

# Summarised inspection findings

**Golfhill Primary School**

North Lanarkshire Council

5 December 2023

## Key contextual information

Golfhill Primary School is a non-denominational primary school on the outskirts of Airdrie. The current roll is 147, organised over seven classes. 47% of children attend the school as a result of a placing request. The associated secondary school is Airdrie Academy. The headteacher has been in post for eight years. She is supported by a principal teacher who has been in post for 11 years.

20.4% of P6 and P7 children are registered for free school meals. 47% of children live within Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) one and two. The remainder live in SIMD three to ten with 37% living in SIMD six and seven.

### 1.3 Leadership of change

good

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

- The headteacher and principal teacher have developed strong team working at Golfhill Primary School. This is an important strength of the school. Everyone involved in the life of the school shows a strong commitment to developing a shared vision for change and improvement. This vision is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. The headteacher plans to work with the school community to give children greater ownership of the vision.
- Almost all parents trust that all staff are committed fully to supporting their children. All children and adults show respect and kindness to one another. Senior leaders, supported well by all adults, have established a school culture where they value and include everyone. Strong values underpin the work of the school community. All members of the school community are clear about the key characteristics of their school. They know their school well. Senior leaders should now work in partnership with the whole school community to identify clearly the values that the school represents strongly. They should link school values to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This should help to develop further, children's understanding of their responsibilities and their place in the world.
- Across the school all staff know children and families very well. They have a very clear understanding of the school's social, economic and cultural context. The headteacher and principal teacher work very well together to support all children, families and staff within their school community. Appropriately, all staff prioritised children's wellbeing post COVID-19. Working successfully in partnership with other agencies, staff use a strengths and difficulties questionnaire effectively to identify and prioritise health and wellbeing support for children.
- Most parents share their confidence in the leadership of the headteacher and the principal teacher. They value highly the consistency of approach when school staff address any concerns. Senior leaders use a range of approaches to communicate and engage with parents. They have built on their effective communication using digital technology during periods of lockdown. They continue to use digital applications and social media well, to engage with

parents. All staff seek parents' views regularly using questionnaires and exit polls. As a result, most parents feel that staff take their views into account when they make changes.

- Teachers are actively involved in the school's self-evaluation processes. They have opportunities to agree priorities and play a lead role in addressing them. Their work with partners identifying health and wellbeing needs, highlights effective collaboration when identifying areas for improvement. The headteacher also empowers support staff to make change. She gives them confidence to contribute actively and lead areas for improvement. They take on additional responsibilities willingly for the benefit of children and the wider school community. Almost all teachers have leadership roles established by the local authority, which they carry out in school. The headteacher should review how these roles support Golfhill Primary School improvement priorities. She should consider carefully the team's capacity and focus on improvements likely to have the greatest impact on outcomes for children at Golfhill Primary School.
- The majority of children enjoy leadership roles within the school. Digital leaders develop their skills for learning, life and work through applying for and being interviewed for their posts. They share their skills successfully with other children by taking the lead during assemblies. They follow this up by supporting younger children effectively to develop their digital skills, for example using digital applications to enhance their learning. Last session the active schools' coordinator trained all P6 children to lead lunchtime sports clubs. P7 children now lead a multi-sports club for P1 children successfully. Children value highly the opportunity to influence developments. Most children are confident that staff listen to their views and take them into account.
- The headteacher has used Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) to provide additional teaching staff. She has used additional staffing to create smaller class sizes. She shares this information with the Parent Council, known as the Parent Partnership. She is not yet able to show the impact of PEF on helping to reduce the attainment gap for children affected by economic disadvantage. Senior leaders recognise that this additional staffing should enable them to focus more rigorously on raising attainment and closing this attainment gap.
- Senior leaders have re-established approaches to monitoring the quality of the school's work, post-pandemic. They follow a well-planned programme of quality assurance activities over a school session. This includes visiting classes to observe children's experiences, sampling children's work and discussions with teachers about children's attainment, progress, achievements, and wellbeing. Senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the overall quality of learning and teaching across the school. They should now ensure that findings from quality assurance activities inform overarching decisions on improvement priorities. This will help support an increased focus on improvement priorities relevant to the needs of their school.

## 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 at Golfhill Primary School work well together to develop a positive, nurturing culture where respectful relationships provide an encouraging environment for all. Children are very proud of their school. Throughout the school, they are polite to adults, peers, and visitors. They are keen to talk about their learning and speak positively about the support they receive from all adults in school. The supportive, caring ethos results in a calm, inclusive and purposeful learning environment.
- In most lessons, teachers' instructions are clear and almost all children understand the purpose of their learning. In most lessons, teachers set work at the right level of difficulty to help most children engage with learning. Staff should continue to review teaching approaches to ensure that all learning experiences are relevant and matched well to all children's needs. Most teachers question effectively to check children's understanding. In a minority of classes, teachers use questioning very effectively to help children develop higher-order thinking skills.
- Almost all teachers give children useful feedback on their work, highlighting successes and next steps. All teachers offer children opportunities to self- and peer-assess work. All teachers should continue to involve children more fully in identifying what they need to do to be successful in learning, across the curriculum. This should help children reflect more accurately on the progress they make and what they need to do next. In a minority of classes, teachers give children opportunities to lead learning. They should now explore how to extend this practice effectively across all classes.
- In almost all lessons, teachers use digital tools and resources effectively to reinforce and support children's learning. Across the school, children use technologies such as digital tablets and applications, with growing confidence. Almost all children benefit from practising their numeracy and literacy skills using online programs. Pupil digital leaders play a key role in supporting digital literacy throughout the school. For example, sharing recommended applications at assemblies and supporting younger children in class. Teachers should continue using digital technologies to enrich learning experiences further and support children to continue developing their digital skills across the curriculum.
- Staff are at an early stage of implementing a play-based approach to learning and teaching. They are considering the environment, learning experiences and the quality of interactions, as they develop their understanding. Staff plan play-based activities as an addition to core learning, currently. Staff are developing their understanding of the significance of play as central to learning and teaching. Senior leaders and teachers seek the views of children and parents as they manage the pace of this development. They should continue engaging with professional learning and national guidance, including 'Realising the Ambition: Being Me'. This would support further improvement in the quality of children's experiences.

- All teachers carry out standardised, summative, and formative assessments. Teachers make judgements about children's achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CFE) levels using this information and children's class work. Teachers should plan assessment when planning learning and teaching and ensure that assessments link well to National Benchmarks. This should include planned, high-quality assessments which allow children to apply their learning in new situations. This would help teachers make more reliable judgements about children's progress and identify next steps clearly and accurately. It would also enrich the quality of assessment evidence. Senior leaders recognise they need to develop teachers' understanding of national standards further. They plan to provide further professional learning and increased opportunities for teachers to moderate planning, teaching and assessment of literacy and numeracy.
- Teachers use literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing progression pathways effectively to plan children's learning. These curriculum pathways are based appropriately on CFE experiences and outcomes. Teachers plan effectively over the long and medium term. They should work with senior leaders to agree short-term planning criteria, to include identifying clearly how they meet the needs of all children effectively. Senior leaders need to provide increased guidance to strengthen teachers' planning of learning across all other curriculum areas.
- Teachers and senior leaders meet each term to review the progress individual children are making. Teachers highlight children who are on track and not on track to attain when expected, and those who need additional challenge in their learning. Importantly, they also discuss wellbeing concerns and the impact of economic disadvantage on children, during these meetings. Their discussions help to inform how they plan additional support. Senior leaders and teachers should identify why children are not on track to attain as expected and take action to address this. They should use all data, to support more robust professional dialogue, and compare the attainment of different groups of children. This would help them to identify gaps in learning. Senior leaders and teachers should record clear actions during these discussions and monitor the impact on improving children's outcomes further.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Senior leaders plan to update the curriculum to reflect fully the context of the school. They should ensure that the curriculum rationale reflects the principles and entitlements of CFE. This should help staff, children and parents identify fully what they want children to learn and how they will work together to achieve this.
- There are progression pathways in place across all curriculum areas. Teachers use literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing progression pathways effectively. These link well to CFE experiences and outcomes. As planned, staff should revisit their curriculum and planning for learning across different subjects. They should ensure experiences are relevant, build on children's prior learning and skills, and support progression for all children.
- Senior leaders have well-planned arrangements to support children's pastoral transition as they move from nursery to P1 and P7 to S1. Children with additional support needs benefit from enhanced engagement transition programmes. A next step is to continue to develop curricular transition to ensure continuity and progression in learning across the curriculum at these key points.
- All classes receive two hours of quality physical education weekly. Teachers make good use of indoor and outdoor spaces to deliver this. Commendably, the school has achieved the gold SportsScotland award. Active Schools' staff trained senior pupils as sports leaders. P6 and P7 children now run lunchtime clubs for younger children.
- Children across all stages learn French, with teachers introducing older children to Spanish. Staff ensure that children's modern language experiences are progressive and align with the 1+2 language learning policy.
- Children receive their entitlement to religious education each week and senior leaders follow guidelines for religious observance. Partners from the local church and Scripture Union support staff to deliver religious education and observance. These partners support the delivery of assemblies, visit classes and take a lunchtime club.

## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Staff value parents as key partners in the life of the school. Most parents feel that the school communicates how their child is learning and developing well. For example, through 'Meet the Teacher' events, parents' evenings, school assemblies and written reports. Staff should explore further opportunities for children and families to learn together. Staff use a range of communication tools to keep parents informed of the life and work of the school. This includes an online application, newsletters and a social media platform to provide regular updates to parents.
- Parents trust the staff team and almost all feel that staff are approachable and responsive to any concerns. Almost all parents feel that staff know their children well as individuals and treat them with respect. This contributes successfully to the happy, safe, and nurturing ethos. Senior leaders support parents of children who need additional support well, to connect with relevant partner agencies.
- The Parent Partnership supports the work of the school effectively. It is active in organising social and fundraising events which promote increased involvement in the life of the school. Senior leaders use funds raised by the Parent Partnership effectively, to purchase resources to enhance the curriculum.

## 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

good

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

- All staff at Golfhill Primary School have created a warm, welcoming, caring school with a strong sense of community. Almost all children feel valued, respected, supported, safe and included, as a result. All staff work hard to develop a nurturing ethos. They continue to develop their nurturing approaches, with the principal teacher sharing professional learning with staff. They have identified this as a priority for improvement this session. Every member of Team Golfhill takes part in this training and values the opportunity to develop their skills further. Across the school, all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to getting it right for every child and are sensitive and responsive to the wellbeing of each individual. Almost all children and parents feel that staff deal well with any bullying incidents. All staff and partners model behaviour which promotes and supports the wellbeing of all.
- Almost all children recognise that adults in school help them lead a healthy lifestyle and provide opportunities for regular exercise. Children engage in more purposeful play at break and lunchtimes as a result of very successful developments to the playground. Children value highly the changes support staff made to the playground when they returned to school after periods of remote learning. Support staff are very aware of the needs of all children. They use this knowledge well to ensure children are happy and safe. Children recognise that the changes have helped them play well together again. They show compassion and care towards each other in their interactions and note that the playground is a calm place.
- Senior leaders track which children attend school clubs in order to reduce any barriers for children facing additional challenges. An increased number of children take part in these clubs as a result. This is enhancing inclusion and increasing equity of experience for individual children.
- Most parents feel that all staff support their child's social and emotional wellbeing effectively. Golfhill Primary School is part of a community of schools working together to develop a shared understanding of wellbeing. Staff identify children to be part of the Airdrie Ambassadors Programme. Children from cluster schools work together to increase their knowledge and understanding of wellbeing. Children visit each other's schools to work together. They share their learning with friends and family members at showcase events. Children who take part are more confident as a result and have increased self-esteem.
- Staff have built strong relationships with external partners which enhance children's wellbeing and the health and wellbeing curriculum. They work well collaboratively to support transition, children's emotional wellbeing and wider achievement. All staff develop children's self-esteem, resilience and build their confidence well, working in partnership within and outwith school. All children are learning skills to support their emotional wellbeing. These skills include, breathing and relaxation techniques and massage. Children are starting to use these techniques independently within the school environment. Parents would welcome learning more about

these techniques to support children using them at home. Children are involved actively in intergenerational projects where they share their love for football and singing with elderly members of the community. These opportunities are helping to boost further children's resilience, social skills and emotional literacy, while benefitting people living with dementia.

- All staff have a very good understanding of their statutory duties and responsibilities to improve outcomes for children. The headteacher ensures that all staff engage in annual updates to the mandatory child protection training. She makes sure that she provides this training for any new staff joining during a school session. Senior leaders provide all adults with key and important information for working with children who have specific needs. This leads to staff being confident in their responsibilities and duties to keep children safe and protected from harm.
- The school submitted information relating to compliance with the revised Nutritional Regulations 2020 and key duties as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007. The Health and Nutrition Inspector (HNI) discussed this information with relevant staff and children. In addition, the HNI examined documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole-school approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of children through food in school. A few areas for improvement have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.
- Staff give children in P4 to P7 the opportunity to make decisions about their school. Children are proud of their contributions to groups and committees. These provide platforms for children to celebrate success, build confidence, develop leadership skills and have a voice within the school. Children taking part in these groups speak confidently about how being involved promotes good mental health. Staff should now consider how to develop leadership opportunities for younger children.
- Staff use effective approaches to assessing and meeting the needs of children who face barriers to their learning. They identify children's needs appropriately and put effective interventions and plans in place. Senior leaders monitor plans and interventions regularly with children, families and staff. As a result, they review and update children's plans. Staff should ensure targets within these are more specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound. This will support staff to identify small gains that show they are closing gaps in learning.
- All staff know their children and families very well. They are developing further their ways of monitoring the progress of individual children, including those facing challenge in their lives. The headteacher has used PEF this session to provide additional teaching staff. Senior leaders should ensure that interventions focus strongly on reducing the poverty related attainment gap.
- All children include and accept each other. Children are beginning to understand, value and celebrate diversity through whole school assemblies. The planned curriculum review should ensure it includes the promotion of equality, diversity and eliminates discrimination.

## 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

- Attainment in literacy and numeracy is good.
- Overall, children make good progress in literacy and numeracy. Most children with additional support needs are making good progress towards their individual learning targets.
- Recent school data shows that the majority of children in P1, P4 and P7 achieved nationally expected levels of attainment in literacy and English. It shows that in numeracy and mathematics most children attained early level, as expected. It also shows that the majority of children at first and second levels attained numeracy and mathematics, as expected. This recent attainment data is not wholly accurate. Most children are working beyond stated levels in literacy and English and at first and second level numeracy and mathematics.
- Senior leaders should continue as planned, to improve approaches to moderation. This should support teachers to develop a better understanding of national standards and help them make more confident, robust professional judgements about achievement of a level.

### Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, children are making good progress in literacy and English.

### Listening and talking

- At early level, most children listen well to each other and adults, follow simple instructions well and take turns. At first level, most children take turns appropriately during discussions and are beginning to build on the answers of others. Most children working towards second level, show respect for the views of others and offer their own viewpoint as part of a group and whole class.

### Reading

- At early level, most children develop their knowledge of initial and blended sounds and are beginning to use this knowledge to read familiar texts. At first level, most children select books based on their knowledge of author, illustrator, or genre. They need to develop their skills in using punctuation and grammar to read with understanding and expression. Most children working towards second level, respond well to a range of inferential, literal, and evaluative questions about texts. They need to build their skills in using expression when reading aloud. Older children provide helpful support for younger children through their role as reading buddies.

### Writing

- At early level, most children write simple sentences with capital letters and full stops. They attempt to spell familiar words correctly. Children working within early level would benefit from

opportunities to show their early writing skills during play experiences. At first level, the majority of children write well for a range of purposes. They require support to improve spelling and punctuation and organise their writing in a logical order. Most children working towards second level, plan and write a range of different texts across different genres, including persuasive texts. Staff should support them to continue reviewing their writing to ensure it makes sense, is technically accurate and meets its purpose.

### **Numeracy and mathematics**

- Overall, children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics.

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

- At early level, most children are confident counting beyond 20. Most can add and subtract numbers within 10. At first level, most children round numbers to the nearest 100 successfully and at second level to the nearest 1,000. They can sequence and order numbers and understand the value of a given digit. Most children explain strategies to support their mental calculations well. Children should transfer this knowledge to new situations to increase their fluency with number further. At all stages, most children identify the most appropriate instrument when measuring everyday objects. At second level, most children understand how to measure area and perimeter. At all levels appropriate to their stage, children need more practice using and carrying out calculations with money.

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

- At early level, most children identify simple two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects accurately. Across first and second levels, most children name an increasing range of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects and use appropriate vocabulary to describe their key features. At first level most children use a grid reference system effectively to plot on a map. They would benefit from developing their knowledge and understanding of angles further. At second level most children use the words acute, obtuse and right angle to describe correctly the angle between a pair of lines drawn. They are less able to recognise and name a straight angle and reflex angles.

### **Information handling**

- At early level, most children gather information well for a variety of purposes. They are becoming more confident using their counting skills to interpret information. At first and second levels, most children work with data confidently, gathering and presenting information in different ways. They can use graphs effectively to interpret information to answer questions. At second level, children are less confident drawing conclusions about the reliability of information. Most children are beginning to use the language of probability accurately to describe the likelihood of simple events occurring.

### **Attainment over time**

- Senior leaders and staff gather a significant amount of attainment data over time. Most children make good progress over time, although this is not reflected accurately in CFE attainment figures. Senior leaders recognise they could develop more robust approaches to tracking and monitoring children's progress and attainment over time. They are at the early stages of using their data effectively to identify trends in attainment for groups of children. A poverty-related attainment gap in literacy and numeracy is evident post-pandemic. Senior leaders provide appropriate support for the most vulnerable children. They are not yet able to evidence the progress children make.

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

- The majority of children have a range of opportunities to develop roles and responsibilities in class, across the school and in the community. Children and staff raise funds regularly for local charities and contribute to improving the lives of others in the global community, using their

links with a school in Rwanda. Children learn how to organise themselves and others, as well as manage their time, through these experiences. They improve their communication skills when planning events together. Children enjoy the intergenerational links they have built within the wider community, sharing their love and knowledge of football with people living with dementia. Children from the Glee Club sing regularly for the residents of the local care home and are proud of their achievements at local competitions. As a result, children are becoming increasingly confident and have developed their understanding of an older generation.

- All staff recognise and celebrate children's achievements, in and out of school, at assemblies and through social media. Children enjoy opportunities to take part in a range of sporting activities and events, enjoying success in gaining their Gold Sports Award. P7 play leaders use their skills effectively to lead lunchtime clubs, developing their skills for learning, life and work. A next step is for staff to help children recognise more clearly the skills they are developing.

### **Equity for all learners**

- Senior leaders are aware of the increased challenges families face as a result of COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crisis. They support families with the cost of school trips and experiences to ensure there is equity for all children and no child misses out. Golfhill's Poverty Proofing Policy highlights both local and national contexts and outlines how staff remove poverty-related barriers. The provision of a clothing bank, run sensitively by staff, ensures all children have access to uniform which they wear proudly.
- Senior leaders monitor attendance carefully. They track and monitor attendance data regularly, creating a clear overview of concerns using individual inquiry forms. Family engagement support staff work directly with children and families. They support them to understand and overcome the barriers a child may face if they do not attend school regularly. The thorough approaches to monitoring attendance result in increasing attendance.
- The headteacher should focus more on using PEF to reduce potential barriers to learning for children affected by economic disadvantage. Staff are not yet able to identify the impact of interventions on raising attainment and reducing disadvantage successfully.

## 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.