

# Summarised inspection findings

**Humbie Primary School**

East Lothian Council

12 September 2023

## Key contextual information

Humbie Primary School and Nursery Class is situated in the village of Humbie in East Lothian Council. The headteacher has been in post since 2021. She is also the headteacher of Saltoun Primary School and Nursery Class in East Lothian. The two schools work closely in partnership with each other whilst retaining their own unique identities. There is one principal teacher, who is class committed for four days a week. A class teacher works in class one day per week and provides support for learning one day per week. There is another principal teacher who works across both schools. The school has one learning support assistant who works four days per week and a business manager.

The roll of the school is 13 children working in a P1 to P7 multi-composite class. In session 2021-2022 the school had no children living in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) zones 1 and 2. The school did not receive any Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) for session 2022-2023.

### 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 staff develop positive relationships with children to create a strong sense of community and a nurturing culture in Humbie Primary School. Staff and children demonstrate the school values well in their interactions with each other. Staff should continue to help children make connections between the school values, their learning and children's rights. This will help children to understand and use the values in more meaningful ways.
- The headteacher has been in post for two and a half years and is bringing highly effective leadership and stability to the school community. Parents appreciate the positive changes she is making to improve children's learning experiences. The staff team describe the positive impact she is having in helping them to improve their professional skills and knowledge. This is helping staff to be clear about their aspirations for children and what high-quality learning and teaching looks like.
- Staff provide children with meaningful opportunities to have a voice in the school. For example, children are involved in 'Decision Making Groups' where they work on the themes of the environment, digital learning, play and citizenship. Children are clear that these groups help them to be active participants in the life and work of the school. This session, children had worthwhile opportunities to talk about and celebrate their learning with their families. For example, they shared their learning during a 'Book and Breakfast' event. Parents describe how these experiences help them feel included in their child's learning.

- Staff are at the early stages of implementing play pedagogy. As planned, teachers should engage with national guidance and research to develop their understanding of highly effective play pedagogy. This should help them to provide experiences which promote children's curiosity.
- Children have useful opportunities to learn outdoors. For example, older children recently participated in a highly motivating 'night under the stars' session. Children developed their problem-solving and teamworking skills well through the range of interesting activities offered. The school grounds are well-appointed for outdoor learning. As planned, staff should continue to provide children with opportunities to explore and make creative use of the school grounds.
- Children support each other well during tasks and activities when working in pairs or groups. They have some choice in their learning to match their interests. For example, children chose the focus areas during a topic about ethical food. Children access digital technology throughout the school day. This is supporting them well to learn independently and lead aspects of their learning. Teachers very recently introduced a digital skills passport. This is supporting teachers well to develop children's digital skills progressively and is beginning to help children identify the skills they are acquiring.
- Senior leaders and teachers rightly identified the need to prioritise children's wellbeing following the COVID-19 pandemic. They provide children with consistent routines and have developed calm classroom environments to make them more inclusive. Children feel that staff treat them fairly and with respect. Teachers and classroom assistants provide sensitive support to children when required. They use a shared vocabulary well which encourages children in their learning and enables them to discuss their emotions. This is supporting children effectively to be ready to learn and be more resilient when they find their learning hard.
- The headteacher has a strong focus on improving the quality of learning and teaching. She supports staff well to plan and organise the delivery of differentiated tasks and activities. This takes good account of children's different stages within classes and is increasing the time that children spend on purposeful learning. Teachers should now ensure that all children spend maximum time on purposeful learning and that they are challenged sufficiently in their learning. This will enable all children to make the best possible progress.
- This session, staff implemented a whole school approach to teaching reading. This work is improving children's learning experiences and there is evidence it is raising attainment in reading. Staff should continue to work together to implement consistent approaches to high-quality learning and teaching across all curricular areas to raise attainment for all.
- All teachers received useful professional learning on using learning intentions and measures of success with children during lessons. They continue to develop and implement these approaches consistently. This is helping children to better understand the purpose of their learning. Teachers should share effective practice with each other in this area. All teachers provide children with clear explanations and instructions during lessons. They intervene appropriately to help children understand tasks and activities. Teachers provide children with oral feedback during lessons to encourage children's thinking. Building on this, teachers should now involve children more fully in peer and self-assessing their work and setting targets for learning. This would help children to identify clearly their next steps in learning and set themselves ambitious goals.

- The headteacher introduced a helpful assessment calendar which is improving teachers' approaches to assessment. Teachers use a range of summative assessments which are supporting them effectively to make professional judgements about children's attainment. They also plan a range of ongoing assessments to measure children's progress through Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. They recognise there is a need to ensure that these ongoing assessments are planned as an integral part of planning of learning and teaching. This will help teachers to be sure that their assessment evidence is robust and links clearly to learning.
- Teachers engage in valuable moderation sessions with staff from another local school. This collaborative approach is helping them to understand the cycle of planning, teaching and assessing children's learning. They are developing their understanding of national standards using the National Benchmarks. As planned, senior leaders should continue to provide teachers with further opportunities to use the moderation cycle with colleagues from other schools.
- Teachers use progressive planning formats in literacy and numeracy and a helpful four-year planning format to plan learning that links different areas of the curriculum. These ensure that children receive a broad and progressive education. Teachers plan targeted learning well for children who require additional support. They set specific and measurable targets which is helping them to identify clearly the progress children are making. They involve children in reviewing their progress towards identified targets. As a result, children requiring additional support experience success, make good progress and are more confident and resilient learners.
- Last session, staff improved processes to track and monitor children's progress and attainment. The headteacher meets with staff termly to discuss children's progress and attainment. They review attainment data and a range of evidence carefully. This enables them to measure the impact of interventions successfully and agree on specific action points for 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. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

## 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

- Humbie Primary School is a small school. At the time of the inspection, no children were in P3 or P4. Therefore, levels of attainment are expressed in overall statements rather than for individual stages or CfE levels.
- Overall, attainment in literacy and English, and numeracy and mathematics is good. Children, including those who require additional support, make good progress from prior levels of attainment.
- The school provided accurate data which shows that for session 2021-2022, most children achieved national levels of attainment in literacy and English. Almost all children achieved national levels of attainment in numeracy and mathematics. For session 2022-2023, most children are on track to meet national standards in literacy and English and, numeracy and mathematics.

### Attainment in literacy and English

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

### Listening and talking

- Across the school, children have a well-developed vocabulary and speak clearly. They listen respectfully to the views of others in small groups. A few children need support to listen to others in larger groups. At all stages, children enjoy listening to stories and books. They ask and answer literal and inferential questions in an age-appropriate way to support their understanding. Older children create and refer to their notes successfully during debates. They take turns to respond confidently to others' views and persuade them to their viewpoint. Teachers should continue to ensure children build on their talking and listening skills as they move through the school. They would benefit from opportunities to talk to a wider range of audiences.

### Reading

- At all stages, children read a variety of texts for different purposes. The school library is well resourced with a diverse range of reading material. Children borrow books regularly, which is fostering their love of reading.
- Younger children use their knowledge of letters and sounds to decode words successfully. They use picture clues in texts to support their understanding. They know what the author and illustrator do although they are less confident about the purpose of the blurb. Older children read with fluency and expression, decoding familiar and unfamiliar words well. They use a dictionary successfully to find the meaning of new words. Children use reading skills such as

prediction and summarising to deepen their understanding of texts. They make relevant comments about features of language in texts, such as punctuation. They identify accurately the features of non-fiction texts such as glossary and index.

## **Writing**

- Across the school, children use picture clues to write descriptive language about characters and settings. Younger children are developing their independent writing skills well. They know when to use capital letters and full stops. They use their knowledge of sounds and letters to spell out simple words. Older children write sentences at length and create texts for a range of reasons. They enjoy writing for real-life purposes within their 'Decision-Making Groups'. For example, the Digital Pro Team wrote persuasive letters to request more digital devices. Children need further support to improve their presentation of extended texts. They would like more opportunities to write creatively on a subject of their choice.

## **Numeracy and mathematics**

- Overall, children make good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Children have regular opportunities to use digital technologies in numeracy and mathematics lessons. This enhances their learning and increases their engagement in learning.

## **Number, money and measure**

- Across the school, children have a good understanding of number processes. They complete number calculations accurately at an age-appropriate level, explaining the strategies they use. Children identify amounts of money using notes and coins and can calculate change accurately. They apply their knowledge of algebraic equations to calculate speed, distance and time. Children use mathematical instruments accurately to measure units of length. Children need regular practical experiences working with a range of mathematical instruments to measure units of weight and capacity.

## **Shape, position and movement**

- Children identify and describe accurately the properties of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. Younger children use positional language to give and follow directions using programmable robots. Older children apply their mathematical knowledge of compass points and directions successfully during orienteering activities.

## **Information handling**

- Across the school, children use a range of charts and graphs to classify and sort information. Children interpret information from graphs to draw conclusions about data. They would benefit from regular revision of these concepts. Children have opportunities to apply their information handling skills in their 'Decision-Making Groups'. For example, Team Green carried out a survey to agree on the most popular flower seeds to plant.

## **Attainment over time**

- Staff work with the headteacher to analyse a range of data about children's attainment and progress during tracking meetings. This is helping them to have a clear picture of each child's individual progress over time.
- The school provided attainment data which shows the impact of COVID-19 on children's levels of attainment. Staff implemented a whole-school approach to reading which is closing attainment gaps in this area. As planned, teachers should continue to implement and measure the impact of literacy and numeracy interventions carefully. This will support them to raise children's attainment further.

- Teachers continue to work with colleagues from other schools using the moderation cycle. This is increasing their confidence in making accurate professional judgements about children's attainment.
- The headteacher follows local authority and national guidance carefully to monitor attendance levels. Children's attendance is above the national average.

### **Overall quality of learner's achievements**

- Children's achievements are displayed throughout the school and celebrated on the school online platform. Staff encourage children and their families to share their out of school achievements. This is building children's sense of pride in their achievements. Staff have started to track children's achievements to ensure no child is at risk of missing out. As planned, staff should now support children to talk about the skills for learning, life and work they are developing through their wider achievement activities.
- All children are members of a school 'Decision-Making Group' which helps them to be effective contributors and make a difference to their school. For example, the Digital Team Pro support their peers to develop their digital skills. The Pro Players assessed playground hazards, which is helping them to be responsible citizens.
- Children and staff have positive relationships with the supportive local community. Children have meaningful opportunities to participate actively in community life. For example, the Community Kids Club entertain residents in the 'Toasty Tuesday' community lunch. Team Green organised a village litter pick. These activities are developing children's citizenship skills well.

### **Equity for all learners**

- Staff know children and families well. They have a good understanding of the school context. They take steps to reduce barriers to learning including barriers caused by children's socio-economic circumstances. The headteacher ensures that activities such as fun days have no cost and school trips are subsidised to ensure maximum participation. Senior leaders signpost families to other agencies when required, in a sensitive way. This ensures that all children are included and involved.
- Teachers plan transitions carefully for children when they move into P1 or on to S1. They recognise that moving from a small primary onto a larger secondary can be a significant change for children. To address this, they provide children with useful opportunities to meet and socialise with their peers from other schools. This is supporting children to develop their social skills within a wider group and be ready for the move to secondary school.
- The Parent Council, Parent Teacher Association and wider parent body support the life and work of the school very well. They contribute funds to the school to enhance children's experiences, for example, providing new library books which are helping to raise attainment in reading.



## 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.