

# Summarised inspection findings

**Lumphanan School**

Aberdeenshire Council

1 October 2024

## Key contextual information

Lumphanan School is a non-denominational primary school in Royal Deeside, Aberdeenshire. It serves the village of Lumphanan and the surrounding rural area. At the time of the inspection, there were 47 pupils attending the school, ranging from P1 to P7. Children are taught across two multi-stage classes. The headteacher has overall responsibility for both Lumphanan and Kincardine O'Neil schools. A principal teacher, three class teachers and several support staff work closely with the headteacher.

### 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

- Relationships between staff and children are highly nurturing and respectful. All adults know each child very well and are encouraging and supportive in their interactions. Across the school, children understand the school values, caring and nurturing, achieving, respectful, effort and ambition (CARE). They demonstrate these through their learning and daily interactions. They have a very good understanding of children's rights and link these to their learning experiences, for example, in discussing the wellbeing and plight of others.
- All staff provide a calm, inclusive and positive learning environment. They create motivating learning spaces indoors and make effective use of the school grounds and local outdoor areas. As a result, almost all children are fully engaged in lessons and activities across the curriculum. For older children, teachers provide dynamic, stimulating challenges and purposeful contexts for learning that capture their interest and which they enjoy very much. Lessons for younger children include exciting provocations that inspire and promote thinking, curiosity and creativity. Across the school, children work very well independently and collaborate effectively when in pairs and groups. This supports them very well to develop creative and unique ideas and opinions.
- Senior leaders and teachers have discussed and agreed expectations and features of high-quality learning and teaching. As a result, teachers provide consistent, highly effective learning experiences for children across the school. In all lessons, teachers' instructions are clear, and children understand the purpose of their learning. Children confidently identify measures for success in lessons. Staff use questioning very effectively to check for understanding and to extend children's thinking. Teachers use plenaries very well to summarise learning and to help children reflect on their skills. Staff provide a wide range of tasks, activities and open-ended projects that are well-matched to children's abilities. They provide regular opportunities for children to make choices and try new skills. Lessons are very well planned, and children engage in meaningful tasks as starters or extension activities. Children respond very well to this approach and make the most of their learning experiences.

- Learning support teachers and support staff assist children very well with their learning in class and when working with groups and individuals. They are sensitive and highly responsive to each child's wellbeing and needs. They provide a range of valuable targeted interventions to support children to practise key literacy and numeracy skills. They help a few children to regulate their own behaviours. This helps children who require additional support with their learning or to deal with their emotions, to make strong progress. Across the school, children are polite and kind, and standards of behaviour are high.
- Younger children in P1 to P4 learn through very well-planned play experiences and open-ended challenges. They are developing important skills in creativity, perseverance and communication. Staff have a sound understanding of national practice guidance and continue to refine their approaches informed by professional learning. They create engaging learning spaces, indoors and outdoors, that support children very well to be curious and make personal choices. Staff observe and interact with children effectively during play, asking thoughtful questions to extend learning.
- Staff and children make highly effective use of digital technologies and software to enhance and support learning and teaching. As a result, all children have very well-developed digital literacy and skills. Interactive whiteboards, laptops and tablets are an embedded feature in lessons. Children use a range of digital resources and applications regularly to extend and share their learning, including programmable robots and toys, coding and stop-go animation.
- Children benefit strongly from embedded approaches to taking ownership of their learning and recognising their own progress. They report that they find it helpful to have regular opportunities to peer and self-assess their work. In lessons, teachers provide encouraging verbal feedback on children's learning. They provide regular high-quality written comments on children's work. Children create their own short-term personalised targets that focus on key aspects of knowledge and the development of personal skills. A few times each year, children capture all aspects of their learning through 'a week in a jotter'. Children then share their week's learning with their parents by taking the jotter home. Parents feel that this approach, along with regular information sessions, gives them a very good understanding of teaching methods and their child's progress across the curriculum.
- Teachers make highly effective use of a wide range of assessment approaches. They assess children's learning regularly in different contexts and across the curriculum. Senior leaders and teachers make very good use of assessment information to evaluate children's progress in learning. Staff use data from national standardised assessments and other tests very well to support their professional judgements of children's progress and attainment.
- Senior leaders have embedded strong and effective processes for moderation. Staff have regular opportunities to discuss and agree standards and focus on various aspects of children's learning, such as writing. Teachers work well collaboratively as a school team and value experiences to moderate standards alongside colleagues from their partner school. As a result, teachers' professional judgements on achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels are robust and accurate.
- Teachers make highly effective use of CfE experiences and outcomes, and local authority and school progression frameworks to plan children's learning across the curriculum. They plan well over different timescales and are very responsive to children's interests. For example, children suggest questions they would like to explore during learning in social studies.

- Senior leaders use a detailed, comprehensive system to monitor and record children’s learning progress. During regular tracking meetings, senior leaders and teachers discuss and record each child’s progress across literacy and numeracy and for health and wellbeing. They use this information very well to identify, plan and evaluate targeted support and challenge for individual children.

## 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

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

- Attainment and progress will be expressed in 'overall' statements, rather than for specific year groups or CfE levels. This is because of the small numbers of children at each stage.
- The robust data presented by the school demonstrates that almost all children made very good progress this year from their prior levels of attainment. Overall, children achieve appropriate CfE levels in literacy and numeracy, relative to their age and stage. Across the school, a few children exceed national expectations in both literacy and numeracy. For children who require some extra support in their learning, the school's reliable evidence demonstrates that they are attaining well for their individual levels of need.

#### Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, children's progress and attainment in literacy and English is very good.

#### Listening and talking

- Across the school, almost all children are highly articulate and confident. They demonstrate and apply their skills in listening and talking very well in lessons and during pupil committee groups and leadership activities. Almost all younger children listen carefully to instructions in class and ask thoughtful questions. Older children debate topical issues confidently and are developing their note-taking skills during class discussions. They listen attentively to their peers and frequently build very well on the answers of others.

#### Reading

- Almost all children demonstrate an enthusiasm for reading and make very good use of the school library to extend their skills. Younger children enjoy hearing stories, exploring books in the classroom reading corner and discussing favourite characters. They use their letter knowledge to sound out simple words and recognise a growing range of words by sight. As children progress through the school, they read confidently with growing fluency and expression. They enjoy discussing their preferences for different authors and genres and choose increasingly challenging books. Older children demonstrate ably their skills in discussing a variety of tools that authors use to engage readers, such as metaphors and emotive language. As a next step, they would benefit from more opportunities to answer and create inferential and evaluative questions about texts.

#### Writing

- Across the school, children write regularly and very successfully for a wide variety of meaningful purposes and audiences. They particularly enjoy writing creatively, for example imaginative stories and character descriptions. As children progress through the school, their writing includes a wide range of sentence structures and increasingly sophisticated

vocabulary. Younger children are developing their letter formation well and almost all use capital letters and full stops accurately in their own sentences. Across first and second levels, children apply their knowledge of spelling patterns accurately and make well-considered attempts when spelling more challenging words. Older children make effective use of punctuation in their writing including more complex examples, such as ellipsis and semi-colons.

### **Numeracy and mathematics**

- Overall, most children's progress and attainment in numeracy and mathematics is good. Staff should continue with plans to introduce children to new mathematical and arithmetical learning through working with concrete physical resources and pictorial representations. This has the potential to give children a deeper understanding of abstract concepts.

### **Number, money and measure**

- Younger children demonstrate a growing knowledge of place value and key number facts. They apply their knowledge well to new challenges and in their play experiences. Most older children round numbers accurately to the nearest 1000 and convert fractions to decimals and percentages. As children progress from the early stages through to P7, they would benefit from learning an increasing range of strategies for adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing. Older children understand most common units of measure, and confidently convert between millimetres, centimetres and metres. They are less confident in estimating and converting units of measure for volume and weight. Older children apply their knowledge and understanding of money very well, for example when working out a budget and calculating profit and loss.

### **Shape, position and movement**

- Younger children confidently name, identify and create a variety of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. They recognise these shapes in different orientations, sizes and in nature. Older children demonstrate a sound understanding of compass points, angles and bearings. They confidently identify lines of symmetry in shapes and everyday objects.

### **Information handling**

- Children apply their information handling skills regularly across the curriculum. Younger children collect and organise information pictorially and using tally marks. They ask and answer questions about their findings. At P4 to P7, children use software programs confidently to collate and display data. They interpret information very well from a wide range of charts and graphs and share their analysis. For example, they create bar graphs and pie charts to share wellbeing survey results and learning for sustainability findings. By P7, all children have a sound understanding of probability, certainty and chance.

### **Attainment over time**

- Staff can evidence the positive impact on children's attainment and progress over time where school-wide areas for improvement are identified and action taken, such as in improving writing. Senior leaders use achievement data and standardised assessment information very well to identify, plan and evaluate support for groups and individual children. They have robust evidence that demonstrates that almost all children maintain consistently high standards of attainment in literacy, and good progress in numeracy, as they move through the school. Staff make effective use of the school's tracking system to analyse and understand patterns in whole school attainment. Senior leaders have rightly identified that a refreshed pedagogical approach to teaching numeracy and mathematics is a next step.



## Overall quality of learners' achievements

- At all stages, children contribute exceptionally well to the life of their school. They achieve success across a broad range of authentic and purposeful experiences. They make meaningful decisions, collaborate, and communicate very well. All children are active members of school improvement focus groups and committees. They have a very strong voice in improving their school experiences. They work together to address the school's improvement priorities and topical issues that arise. For example, children worked together to devise rules for playing football at break times. As part of this, they devised their own rota for refereeing and ensuring fairness during their play. Children demonstrate maturity and responsibility, as well as strong leadership and organisational skills, through such meaningful, real-life contexts for learning.
- Staff value and share all children's individual achievements regularly through certificates, displays and at assemblies. Children are proud of each other's achievements and appreciate when adults recognise these through the 'golden book' '100% club', CARE certificates and the values tree.
- At all stages, children talk articulately about the skills for learning, life and work they are developing and reflect on these in lessons. Each week, older children organise and lead 'masterclass' clubs for the rest of the school community. They reflect on their work in increasingly sophisticated ways, demonstrating higher-order skills in evaluation and organisation. Staff track children's skills, their participation in clubs and experiences, and their many wider achievements. They identify any potential gaps and target support appropriately. As a result, all children succeed across a range of experiences. Older children develop skills in independence and resilience through annual residential excursions.

## Equity for all learners

- Senior leaders and staff know children and families very well and demonstrate a deep professional understanding of the school and community context. They use a wide range of data very effectively to decide where universal and targeted support will be most beneficial. Staff take effective action, including using Pupil Equity Funding (PEF), to support children who face potential barriers in their learning. Teachers use outdoor learning effectively to build a few children's resilience, confidence and engagement levels. As a result of this targeted support, identified children demonstrate progress in important measures, such as readiness to learn, self-esteem, attendance and progress in learning.
- The headteacher, Parent Council and children work together very well to reduce the cost of the school day for all families. On their own initiative, a group of children have organised a school uniform swap-shop. As a result, they display empathy for others and demonstrate a practical understanding of ethical and sustainable approaches. All children can participate in the after school running and netball clubs. Senior leaders understand the challenges of a rural community and they carefully consider the equity of social experiences. Parents play a significant role in sourcing funding and raising money so that all children can participate in enriching experiences. Staff plan regular activities with wider groups of children from local schools to help build friendships. As a result, children feel included and very well supported.



## Practice worth sharing more widely

Children's involvement in decision-making and their ability to lead their own learning and aspects of school life.

## 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.