

Summarised inspection findings

Duror Primary School

The Highland Council

27 August 2019

Key contextual information

Duror Primary School is a small rural school serving the Duror and Kentallen area. The headteacher is also responsible for Glencoe and St Brides Primary Schools as an associated school headteacher. At the time of the inspection, the roll of pupils at Duror Primary School was nine, with all educated in one multi-composite class of P2 to P7 children. Over the past two years, there has been significant change in teaching staffing in the school. At the time of inspection, three teachers taught the class in a job share arrangement including the headteacher.

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 school has experienced a very high turnover in staff. This has had a negative impact on the overall quality of teaching. There is an urgent need to ensure systems and processes are in place to support greater consistency of practice in learning and teaching. This will ensure all children make appropriate progress across the curriculum.
- There are positive relationships across the school. Older children support younger children and show empathy for one another. They interact well with each other when working in pairs and groups and are eager to learn. Most children enjoy coming to school and talk positively about the range of experiences the school provides for them to learn.
- Teaching approaches do not provide sufficient opportunities for all children to be actively involved in their learning. Children are passive in their learning and there is too strong a focus on teacher-led, whole class lessons. Learning is not sufficiently challenging and this is having a negative impact on the progress of children. The organisation of learning does not enable children to work independently. There is an urgent need to develop learning and teaching approaches within a multi-composite setting. Teachers should ensure that lessons are age and stage appropriate and meet the needs of all children. In addition, teachers should develop children's skills further as independent learners who know their strengths and next steps in learning. This will help children to articulate the skills, knowledge and understanding that they develop.
- In the majority of lessons, teachers' explanations and instructions are clear. Approaches to developing children's skills, knowledge and understanding are informed by resources. Teachers share the purpose of learning with children. There is scope to share more regularly the steps to success, involving children in the creation of these. This will support children to have a clear understanding of the expectations set.
- Most children follow instructions well and complete tasks and activities independently when they are set by the teacher. They receive verbal and written feedback on how to improve their writing. Teachers also set targets for children focusing on literacy and numeracy. The headteacher should now review this practice to ensure teachers set meaningful targets with

children. This will support them to see improvements in their learning and evidence their progress on a regular basis.

- In the majority of lessons, teachers use questioning to determine children's understanding. Children now need to develop further their higher-order thinking skills by embedding effective questioning across all learning. This will improve the level of challenge for the highest attaining children.
- Teachers use information relating to children's needs to plan tasks and activities that help support their learning. They deploy support assistants well who provide support to individual children which show early signs of impact. The headteacher should review these interventions to ensure children are not missing core learning within their classes.
- Teachers use a variety of digital technologies to support the learning experiences. In the best examples, this is well-planned, aligned to the intended learning and used to enhance learning and teaching. Teachers should now develop the use of digital technologies to ensure children access these independently to support and challenge further all areas of the curriculum.
- Children engage in a number of opportunities to learn beyond the classroom. Staff work with a range of partners and local businesses in the community to support children's learning experiences. The school works with the ranger service and the local outdoor centre to provide a range of outdoor learning experiences. In addition, the 'Seed to Plate' project gives children the opportunity to engage the local community whilst developing their confidence and social skills. In moving forward, staff should ensure that these opportunities are planned for using appropriate experiences and outcomes and linked to the wider curriculum.
- Teachers plan a broad curriculum through a range of experiences that relate to the context of the school. This does not yet incorporate fully the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence and demonstrate clear differentiation for learners. As a matter of urgency, staff should review their approaches to planning. Teachers need a strategic lead on expectations for planning to ensure a consistent approach. Progression pathways should be introduced to support further teachers' expectations and to plan appropriate experiences that meet the needs of all children. Building planning around children's input in a more explicit way will also help to ensure that they take more of a lead role in their own learning.
- Assessment is not yet integral to learning and teaching. The headteacher reviews children's progress across literacy and numeracy twice a year. She shares this information with teachers throughout the session. Teachers are beginning to use standardised assessments to help them understand the learning needs of children. The headteacher should now ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of all assessment data. This will ensure that teachers make informed decisions in relation to the planned learning experiences and monitor the impact of any interventions set for children. A strategic review of assessment is required to ensure its effectiveness in supporting children to make appropriate progress across the curriculum.
- Teachers are beginning to engage with the national benchmarks for literacy and numeracy. Planned opportunities to work collaboratively with staff in other schools will support staff to have a more developed understanding of national standards. Regular professional dialogue in this area will increase expectations of what children can achieve across the school and ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of progression.

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

Unsatisfactory

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

- The number of children in the school is less than ten. Therefore, overall statements have been made about progression to ensure the anonymity of individual children. The school is at the very early stages of assessing children's progress using Curriculum for Excellence levels supported by reliable professional judgments. Inspectors sampled children's work, observed learning and spoke to children. At the time of the inspection, teachers' plans were available for April and May 2019. There was no information showing coverage of experiences and outcomes across the Broad General Education for the past two years.

Overall attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Overall, attainment in literacy and numeracy is unsatisfactory. Assessment data provided by the school does not reflect accurately children's progress. Across the school, children do not make sufficient progress from their prior levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy. Too many children are not on track to achieve expected levels. There is a need as a matter of urgency to increase the pace of progress for each child and improve the reliability of assessment data.

Literacy and English

- Overall, attainment in literacy is unsatisfactory. Children do not make appropriate progress from their prior levels of attainment. Learning does not take enough account of what children already know or have learned at home. Planned interventions show early signs of impact but should be more robustly evaluated. This can lead to children missing valuable learning time with their peers. The headteacher tracks children's attainment, however, the information used to inform the tracking tool is not reliable. They are not benchmarked against local and national standards.

Listening and Talking

- Overall, children's progress in listening and talking is unsatisfactory. Children are articulate when describing activities that they enjoy. They are keen to share ideas and information. Most listen well to each other and the teacher. However, they are easily distracted during planned learning. Across the school, they are at the early stages of using discussions to extend their thinking or talk for a range of purposes. Older children do not reflect critically on discussions or recognise ways that they are influenced by media. They are unable to debate challenging topics in groups and draw points together.

Reading

- Overall, children's progress in reading is unsatisfactory. Children enjoy reading at home and can describe some authors. The majority read with fluency appropriate to their age and stage of development. However, there is insufficient use made of the well-stocked library or access to online texts. Children are unfamiliar with a range of genre, non-fiction books and the pace of

reading novels is too slow. At the early stages, they are developing strategies to decode words and identify characters. Older children draw and label a character setting from the description in the text. Overall, children are not developing well enough skills as critical readers. They are unable to compare and contrast texts and discuss each writer's choice and use of language.

Writing

- Overall, children's progress in writing is weak. There are a few examples of very good and relevant contexts for children to develop their skills in writing. For example, they wrote clear reports on their visit to the local outdoor centre and took concise notes at the Vex challenge. In science, they wrote experiments, accurately predicted outcomes, and used high quality technical vocabulary during homework research tasks about sonar waves. However, the quality of writing is too variable and there are insufficient opportunities for children to write often enough across the curriculum. They do not write extended pieces of writing of a high enough quality. Children's knowledge of writers' techniques and use of vocabulary is limited and does not engage the reader. Simple punctuation and structures are evident but as children move through the school these do not increase well enough in complexity.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Across the school, children's progress in numeracy is unsatisfactory. Children's progress is slow and does not build well enough upon prior learning. There are gaps in children's mental agility and understanding of word problems. They have insufficient experiences of numeracy and mathematics across the organisers.

Number, money and measure

- Children enjoy using measuring equipment to replicate the bothy that they will visit on an excursion. However, their skills in measuring are inaccurate. They can estimate distance less than a metre. Written calculations are accurate and they confidently add and subtract two digit numbers. Children work with numbers to one hundred and add and subtract multiples within. They convert money to pounds and pence and order numbers.

Shape position and movement

- Children name simple shapes and follow simple patterns. Older children identify angles. Children lack confidence in finding the perimeter of 2D shapes. There are gaps in children's knowledge across a range of organisers and experiences at both first and second level.

Information handling

- As part of the national bird watch, children record the frequency of birds in the school garden using tally marks. They present information using blocks and pie charts. They are less able to manipulate data using digital technology.

Attainment over time

- Across the school, there was insufficient information on children's overall progress and attainment over time. However, there is much room for improvement in children's progress. Targets set in learning logs and documentation do not show clear progression routes. A strategic overview of children's progress is not available and learning is often decontextualised.

Overall quality of learner's achievement

- The school celebrates children's success through assemblies, online, newsletters and individual achievement folders. All children participate in the wide range of learning opportunities outwith the classroom in which they achieve some success. The majority of these experiences are specific to the Duror area and provide very relevant contexts where the

children develop important skills. For example, the Fort William mountain bike competition helped developed important skills for work. In addition, the 'Seed to Plate' vegetable taster event led by the children was enjoyed by the community and supported children to develop their communication skills. Participation in the Lego Robotics Challenge expanded their computing science programming skills and allowed them to apply these in a real life context. Children used the influx of tourists at the Duror duck race as an entrepreneurial opportunity to raise funds for the school. The three-day outdoor education experience gives children a range of opportunities to work collaboratively. Staff support children to reflect on these experiences and evaluate their enjoyment using a traffic light system. There is a need for staff to ensure that children know the skills they are developing as a result of their involvement in wider achievement.

Equity for all learners

- The headteacher is aware of the context of the school and aims to ensure that identified barriers to learning are removed. The pupil equity fund is used with other local schools for interventions across the cluster. Children receive support for literacy and are beginning to make better progress. They benefit from regular input from support staff trained in delivering interventions. There is a need to continue to review the effectiveness and impact of planned interventions on children's attainment, achievement and progress. Interventions to ensure equity for all learners rely on high levels of input from additional adults. These are not built upon well enough in the universal delivery of learning and as a result, they are not sustainable in delivering improvement to children's attainment.

Other relevant evidence

- At the time of inspection, the curriculum did not have a clear structure to support to support children's progression through the levels. The school should consider how to develop learning pathways that raise attainment, meet the needs of the children and are sustainable in their context. This needs to have a clear focus on the design principles of Curriculum for Excellence.
- There is a need for clear leadership and guidance on effective pedagogy within a multi-composite setting to ensure that all children are suitably challenged.
- We asked the school to continue to plan motivational and relevant learning experiences. In doing so, staff should ensure that these are underpinned by clear progression pathways across the breadth of Curriculum for Excellence.

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.