Summarised inspection findings

Kirkriggs School

Glasgow City Council

18 August 2020

Key contextual information

Kirkriggs School is an authority provision for primary children in Glasgow who have a range of support needs, including severe and complex additional support needs. At the time of the inspection, the roll was 46. The school was being led by the depute headteacher in the absence of the headteacher.

1.3 Leadership of change	weak
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	

■ Staff are keen to do their best for the children who attend the school. They know the children, their needs and their families well. A minority of staff are finding the change in the level of children's needs over recent years challenging. Most staff realise that they need to modify their practice to make appropriate provision for children. They are also aware that there is work to do to ensure that there is greater consistency across the school in approaches to learning and teaching, assessment, planning, tracking and monitoring.

■ The school developed its most recent vision, values and aims in session 2017/18. This was created in partnership with staff, parents and children. The core values are 'Respect, Inclusion, Achievement, Independence and Equity'. The school realises that it is now time to revisit this vision, along with the values and aims. They need to reflect the changing population of the school and to be more appropriate for the whole community.

■ Senior leaders involve staff, children and parents in consultation for improvements, including self-evaluation. Staff were not involved in identifying the priorities of the most recent school improvement plan (SIP). They are positive about the content of the SIP and recognise the identified priorities. Staff feel well supported by the depute headteacher.

■ Senior leaders engage staff, parents and children regularly in a range of consultations linked to the work of the school. There is a lack of feedback or next steps given from these responses. More could be done to encourage and act upon discussion and collaboration within the school and in its wider community. Greater clarity about how the consultation responses are informing future plans or are leading to changes would enable staff to feel more valued and more involved in the school's decision making processes. Staff are keen to have access to a greater number of leadership opportunities within school.

■ Senior leaders protect time for structured professional dialogue amongst staff on a regular basis. However, teachers would benefit from more time for preparation or dialogue during collegiate time, rather than external presentations. For example, they are keen to spend time sharing practice with similar schools so that they can learn from it and improve their teaching. Senior leaders should develop a more strategic approach to professional learning. This should support staff to develop their skills in working with children who have complex needs.

- A closer involvement of partners in self-evaluation and planning for children is needed to help staff to enhance the curriculum. Senior leaders need to involve and also help partners to contribute more effectively to the school's plans for continuous improvement whilst meeting their own priorities.

- All staff are keen to take responsibility at an appropriate level for implementing change in the school. This includes helping to take forward planned changes which have been highlighted in the SIP. Whilst there have been some improvements from this, staff are keen to work more collegiately in groups to drive forward initiatives at a greater pace. There are no staff SIP working groups this year.

- Staff have clear ideas for improvement and promoting consistency of approach across the school, but these are not always shared by senior managers. At times, staff do not feel that their contributions and suggestions are valued. For example, an exercise was carried out in relation to tackling bureaucracy involved with teaching and learning to see how this could be improved. Not all of the suggestions from staff were positively received by senior management. This included requests for a strategic approach to working with other similar schools to share practice and carry out moderation activities. This approach is needed to help support necessary improvements in learning, teaching and assessment. Whilst teachers and support staff are committed to change which results in improvements for children, senior leaders are not creating conditions to support creativity or innovation.

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

■ The ethos and culture in the school reflect a commitment from staff to promote the values of respect and nurture. There are supportive, caring and compassionate relationships between children and staff. Across the school, children are happy and have an experienced school team who strive to keep children safe.

■ In a minority of lessons, children engage in learning well and interact with teachers in a productive, positive manner. In a few lessons, almost all children are eager to learn and find lessons challenging and enjoyable. In these lessons, teachers use a variety of teaching methods and allow for different approaches to learning. For example, teachers divide learning into short sections to support children's engagement. For a few children, adding video explanations or documentary effectively benefits learning, while for others, incorporating an effective practical activity maintains their attention well. In a few classes, children are able to contribute to leading their learning. However, in most lessons, children are not engaged well in learning, and the purpose of learning is not clear. In the majority of lessons, there are no routines or structures in place to allow children to self-regulate. For example, children are removed from the class routinely rather than resettling within the classroom setting. All teachers would benefit from team teaching and the opportunity to share good practice.

■ In the majority of lessons, teachers do not plan learning that meets effectively all children's needs. Teachers are not always matching activities to children's stage of learning. Learning builds on concepts which children do not yet understand, therefore reinforcement and repetition is not meaningful or accessible and is a cause for disengagement. When this happens, children become disinterested and distracted. Conversely, a minority of children participate in activities which, although relevant and engaging, should be more progressive and challenging. Teachers need to ensure that they plan appropriate tasks that meet the needs of all children. They should make better use of the local community. They need to provide high quality learning experiences, which build children's skills for life and provide opportunities for their independence and success.

■ A few teachers make use of a range of learning environments to provide a mixture of learning experiences for children. Learning takes place within the classroom, in the playground, within local shops and in a local outdoor learning centre. The location of the teaching provides a degree of variety, the activities are predictable and offer routine. Whilst these qualities are essential for most children, teachers should be more creative in their approach to planning outdoor learning, ensuring that it promotes curiosity, independence and confidence.

■ Across the school, lessons are too teacher-led and a disproportionate amount of time is spent on non-learning tasks such as preparing for snack, diversionary activities and changing. In the

majority of classes, there are too few strategies in place to manage and support children's behaviour. Teachers do not deploy support staff effectively to meet the needs of children.

■ Digital learning within the school is limited. In a few lessons, children learn effectively from using interactive whiteboards. This helps to enhance learning by incorporating video clips and documentaries in lessons. This provides opportunities for children to steer the direction of learning and has a positive impact on selected learners who, for example, are able to replay and choose clips. A few older children use tablet computers to good effect and participate in filming and photography, which teachers later use as assessment material. In the majority of lessons however, technology is not embedded within teaching. Senior leaders have identified the need to develop digital learning in classrooms and plan to build staff capacity in effective use of digital technologies.

■ All children have learner journey folders that incorporate a limited range of assessment information. Teachers plan using the early and first level experiences and outcomes from Curriculum for Excellence. Assessment records are predominantly photographic although teachers annotate plans with notes regarding children's progress. Teachers have begun, where appropriate, to use the Foundational Milestones to assess progress. Neither of these approaches are used effectively to enhance practice. Senior leaders should ensure that staff continue to develop approaches to assessment, which incorporate the National Benchmarks, across all curricular areas.

■ Teachers are beginning to develop their understanding of the moderation cycle. This should support teachers to incorporate assessment and moderation when planning. Senior leaders have identified the need to improve assessment practices and have devised a whole school assessment framework. At present, it is too early to assess the impact of these changes on children's progress. Senior leaders should now ensure that these assessment activities include opportunities for teachers to share good practice, participate in peer observations and identify cluster-wide planning and moderation opportunities. Teachers are not yet able to reliably say how well children are learning which makes it difficult to put in place appropriate interventions to raise attainment.

■ Teachers have recently started to use new standardised progression planners for yearly and termly forward planning. These are beginning to offer an element of consistency in planning across the school. Teachers outline learning under the headings of breadth, challenge and application. They identify a focus for the term, which includes effective assessment strategies, and outline planned approaches to teaching and learning. Implementation of this planning is in the early stages and it is not yet possible to say that this has a positive impact on learning and teaching.

■ Teachers are motivated to develop planning processes within the school and have identified areas where significant improvements could be made. Senior leaders recognise the value of this and consult with staff and pupils. They should continue to encourage this professional dialogue and ensure that they act upon any consultation. Staff need to ensure that outcomes from consultation with children result in a positive impact on children's experiences. Although a recent consultation and review of processes has taken place across the school, the influence has been minimal and has made no impact on practice.

■ The school does not yet have manageable processes to monitor attainment across all curricular areas. The majority of teachers monitor progress of individual children using the learner journey folders. These allow teachers to plan on a termly basis and contain assessment information pertaining to the current school year. Senior leaders do not yet have a strategic overview of progress and have no effective, embedded tracking processes in place. Senior leaders need to adopt an appropriate system, which tracks progress and allows staff to identify

any challenges faced by children. In particular, senior leaders should track the attainment of cohorts of children who face additional difficulties, such as for those who should benefit from pupil equity funding.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

■ Staff are preparing to review the vision, values and aims of the school in consultation with children, parents and partners. All staff strive to promote achievement, independence and equity through the curriculum.

■ The curriculum is designed to place a strong focus on literacy, identifying it as the core priority and a key factor in developing life skills. In the upper school, children are confident communicators and possess skills that will benefit them in learning, life and work. Teachers also prioritise learning in numeracy and health and wellbeing. They promote other curricular areas through interdisciplinary learning. The newly-developed whole school interdisciplinary learning (IDL) planner should provide a focus for progression in learning over time. Senior leaders need to continue to monitor the effectiveness of the framework and review it as necessary.

■ Senior leaders have devised recently individualised learning journey folders for each child. Within these folders, teachers record plans and assessment evidence for individual children. This process is beginning to provide teachers with the structure to reflect on and record how they can personalise effectively children's learning. Senior leaders prescribe the contents page of the folder. It provides a helpful structure for planning and ensures that teachers assess key areas identified. In developing this resource, senior leaders should ensure that the views of all stakeholders are gathered.

■ Staff are developing a range of flexible learning pathways for literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing, which they use to support planning. Senior leaders have identified correctly the need to develop progressive, flexible learning pathways with staff in all curriculum areas. This is needed to ensure that children are developing skills for life in all areas of the curriculum. Senior leaders need to improve and revitalise the school curriculum and to use all stakeholders' contributions in this process.

■ In a minority of classes, teachers provide activities which build children's skills for learning, life and work. In the upper school, children have the opportunity to attend the local supermarket. Here, they develop communication skills and other key skills they need for their future. Children achieve increased confidence in dealing with the public, interacting with strangers and gain vital life experiences. Staff should develop links to work-based learning and devising a simple method of recording children's progress in these areas.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

■ Staff have developed positive relationships with all parents. Parents speak very highly of how supportive all staff are at the school. They value the time they take to listen to them if they have concerns. Parents are confident that staff will take forward actions needed to ensure their child is supported. Senior leaders should continue to develop how staff communicate with parents, particularly using digital technology to keep parents informed of their child's progress.

■ The school has put in place a range of interventions which support the development of family learning. The 'holiday club' was organised to support parents to observe and understand how their children learn at school. This was attended well and parents appreciated the opportunity for their children's siblings to join in the activities. The cooking club supported children and their parents to learn how to cook a range of healthy eating options. Staff should continue to develop how they support families to learn together.

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	satisfactory

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

- Developing children's wellbeing is central to the work of the school. All staff show high levels of consideration and compassion for every child. Upon placement, the child-centred approach of staff supports each child to settle and maintain their place in the school. Staff support each child well to settle each day. Teachers and support staff understand that each child is an individual with their own unique needs and wants. The school's approaches to wellbeing ensures that children feel supported well and attend regularly. Staff manage instances where children become distressed to minimise the impact on children's wellbeing. Staff need to develop further their approaches to supporting children's wellbeing to ensure they continue to reduce children's levels of anxiety. Approaches to wellbeing are not yet having a significant enough impact on raising children's attainment.

- Staff take good account of the needs of families when planning interventions. This is having a significant impact on the wellbeing of most children's parents and families. For example, a few parents talk of how their child has increased their mobility through the support of the school.

- Staff are developing their use of the wellbeing indicators. They use these to review children's needs in wellbeing assessment plans. Teachers are beginning to develop children's understanding of these indicators through regular assemblies. Staff now need to embed the language of the indicators more fully across the school to reinforce this understanding.

- A minority of children are developing their confidence through leading aspects of the life of the school. For example, children run school assemblies, support younger children and recycling waste. Teachers should continue to enable children to be full and active participants in the life of the school.

- Teachers and support for learning workers are developing children's abilities to communicate. They use visual cues and signing effectively to support children to express themselves. Children are developing their abilities to express their feelings with support from their teachers. Senior leaders should continue to develop approaches to how children are supported to communicate, for example through alternative and augmentative communication aids.

- Adults across the school model positive relationships well. They take steps to ensure they have good relationships with all children. As a result, children learn in a school where they are welcomed and feel supported to do their best. Children feel cared for and respected by all adults. This is resulting in them developing their social skills and understanding how to interact with others. All staff develop positive relationships with children's parents and their families. Parents speak highly of how they feel welcomed and supported by staff at the school. They appreciate the efforts teachers and support staff go to, to ensure they are able to communicate with them. Parents say they feel that the school has a strong sense of community. They compare the support they receive from staff at the school to that of an extended family. The

school should develop further the staff's approaches to developing positive relationships to ensure all adults feel fully supported and valued.

■ Staff undertake appropriate professional learning to ensure they are kept up to date with issues relevant to children requiring additional support. Senior leaders need to ensure that this training leads to measurable improvements in children's wellbeing.

■ Appropriate risk assessments are in place for all children and are applicable to their needs. These support staff to keep children safe when undertaking activities such as community trips or horse riding. Children's wellbeing assessment plans (WAPs) support teachers to review children's needs against the wellbeing indicators. It is not clear whether children's WAPs are single or multi-agency documents. They do not clearly detail what actions the school takes following any review of a child's progress. WAPs do not clearly indicate what support children receive from partner agencies. Children's personal targets are captured in their learning journey folders, but it is unclear how these targets relate to children's WAPs. Senior leaders should ensure that children's WAPs indicate clearly when they have been reviewed. They need to review the use of documentation to plan to meet children's needs. They should ensure this supports measurable improvements in children's wellbeing. The school should consider how parents could contribute more effectively to children's personal targets.

■ Senior leaders consider all care experienced children for a coordinated support plan. They should also review whether or not other children in the school should be considered for a coordinated support plan, given their level of need.

■ Teachers use outdoor spaces appropriately to support children's wellbeing. Trips to local shops support children to develop their understanding of the local community. The school campus provides children with opportunities to experience gardening and cycling. The school needs to develop the use of outdoor spaces to ensure progressive improvements in children's health and wellbeing.

■ The sense of community within the school supports children to have an understanding of equalities and diversity. Children interact well and include each other in activities. Religious celebrations are marked appropriately throughout the year in school activities and assemblies.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	satisfactory

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

- With the exception of the oldest children, across the school children need significant support in classes from teachers, support for learning workers and differentiated approaches and materials when undertaking activities in literacy and numeracy. From information provided by the school, it is not yet possible to say with confidence what type of overall progress that children are making in literacy or numeracy. The school is beginning to use a wider range of standardised assessments alongside the National Benchmarks and milestones, but most of this potentially, helpful information is collated on an individual level for children rather than strategically analysed across the school.

Literacy

- Younger children are learning to read initial letters and to blend these into sounds. Older children can decode and read simple words. The oldest children are more accomplished in their reading. They are enthusiastically reading graded readers as well as books by a range of authors.

- Young children are at the very early stages of mark-making. A few are able to begin to form letters and to use these in their learning. Older children are developing their skills in writing individual words using their knowledge of individual letters. The oldest children engage in extended writing with a small amount of support from their teacher. They can write at significant length, and a few are using punctuation skilfully and appropriately.

- Many young children are not yet able to communicate verbally, however, they benefit from the use of symbols and signing and are developing their skills in using these. They are also developing their listening skills, although a few are challenged by teacher expectations of their attention spans in classes during learning activities. Older children are more skilled in verbal communication with adults and, occasionally, with each other. The oldest children have developed skills in talking and listening. For example, they can listen to what others say and make appropriate contributions to discussions.

Numeracy

- Younger children are able to dance along to number-related songs and are encouraged to communicate their preference when choosing songs. In a few more interactive lessons, children are learning to explore number by counting out scoops of ingredients when baking. In a few lessons, children did not yet understand that numbers represented quantities.

- Across the school, children can understand and use visual timetables effectively to support the concepts of first then next. Children can understand position and direction through playing

games with toy cars. They can correctly follow instructions to place objects behind, above and in front.

- Older children have access to computers in the school's IT suite. They use competitive computer programmes to enhance their mental agility. The majority of the oldest children are able to add and subtract beyond 1000 and a few are beginning to understand multiplication as repeated addition.

Attainment over time

- From information provided by the school, it is not yet possible to say with confidence what type of overall progress in attainment over time that children are making in their learning. However, from examination of several learning journey folders, it appears that most children are making gradual progress in their learning. Children in the school are working from pre-early level to first level. The school needs a system to track and monitor children's progress across the school. It is planning to identify and adopt one, but this is not yet in place.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Staff encourage a range of activities of high quality which allow children to achieve more widely. This has recently included successful involvement in dance competitions, culminating in performances at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall. Similarly, children have been achieving well in gymnastics, gaining awards and certificates for their involvement. This has been a very positive experience for children and their parents, improving and enhancing performing skills. The school's signing and singing choir involves almost half of the children. They perform for the public, particularly at Christmas, and raise significant amounts of money for charity. The expectations of parents regarding what their child is capable of have been enhanced through these activities.

- Other significant activities organised by the school to promote achievement and develop life skills include Bikeability which has helped children to develop skills that allow them to undertake the same activities as their brothers, sisters and friends. This is highly valued by parents. The school also provides access to riding for the disabled. Until recently, the sport of boccia was available as an out-of-school activity in the school and children have had success in national championships.

- The school has developed internal awards to acknowledge and reward children's achievements within school. These include Stars of the Week and Mighty Munchers. These awards are celebrated at assemblies and in displays around the school. Teachers track children's participation in wider achievements through the individual learning journey folders. Senior leaders need to implement their plan to develop this further to make better use of this information to support children's achievement and skills development.

Equity for all learners

- Senior leaders have allocated the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) to appoint a 0.5 FTE family support worker. This has become a significant part of the school's provision and the family support worker has run and evaluated an October Holiday Club, a Cooking Club and drop-in sessions relating to key services which may be helpful for families including money advice. The worker has also written impact reports related to families worked with.

- Senior leaders are aware that PEF initiatives need to be more appropriately targeted. They should track the progress of any interventions to demonstrate whether or not they are succeeding in narrowing any attainment gap over time.

School Empowerment
■ Tackling bureaucracy

■ The school has been looking recently at ways of reducing the bureaucracy involved with learning and teaching. Staff were asked through an anonymous survey to indicate which areas of their role took too much of their time. This was collated and areas including organisation of resources and school improvement activities were highlighted. Staff planned the next in-service day, identifying themes for discussion, related activities and their impact on tackling bureaucracy.

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.