

Summarised inspection findings

Burntisland Primary School

Fife Council

5 November 2024

Key contextual information

Burntisland Primary School is a non-denominational school serving the town of Burntisland in Fife. At the time of inspection, the school roll consisted of 427 children across sixteen classes. The headteacher has been in post since April 2024 and is supported by three depute headteachers. The senior leadership team has gone through a period of significant change over the last year.

A majority of children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) decile six and above with a minority living in SIMD decile 1 and 2. Children's attendance is in line with the national average. The school reported that 30% of children have additional support needs.

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

- All children and staff work well together in a climate of very positive and respectful relationships. Staff are committed to embedding children's rights and this can be seen in the class charters and the supportive ethos across the school. The school's vision of 'belong, participate and succeed' is well-embedded and underpins learning across the school.
- Staff are well supported by senior leaders to promote high expectations of children's behaviour. Staff use a nurturing approach across the school which results in children learning in a calm and supportive environment. Children interact well with each other and are polite to staff and visitors. They use calm spaces and resources when required to regulate their emotions and maintain a focus on their learning. Senior leaders and staff support children consistently to have increased expectations and improve the presentation of their written work. As a result, children are developing a sense of pride in their work.
- In most classes, children participate well in learning activities and are engaged in their learning as a result of well-paced and carefully considered tasks. However, this is not yet of a consistently high-quality across the school. In a few lessons, children's learning is overly teacher led and too much time is allocated to teachers' explanations. As a result, a minority of children become disengaged.
- Almost all staff support effectively children who require additional support with their learning. In almost all classes, skilful and caring pupil support assistants support children's learning effectively. A minority of children who require additional support with their learning use digital devices to help them access materials appropriate to their needs. In the majority of classes, a few children become disengaged when the task is too difficult to complete. In most lessons, higher-achieving children would benefit from greater levels of challenge. Senior leaders should continue to review the allocation of additional support so that key staff are deployed effectively to meet the needs of all children across the school.

- The headteacher led a whole school approach to improving the quality of learning and teaching. As a result, there is greater consistency in the language of learning across the school. Staff have undertaken professional learning to improve the quality of teaching. They developed a four-part model which details a common approach to learning and teaching. Staff in almost all classes demonstrate the four-part model effectively to structure their lesson delivery. As part of this development, teachers in almost all classes have focused recently on helping children to make links to prior learning. As a result, most children engage well in their learning. Teachers should continue to develop strategies for children to consolidate and retain their learning more effectively. Senior leaders should continue to embed these recent developments and share examples of highly-effective practice more widely across the school. This would help develop greater consistency of high-quality learning and teaching.
- Teachers in almost all classes provide clear explanations and instructions. They share with children the purpose of learning and how they can demonstrate that they have been successful. In a few lessons, children are involved in creating the measures of success with staff. In an increasing number of lessons, children use these effectively to reflect on or self-assess their learning. Most teachers are beginning to share effectively ongoing verbal and written feedback based on the agreed measures of success. This is helping children to understand how successful they have been and to know their next steps in learning.
- Staff are developing their understanding of play pedagogy in Primary 1 and have undertaken professional learning and are improving their approaches to play in Primary 1. Most children who engage well in play activities learn creatively. A few learners become disengaged and require greater support to remain on task. Staff should continue to ensure they provide learning in play that challenges and supports all children to engage them in learning. Senior leaders are supporting staff to understand better the role of the adult in play. Staff should continue, as planned, to ensure an appropriate balance of teacher-initiated and child-led play.
- Teachers are increasing their use of the school's context to provide outdoor learning experiences for children. Children enjoy spending time outdoors increasing their understanding of the sea and the woodland. Staff have worked well together to ensure that children can build on their previous outdoor learning as they move through the school. Children are motivated by the recently introduced outdoor learning awards which help them to celebrate their success and achievements outdoors.
- Staff have worked well with the leadership team to develop a yearly overview of assessment. This supports further their work on integrating assessment into planned learning. The headteacher rightly identified the need for staff to become more aware of the national Benchmarks in their assessment processes. They have now included these in their long term planning. This will better support teachers to measure more robustly children's progress through Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. Most teachers are beginning to share the outcome of assessment information with children. As a result, most children know their next steps in literacy and numeracy.
- Teachers are continuing to develop their shared understanding of standards through moderating children's work with colleagues from other schools. As planned, staff should continue to work with their stage partners and other schools to ensure they become more accurate in assessing children's progress. The headteacher has recently streamlined the approach to planning to ensure staff plan learning fully on a weekly basis. This is helping ensure progression in learning is clearer. Staff now plan more effectively to meet the needs of children in learning and integrate ongoing assessment opportunities. Teachers now plan a yearly overview to identify key learning across the year. They refer to Fife Council's learning pathways to ensure children make appropriate progress in learning.

- The headteacher has reviewed how staff track and monitor attainment and progress across the school. Staff are working well with the leadership team to improve how information from this is analysed and used more effectively to raise attainment. For example, together they analyse attainment data successfully to recognise gaps in children's writing. Staff have used this information well to identify groups of children for intensive support. Staff trained in the local authority's writing pack support well the teaching of writing in most classes. This is beginning to show improvements in writing for specific groups. The leadership team meet termly to track children's progress. They identify promptly children who need further support and challenge. Teachers work well with the support for learning teachers to plan targeted interventions for identified children including those who are impacted by socio-economic factors. They set specific and measurable targets for children. Support staff provide effective support for children with targeted interventions in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

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, attainment in literacy and numeracy is good. Most children across the school achieve appropriate CfE levels in literacy and numeracy. A few children across the school could be achieving more. Children who need additional support with their learning are making good progress towards their individual targets.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, children's progress in literacy and English is good. A few children are making very good progress.

Listening and talking

- Across the school, most children are confident and articulate for their age and stage. They use a wide range of vocabulary. At early level, most children listen to instructions and respond appropriately in class and group settings. A few children become disengaged when listening during whole class activities and need support to engage in learning. At first level, most children build respectfully on the opinions and views of others during classwork and group activities. Most children deliver personal presentations confidently. They are beginning to use simple techniques to engage their audience and can adjust the pace and volume of their voice appropriately. At second level, most children talk with confidence and expression. They show interest and enthusiasm when conversing with adults and other children. Across all levels, children would benefit from further opportunities to apply their talking and listening skills for a range of purposes and to a wider range of audiences.

Reading

- Most children who have achieved early level, use their knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns to read words. They are beginning to read familiar texts with expression. At first level, children read aloud fluently and show an understanding of different genre. They describe clearly features of texts they enjoy. At second level, children are enthusiastic about reading and enjoy selecting books from the school library. Most children make relevant comments about aspects of the writer's style and use of effective language. Across the school children need more experience in answering inferential and evaluative questions.

Writing

- A majority of children who have achieved early level, write one or two simple sentences independently. They identify sounds and are becoming more confident blending sounds to write unfamiliar words. They should continue to practise letter formation to improve their handwriting and the presentation of written work. At first level, most children write for a variety of purposes. A majority of children are beginning to use paragraphs to structure their writing and are becoming more confident using a range of punctuation. They should continue to apply

spelling strategies and punctuation checks to improve the accuracy of written text. At second level, most children produce extended pieces of writing. They use a range of interesting vocabulary and techniques to engage the reader. They confidently write recounts, organising information logically. They would benefit from further opportunities to write for a range of purposes and audiences, applying their knowledge and skills in different contexts. Across the school, children would benefit from opportunities to write more often.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, most children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Staff are beginning to use data more rigorously to increase their understanding of gaps in children's learning in numeracy and mathematics. This is beginning to improve attainment across the school.

Number, money and measure

- Most children across the school are developing their knowledge of place value well, appropriate to their age and stage. Almost all children at early level create repeated patterns. Children who have achieved the early level add, subtract and order numbers to 20. Most children at first level are confident in adding and subtracting two-digit numbers and are confident in reading quarter past and quarter to times on both an analogue and digital clock. At second level, most children confidently use the four operations to solve money problems. At all stages, staff should regularly revisit previously taught concepts to improve mental agility.

Shape, position and movement

- Children who have achieved early level correctly identify two lines of symmetry in two-dimensional (2D) shapes. Most children at first level use mathematical vocabulary correctly to describe the names and properties of 2D shapes and three-dimensional objects. Most older children calculate the area of squares and rectangles with a few understanding how to work out a radius from the diameter of a circle.

Information handling

- Across the school, children demonstrate an appropriate understanding of information handling. At early and first level, children carry out their own real-life surveys and use a variety of different methods to display data appropriate to their stage. At second level children are able to collect data using appropriate methods, create bar charts and analyse this information effectively. Older children should extend their skills through the effective use of technology to support their data collection and analysis.

Attainment over time

- Attendance is in line with the national average. The leadership team have developed a robust approach to tracking and monitoring the attendance of children. A range of well-conceived targeted interventions are beginning to impact positively on improving the attendance of a few children facing additional barriers to learning. This includes working effectively with a range of partners who work with families to develop bespoke interventions most suited to meeting the needs of children. Staff make good use of the breakfast club to encourage children to have a soft start to school. They have worked well with parents to reduce the cost of the school day to ensure all children can participate fully in the life of the school.
- Senior leaders are aware that historic data gathered over time is not sufficiently reliable and robust. This means that the school's illustration of attainment over time is not accurate. Senior leaders have recently introduced more robust and effective processes to track and monitor children's progress in literacy, numeracy and wellbeing. This robust tracking, regular

attainment reviews and increased moderation activities are supporting teachers to develop further their understanding of achievement of a level. As a result, the tracking of children's attainment over time is becoming more reliable with this year's data.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Children's achievements in and out of school are celebrated at assembly and displayed on the Celebrating Success wall. Children are proud of their achievements and enjoy sharing these with their peers. As planned, staff should now support children to identify the skills and attributes that they are developing through these achievements.
- Staff track children's participation and personal achievements. They are beginning to use this information to extend the opportunities available for children and to identify children who are at risk of missing out. They work well with active schools to identify clubs and activities for individuals and engage well with parents to ensure they are appropriate for children. They have developed a robust plan to ensure every child is included.
- Across the school, children are encouraged to participate in a wide range of sporting experiences, led by school staff and partners. As a result, children have achieved success in several sporting events and competitions including, football festivals, athletics, and cross country. These experiences are effectively building children's confidence and providing opportunities for them to develop their skills and interests.
- Senior pupils contribute positively to the life of the school by leading sports clubs for younger children, buddying P1 pupils and participating in various committees such as pupil council. Last session, all P7 pupils achieved a nationally recognised award for outdoor learning, demonstrating their leadership and team working skills. They also worked successfully with staff to develop a progressive outdoor learning programme for the whole school.
- Staff have established meaningful partnerships within the local community and children participate regularly in community events such as Highland Games and the Gala Royal Party. These partnerships enhance children's citizenship skills and provide increased opportunities for them to contribute meaningfully to their local community.

Equity for all learners

- Staff, working in partnership with parents, have reduced the cost of the school day. They have reviewed the fundraising calendar and make good use of the breakfast club. Parents have access to a food bank and subsidised school excursions if needed. The 'Big Hoose' project provides everyday household items, and the creation of a Parent Council pre-loved clothing bank has been established. These initiatives are supporting families well to mitigate the cost of the school day.
- The leadership team have developed new approaches to tracking attainment which has raised staff's awareness of children experiencing socio-economic difficulties. This is leading to interventions being planned carefully to support specific children. Staff are able to demonstrate increased attainment for these children, in particular in writing and in reading. The leadership team consult stakeholders on the use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). A PEF funded writing intervention has accelerated progress for targeted children who face additional barriers to learning. The headteacher should continue with plans to track more robustly the impact of PEF funded support staff. This will help show the impact of this intervention on children adversely affected by their circumstances.

Other relevant evidence

- 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. Minor areas for improvement have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.
- All children receive their full entitlement to two hours high-quality physical education each week. Teachers plan children's learning in physical education using Fife Council's progression pathways linked to CfE experiences and outcomes and Benchmarks. As a result, children experience progression in their learning of physical skills as they move through the school.
- All children receive their entitlement to learn 1+2 modern languages. Children learn French from P1-7 and Spanish from P5-7 in a planned and progressive approach as they move through the school.
- Children have access to an attractive library. Staff have worked well with parents to improve the library. Older pupils led the development of the library successfully. Children speak positively about borrowing books to read in class and the range of authors available.
- Children receive their entitlement to Religious and Moral Education in line with national expectations.

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.