

# Summarised inspection findings

**Falla Hill Primary School and Nursery Class**

West Lothian Council

2 June 2020

## Key contextual information

Falla Hill Primary School and Nursery Class is located in the town of Fauldhouse in West Lothian. It serves Fauldhouse and surrounding areas. At the time of the inspection, the school roll was 172, and 41 children in the nursery class. The school serves an area of significant deprivation with around 88% of the children residing in quintiles 1 and 2. The headteacher had been in post since August 2019. Pupil Equity Funding has been used uniquely for the purposes of creating a nurturing school and improving the social, emotional and mental wellbeing of children.

### 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

- Senior leaders and staff take a nurturing approach to supporting children. As a result, children are valued and included consistently by all staff. The school's values of respect, responsible and belonging are visible throughout the school. Most children are able to demonstrate these values appropriately in their day to day work. Children are benefiting increasingly from the recent focus on improving relationships, building resilience and self-esteem. This means that in almost all classes, most children settle quickly to their learning. Most remain focussed on activities set for them by their teachers.
- Most children are gaining confidence in talking about the progress they are making in their learning. A few children across the school still require targeted support to talk about their learning and to engage more positively with their learning in class. In a few classes, children have regular opportunities to plan their learning. Senior leaders and staff need to increase the frequency of these planning opportunities and strive for consistency of approach. Children should be setting individual learning targets in other areas of the curriculum, such as in health and wellbeing.
- Children in P1 classes benefit from well-designed play pedagogy. While playing they enjoy making choices. Children are motivated, independent learners who were excited by their involvement in making, selecting and adding colour to the playdough. In the travel agent's shop animated conversations focus on where to go on holiday. Teachers observe children during their play, and they involve them in planning what they want to learn next. They do this using visuals in the talking and thinking floorbooks. Children contribute willingly their ideas to the floorbooks drawing pictures of what they know already and want to know next. The school should build on this positive practice beyond P1.
- Across the school, children gain important life skills through their involvement in clubs, committees and the pupil council. Most children take part with enthusiasm in the many experiences on offer after school. The introduction of the house system has improved the leadership skills of a few older children. Across the school, most children take on proudly their responsibilities for improving aspects of school life. These include designing the positive

behaviour awards. Positively, the creation of a reflection room emerged out of a suggestion from the children. The reflection room offers children a safe and quiet place to meet and to be supported by staff. Children at the upper stages benefit from residential trips, which offer them opportunities to develop teambuilding and citizenship skills. Children need to relate these skills to the world of work. Children do not yet have sufficient opportunities for outdoor learning which make use of the school grounds and beyond. Increased access to active outdoor activities would contribute to improving children's health and wellbeing.

- Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers are well organised, responsive and kind. They know their children very well, taking good account of their social, emotional and mental wellbeing needs. In the majority of lessons, they make regular use of digital technologies to support their teaching. Children need to use digital technologies more often. Teaching and support staff have positive relationships with almost all children. In most lessons, teachers explain clearly and succinctly the purpose of the lesson. At times, the adult voice dominates the lesson. Teachers need to involve children more as active participants in lessons. Most teachers provide evaluative written feedback to children. Children need support to use this feedback to set themselves more challenging, time contained targets, particularly in writing and numeracy. All staff take part in professional learning activities to improve their teaching skills, and to deepen their understanding of how to support children to succeed. Senior leaders and staff should share good practice more often to improve further the quality of children's experiences.
- The headteacher has devised a whole-school calendar for planning, tracking, monitoring and assessing children's progress. The school tracks children's achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) level in literacy and numeracy. Staff are at the early stages of tracking children's progress in health and wellbeing. Teachers determine these CfE levels using their professional judgement, and a range of formative and summative assessment for literacy and numeracy. Teachers need to extend their range of assessments to require children to apply their learning in real-life and unfamiliar contexts. This will strengthen the quality of evidence available to teachers when building a picture of how well children are achieving.
- Teachers have begun to engage with the National Benchmarks. They take part in school and cluster moderation activities. Teachers should continue to use the National Benchmarks to develop further their shared understanding of standards, particularly in listening and talking. Senior leaders should continue to develop their use of data to improve their tracking of particular groups and cohorts of children. This will help to inform further planning for improvement at a whole-school level as well as identify gaps in learning more accurately.
- Senior leaders and teachers observe children during lessons to gather information on their progress. Staff gather information to identify children who need extra help with their learning. They share this information appropriately with support staff. This means they have a clear understanding of their role in supporting individuals and groups of children. Teachers meet regularly to plan what and how they will assess children's understanding of new concepts and skills taught. An important next step will be to ensure that planned learning is sufficiently challenging for children who are capable of achieving more.

## 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.

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

### **Overall attainment in literacy and numeracy**

- The school provided a range of data on children's attainment in literacy and numeracy. This data needs to be more robust to generate an accurate picture of achievement of CfE levels. Overall children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. The majority of children are achieving appropriate CfE levels in literacy and numeracy. Children with additional barriers to their learning are making appropriate progress from their previous targets.

### **Literacy and English**

- Most children achieve appropriate CfE levels for listening and talking. The majority of children achieve appropriate CfE levels in reading and writing.

### **Listening and talking**

- The majority of children take turns to talk and most focus attentively during class lessons. Across the school, a few children find it difficult to wait until it is their turn to speak. Across the school, most children respect contributions of others during group and whole class discussions. At second level, almost all willingly share their views on their favourite subjects in school, and opinions on what they like about school dinners. Children should be supported better to take part in group discussion to practice speaking audibly and clearly for a range of purposes.

### **Reading**

- The majority of children are making satisfactory progress in reading. At early level, the majority of children engage enthusiastically during phonics lessons. They use confidently their knowledge of sounds to help them read words in texts, and on signs around the classroom. At first level, children's skills in reading aloud are variable. The majority of children read fluently, and with expression, while others need support to decode unfamiliar words. The majority of children pick out with ease the main ideas in a story. They locate correctly key words and answer simple questions about the genre of a familiar text. At second level, children are developing confidence in skimming and scanning for information.

### **Writing**

- Across the school, the majority of children are making good progress in writing. At the early level, the majority of children form their letters well and leave spaces between words. Children need to develop further their fine motor skills. At first level, children spell most common words accurately. Children write for a good range of purposes. Around a half of the children are achieving well at second level. The quality of children's work is too varied. In the best examples, children write at length, neatly, and in paragraphs. They craft interesting imaginative pieces of text which use appropriately relevant vocabulary. Across the school, teachers rely too much on commercially produced worksheets that are then stuck into children's workbooks and jotters.

## **Numeracy and mathematics**

- Overall, attainment in numeracy and mathematics is satisfactory. Teachers provide a range of numeracy and mathematics experiences for children over the school session. Children should now develop their learning within relevant contexts, and to apply their learning in new and unfamiliar situations.

## **Number, money and measure**

- At early level, children sort and compare confidently concrete materials in a variety of different ways. A few children order correctly numbers to 100 from the smallest to the largest. They articulate clearly various strategies they use to subtract successfully within 20. At first level, a majority of children round numbers to the nearest 10 and 100. They multiply accurately numbers using single digits and identify simple fractions. They need more practice in placing fractions in order on a number line. At second level, most children round numbers to the nearest 1,000 and 10,000. They have a good understanding of equivalent forms of common fractions, decimal fractions and percentages. Children need more practice in finding simple percentages of a quantity. Across first and second levels, children employ well a range of strategies to carry out simple calculations. They need more practice in solving multi-step problems and mental agility.

## **Shape, position and movement**

- At early level, most children recognise and sort correctly two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. They compare shapes using terms such as larger and smaller. At first level, most children use appropriate mathematical language to describe the properties of common two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. They need more practice in developing their understanding of symmetry. At second level, a majority of children understand that the radius of a circle is half of the diameter. They identify most of the time, right, obtuse and acute angles. Across the school, children need to extend their knowledge and skills in shape, position and movement.

## **Information handling**

- At early level, children collect information about their favourite colours and display appropriately the data on a pictogram. At second level, children gather information using tally marks and frequency tables. They display successfully information on scatter graphs, Venn diagrams, and bar graphs. Children need to develop further their information handling, and digital skills.

## **Attainment over time**

- The school has a range of data over time. The data provided on the achievement of CfE levels needs to be more accurate to reflect appropriately children's attainment over time. Continued improvement to whole school approaches to assessment and moderation will support teachers in making reliable professional judgement.

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

- The school provides many opportunities for children to develop the four capacities of CfE. This includes the vertical leadership groups, which involve all children. Children from across the school are also enthusiastic members of the pupil leadership group and the eco committee. They benefit from being digital leaders, developing confidence and leadership skills. The school was proud to receive its third Eco-Schools Scotland Green Flag. Children receive certificates for success in a range of sporting achievements from the Whitburn Sports Partnership. Children's achievements in and outwith school are celebrated regularly at whole school assemblies, in displays, and through social media.

- Staff and partners work well together to offer after school clubs in a wide range of activities such as football, multi-sports and choir. The senior leadership team and teachers record the number of children participating in these activities. They should develop a whole-school tracking system to record which children are involved in after school activities. Staff should highlight the skills children are developing both in and out with school. Children are not yet aware of the skills they are developing through wider achievement opportunities.

### **Equity for all learners**

- Staff have a very good understanding of the social context of the school. Senior leaders' analysis of current data is supporting them to identify attainment gaps across the school. They know their children well, and ensure children who experience barriers to their learning receive the support they need. The introduction of a nurture class and nurturing approaches is supporting children to access learning. Pupil Equity Fund has been used to employ pupil support workers. They have been trained to deliver a range of interventions designed to target gaps in literacy across the school. Early indications are that these interventions are beginning to improve outcomes for targeted individuals and groups. Staff should continue to monitor the impact of these approaches on children's learning across the curriculum.

## 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.