parents through an online application. In addition, most teachers use children's views well to explore prior learning, choice and approaches to learning. Senior leaders have rightly identified the need to take steps to enable children to lead their own learning. This should include opportunities for them to identify their strengths and next steps.

- All teachers use questioning appropriately in lessons to clarify instructions and explanations. In a few classes, teachers use questioning effectively to develop children's curiosity and creativity. In these examples, children show greater engagement in their learning. Senior leaders should continue to ensure this effective practice is shared more widely across classes to develop children's thinking skills. Teachers should develop the use of plenary sessions further to reinforce and consolidate key learning.

- Most older children access digital tools and software regularly to support their learning. As a result, they are developing a few skills in word processing, coding and research. Younger children use matrix bar codes to access games and activities and use tablets to record examples of their learning. However, younger children have limited access to digital devices and high-quality experiences to allow them to develop necessary digital skills. Across the school, a minority of children are provided with opportunities to develop skills through outdoor learning. Senior leaders must now develop progressive pathways and increased opportunities for children to develop skills in both digital literacy and outdoor learning across all classes.

- Teachers at early level use research and national guidance to develop opportunities for children to learn through play. They have adapted learning environments to provide adult-initiated opportunities for learning through play. Teachers must now provide more open ended, child-initiated activities to extend children's thinking and learning in their play. In addition, they need to ensure that all play opportunities allow children to deepen and enrich their learning. As teachers develop play approaches further, they should use their observations more closely to inform planning. Across all classes, teachers should increase children's engagement in learning further through well planned enquiry-based approaches.

- The senior leadership team has developed a useful annual assessment calendar. This identifies key national and summative assessment activity, including timescales for completion of these. Senior leaders use assessment information well to identify appropriate interventions for children's wellbeing. Teachers must now identify how planned learning will be appropriately

assessed. They need to take steps to ensure assessment information is being used to raise attainment. Senior leaders should continue to support teachers' confidence in analysing assessment data to identify gaps in children's learning and plan effective interventions in classes. They need to ensure this includes interventions for children who require support or increased challenge in their learning.

■ A few teachers provide helpful written feedback for children, that links well to the purpose of learning and identified steps for success. In a few classes, children are beginning to learn skills in self and peer assessment in writing. To increase children's awareness of their strengths and next steps in learning, senior leaders should ensure that approaches to high quality feedback are applied consistently across the school.

■ All teachers plan learning across different timescales. Recently, staff have increased consistency of planning approaches through the use of local authority progressive pathways across the curriculum. They use these to plan for groups in their classes. Teachers need to ensure they plan for children with additional support needs more effectively. Staff working with children at similar stages plan together to share ideas and moderate children's experiences and outcomes. Teachers must now review their approaches to evaluating their plans. Evaluations should record how well children have achieved the learning and how planning is adapted as a result. Teachers need to plan opportunities for children to apply learning in new and unfamiliar contexts. This should support greater breadth and depth of learning across different curricular areas.

■ Teachers are at the early stages of developing a shared understanding of standards through moderation activity, within school and across the learning community. This is beginning to improve teachers' confidence in identifying children's progress. Senior leaders should continue to provide further moderation activities to increase the accuracy of teachers' judgements of attainment. This has the potential to improve the quality of learning and teaching.

■ Senior leaders and teachers meet four times a year to discuss, track and record children's attainment. Senior leaders are beginning to use data more effectively to monitor the progress and attainment of different year groups. They should now improve their processes to review more effectively the progress of different groups, such as children who require support with their learning. In addition, senior leaders need to develop a stronger understanding of children's progress relative to national standards. This should support them to identify clearly the attainment gap for children who face barriers to learning, including as a result of poverty, and plan approaches to accelerate progress. It is important for senior leaders to put in place measures to identify more clearly which interventions are more effective in reducing gaps in children's learning.

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 that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	weak

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, levels of attainment in literacy and English, numeracy and mathematics are weak. Children make insufficient progress in literacy and numeracy across the school. The attainment of children at early level in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. At first and second levels, attainment in literacy and numeracy is weak. Too few children are making progress in line with expected national standards. Staff are at the early stages of developing confidence using national standards to identify children's progress in attainment and current judgements of attainment are not sufficiently robust. The school's data does not indicate accurately the progress of children in literacy and numeracy.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, the majority of children are making satisfactory progress in writing from prior levels of attainment. Children's progress in reading and listening and talking is weak.

Listening and talking

- At early level, the majority of children engage with stories, songs and rhymes and hear and say patterns in words. At first level, a minority of children communicate clearly and audibly and contribute to class discussions. At second level, a minority of children make relevant notes using their own words. They use these to create new texts for a range of purposes. Across all stages, staff should support children to develop skills in taking turns to talk and respectfully agreeing and disagreeing. Children across the school need regular opportunities to develop listening and talking skills through planned, progressive and structured learning and teaching.

Reading

- At early level, a minority of children hear and say a few single sounds made by letters. A few children are beginning to use taught sounds to decode and read words. Children need to build confidence to read common words. At first level, a minority of children read with fluency and are able to answer literal questions about texts. They identify key features of fiction and non-fiction texts. At second level, a minority of children tackle unfamiliar texts with fluency, understanding and expression. They use appropriate pace and tone. At second level, most children make relevant comments about structure, characterisation and setting with reference to the text. Across the school, children are not yet able to confidently explain their choice of text, referencing title, author, and illustrator, appropriate to their age. Children need supported to become motivated and engaged readers. They should be encouraged to read and access library environments to read for pleasure more regularly.

Writing

- At early level, most children explore mark making. They require more regular opportunities to write independently, including through play. At first level, a focus on improving writing is supporting children's ability to write independently and punctuate sentences with capital letters

and full stops. Across first and second levels, the majority of children are developing skills in using interesting vocabulary and a range of conjunctions. At second level, a minority of children are developing confidence in writing a variety of genres and for a range of purposes. Across the school, children's presentation and handwriting is not yet of a consistently high standard. They would benefit from increased opportunities to practise letter formation and be supported to take pride in the quality of their written work.

Attainment in Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, a minority of children are making satisfactory progress from prior levels of attainment in numeracy and mathematics. The majority of children are making insufficient progress.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, most children identify and recognise numbers from 0-20. The majority of children have a good knowledge of number facts and use these to add within 10. Children now need to be supported to use strategies of counting on and counting back, and to subtract numbers within 20. At first level, a minority of children confidently apply addition and subtraction processes for three-digit whole numbers. They read, write and order whole numbers to 1000. At first level, children need support to develop their understanding of division. At second level, a minority of children are confident in mental calculations. They use appropriate multiplication and division facts well. At second level, children lack confidence in aspects of measure, such as volume and capacity. At all stages, children lack confidence in solving numeracy and mathematics problems in real-life situations.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, the majority of children recognise, describe, and sort common two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. They compare and describe heights well using everyday language, including, taller, tallest, smaller, and smallest. At first level, a minority of children understand lines of symmetry and identify these on a range of two-dimensional shapes. They require support to estimate and compare the size of angles and know that a right angle is 90°. At second level, a minority of children are confident in describing a range of angles. They describe two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects accurately using appropriate vocabulary, such as radius and diameter. Children do not have sufficient skills in interpreting maps, models or plans with simple scales.

Information handling

- At early level, the majority of children match and sort items by colour, shape and size. At first level, a minority of children use bar graphs to interpret information. Children at second level lack confidence in using data to interpret information. Across the school, teachers need to take prompt action to ensure children develop skills in handling information appropriate to their age and stage.

Attainment over time

- Senior leaders and teachers gather a range of attainment data for individual children in literacy and English, numeracy and mathematics and wellbeing over time. This data is not yet robust and therefore does not provide a reliable picture of children's attainment over time. The headteacher acknowledges the importance of developing approaches further to gathering data that accurately illustrates attainment over time for all children. In doing so, senior leaders should analyse data to identify trends in children's attainment, for example, with particular groups and cohorts of children. This analysis should support staff to measure better the impact of school improvement initiatives and interventions.

- Over time, children's attendance is consistently below the national average. Forty-one percent of children have an absence of 10% or more. This is significantly impacting on children's attainment. Senior leaders monitor closely the absence and lateness of individual children.

They work effectively with health professionals to support a few families to improve children's attendance. The headteacher rightly plans to extend this effective approach to a wider range of families where attendance is of concern.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

■ Children share and celebrate their achievements through assemblies, wall displays and by gaining house points. They are proud to receive awards such as, 'Character Counts,' 'Going for Gold,' 'Diamond Learners' awards and 'Team MP' merits. As a result, most children are developing aspects of the school's values of aspiration, respect and resilience.

■ Staff work effectively with partners to provide a range of experiences where most children succeed and develop skills of respect and resilience. These include football tournaments, basketball competitions and running events.

■ In consultation with parents, staff developed a useful skills framework to track progressively the skills that children develop. They use this document to also track children's participation and achievement in a range of activities both in and out of school. They should now analyse this information to determine any gaps in children's experiences and skills. They should also use this information to support children to understand and link their achievements to the skills they are developing.

Equity for all learners

■ The headteacher and most staff are very aware of the socio-economic context of their school community. They use Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) well to support emotional wellbeing and to develop approaches to play through additional resources and partners. Planned approaches, interventions and strategies are having a positive impact on outcomes for children. For example, children and families have access to a counsellor to help them with strategies to improve their emotional wellbeing. Senior leaders need to evaluate more closely the impact of all planned interventions on attainment. This will support them to clearly identify and articulate how well they are closing the attainment gap caused by children's socio-economic circumstances.

■ The headteacher and staff are mindful of the need to minimise the cost of the school day. They ensure that all trips are subsidised or free of charge for all children. They use PEF funding well to provide a breakfast club to ensure all children have a positive start to the school day. The headteacher also uses PEF funding to ensure that children are given opportunities for wider achievement outwith the school day. She works very well with staff and partners to provide after-school clubs weekly. This effectively ensures equity of experience and improves outcomes for children.

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.