

Summarised inspection findings

Sandhaven Primary School

Aberdeenshire Council

14 May 2019

Key contextual information

Sandhaven School is a small primary school near Fraserburgh in Aberdeenshire. The school also houses a nursery and enhanced provision. In 2017/18, there was 95.8% attendance, which was above the national average. There were no exclusions. 82% of children reside in households within decile four according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). In 2018, 15.2% (decile five) of P4-P7 pupils were registered for free school meals, which is in line with the national average. Since the roll of the school is small, there will be limited reference in this document to children at specific stages or percentage figures as these could be misleading or inadvertently identify individuals.

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 has a clear priority to engage all stakeholders more directly in self-evaluation to improve the school. This has recently included more fully developing the school's vision, values and aims. These have been agreed by stakeholders and are clearly stated and visible in the school. Children increasingly recognise the school values and now need to develop their understanding further by discussing how these can inform their daily experiences. A helpful next step would be to explore how school values could be linked with wider work around children's rights and the school house system. This could help children and stakeholders to more fully develop their understanding of how the values are enacted in the life of the school.
- The headteacher participates with peers from across the local authority area in a self-improving schools programme. This is an important support in developing a strategic approach to establish evidence-based self-evaluation to inform practice and identify priorities for improvement. The headteacher is working with teachers to build capacity by empowering them to lead aspects of school improvement. She is supporting staff to develop their understanding of the socio-economic and cultural context of the school.
- Teachers welcome the improvement approaches being taken by the headteacher and demonstrate their commitment to improving the school. They are increasingly supporting each other to evaluate and improve their professional practice through collaborative use of professional standards. This is helping them to develop a more robust approach to self-evaluation. The headteacher is keen to support staff to engage in practitioner inquiry to improve practice. The approach to self-evaluation is encouraging teachers to identify and generate appropriate information and data to inform more robust self-evaluation. She acknowledges that teachers are still at an early stage of developing their data analysis skills. All staff should continue to develop a wider awareness of how socio-economic and cultural factors can be barriers to learning for some children. This will help to support clearer and more detailed evaluation of the success of school improvement activities.

- There is an increasing range of leadership opportunities for children and other stakeholders. Children have identified those groups which they think are of most benefit to the school. All children are members of one of these school community groups, through which they are taking forward aspects of school improvement. Participating in these groups is supporting children to develop skills of leadership and collaborative working. All children in P6 and P7 have leadership roles. As these roles develop, teachers should support children to recognise the skills they are developing. Everyone involved should have a clear idea of the impact their leadership and collaborative work is having on improving outcomes for all children.

- The headteacher has engaged stakeholders effectively in identifying priorities for Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). She has taken good account of the school context and the needs of children. Appropriate evidence of impact has been identified which can be analysed in order to evaluate the success of interventions aimed at addressing the identified priorities. A helpful next step would be to specify, in greater detail, evidence which demonstrates the improved outcomes for children that result from such interventions.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

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

- Staff and children enjoy positive relationships across the school. There is a high level of respect between staff and children and between children. Together, the staff team has established a safe, inclusive environment for learning, which is welcomed by parents and children. Children are happy in school and most are motivated to learn and engage well with a range of learning activities. They engage most enthusiastically when activities are well-matched to information from assessment, ensuring an appropriate level of challenge. For almost all of the time, in paired and small group activities, children are responsible and work together well to complete the tasks they are set.
- Children have an increasing awareness of their rights and responsibilities within school and wider community. They demonstrate a sense of citizenship through their work with groups in the community. Children discuss their right to participate in making decisions through the pupil council and assemblies. They are beginning to use these to discuss what they would prefer to learn. Staff should continue to explore ways in which children can take responsibility in the school and develop skills of independent learning. For example, it would be helpful to reflect together on how far the increasing emphasis on children's rights is consistent with the current house points system.
- Teachers have a measured approach to improving pedagogy. They have worked together to produce 'Successful lessons in Sandhaven', which is an agreed vision of what constitutes good learning and teaching. A helpful next step would be to develop clear expectations of standards on which to base self-reflection and classroom observations. This will help to identify improvements in professional practice and support evaluation of their impact. Feedback given to teachers around classroom observations should have a clear focus on how well expectations and standards for learners, and for learning and teaching, are being met.
- Most lessons are well organised. Most teachers provide explanations and instructions which are clear and effective. They help children to be clear on the purpose of their learning. There are a few examples of teachers making effective use of differentiation to ensure that children experience appropriate challenge in their learning. A few teachers demonstrate effective use of questioning to support the development of children's higher order thinking skills. However, in some lessons, there is scope for learning to be extended through more effective use of questioning. Staff could helpfully review their use of questioning and share effective practice to ensure children's higher order thinking skills are developed progressively across the school.
- Teachers make regular use of digital technology and a few children are confident in using laptops, with some having roles as digital leaders. Across the school, children are not yet using computers and other digital devices sufficiently as a regular, core part of their learning. Staff should reflect on how digital technology can be best used to ensure that children's digital skills are being developed in a coherent and progressive way as they go through school.

- There is potential for teachers to make more effective use of information from assessment, tracking and monitoring in planning and agreeing next steps in learning with children. Children would benefit from opportunities to engage in discussing expectations with their teacher. This should help them to identify what they need to do to improve their learning, and ensure appropriate pace and challenge for all children. Teachers give verbal and written feedback to learners regularly. They should ensure that this is used more consistently across all classes to support all children to understand how they can improve their learning. Across the school, children would benefit from greater challenge and more opportunities to make choices and take a greater lead in their learning.
- The recently introduced assessment calendar is supporting a clear and consistent strategy for assessment. Teachers are beginning to use the National Benchmarks to develop a clearer understanding of expected standards. They use standardised assessments to confirm progress and identify appropriate interventions. Summative assessments are used to provide information about children's progress in literacy and English language and numeracy and mathematics. As planned, teachers should continue to develop their skills in analysing and using data. This will help to support them to ensure information from a wide range of assessments is used to inform planning for learning and to measure progress.
- The headteacher has termly meetings with teachers to track and monitor children's progress in learning. These are helping teachers to focus more clearly on raising attainment for all children. The headteacher should ensure these meetings result in increased expectations from teachers in relation to children's pace and progress in learning. As teachers continue to build their expertise in the moderation of standards, they can support each other to ensure that pace and progression in learning is appropriate to help all children achieve their potential.
- Children are increasingly encouraged to explore the world of work and make connections with the skills they are learning in school and the world around them. This is supported through focus days when parents and partners talk about their jobs. Children in P6 and P7 have visited a local building site to talk about the different work options as part of the transition programme to the local secondary school. Teachers should consider the value of a whole-school approach to developing and tracking children's skills across the four contexts of learning.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- A curriculum audit has been conducted by teachers to begin to understand how all children are receiving their entitlements to a broad general education. Along with stakeholders, they are developing a curriculum rationale which is derived from the school's vision, values and aims. They should now consider in more detail how the curriculum rationale can be more fully developed to reflect and utilise the unique setting of the school.
- Regular use is made of the outdoor area and local community, for example, in developing 'Coastal Classrooms', to provide motivating experiences for specific groups of children. There is scope to consider how a variety of environments can further enrich and enhance learning for all children. The use of a progressive skills framework could help teachers plan and evaluate the development of children's skills across the four contexts for learning.
- There are a few examples of children using digital technology well to support their learning. Teachers recognise the need to develop the use of digital technology further to ensure that children have regular and progressive opportunities to develop their digital skills.
- Teachers are planning learning using progressive pathways across the curriculum. This is helping them to ensure that most children experience greater coherence, continuity and progression in their learning. As a next step, teachers should consider how the pathways can be used to more effectively plan the next steps in learning which support progress for individuals and identified groups of children.
- The school is meeting the national target of two hours of quality physical education for children in mainstream classes. The provision of religious and moral education (RME) and religious observance is also in line with national advice. There are effective links with the local church to support children to understand the significance of faith in daily life and the work of the Church in the local community and further afield. RME is helping children to understand the views of people from various faiths and supporting the development of equality and inclusion across the school.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Parents welcome the work being done by the headteacher to engage them more directly in the life of the school. They remark on the positive difference her leadership is having on the school. They feel that staff know their children well, regardless of whether they teach them directly. There are several opportunities through which parents can find out more about what and how children are learning at school, for example, open afternoons, and sharing the learning assemblies. These are well-attended by parents. Children often conduct parental surveys during parent contact afternoons in order to gain useful feedback on parental views. Teachers could consider exploring ways to share with parents what children are to learn ahead of time. This may be helpful to them in supporting their child as they learn.
- All children use learning journals which include termly targets. These are seen and signed by parents. This is providing a promising start to engaging parents more regularly in supporting their children's learning. The headteacher should continue with plans to engage with the wider parental body and expand the parent council to be fully representative. This can support more parents to be involved in decision-making and self-evaluation.
- The parent council contributes significantly through its fundraising to equity for all. They fund buses for swimming and visits. Parents bought digital technology resources for literacy and numeracy, which is contributing to children learning to work independently and using technology effectively to support their learning.
- During open events, parents contribute to school self-evaluation through surveys, leaving comments, scoring the quality indicators from How good is our school 4th edition (HGIOS4) and through discussions. They feel that the headteacher listens to them and responds very quickly and effectively to any issues that parents raise.

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

- The caring ethos within the school supports the development of positive relationships. As a result children are becoming more skilled in applying their understanding of relationships and friendships when issues arise. Staff know children well and have a shared and agreed approach to ensuring wellbeing. Children are confident in approaching a member of staff with any worries or concerns. Almost all children believe that the school is helping them to become more confident and that most staff encourage them to do their best. Children are polite, articulate and enthusiastic and have a strong sense of pride in their school.
- The school has recently introduced the local authority health and wellbeing progression framework. This is helping teachers identify coverage of experiences and outcomes and plan for progression in learning. The school should, as planned, continue to develop use of the framework to ensure there is progressive learning across all health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes across stages. Teachers should also ensure children's prior learning and experiences are taken into account and that explicit links are made between other areas of the curriculum. For example, children could now take a lead role in applying knowledge of food and nutrition to ensure that all food and drinks for sale at morning break fully comply with required standards.
- Teachers are making a positive start to developing their use of national wellbeing indicators and tracking children's progress in health and wellbeing. They are increasingly engaging children in talking about how the wellbeing indicators apply to their experiences in and out of school. Most children say they feel safe in school and the school helps them to lead a healthy lifestyle. As they develop this work, they should ensure they support children to understand the wellbeing indicators. Staff and children can use these to help assess progress and identify areas for development.
- Staff and stakeholders have recently developed policies for promoting equality and diversity. Children are developing their awareness of equality through increasing engagement with the school values and work such as 'Rights Respecting Schools'. Almost all children work well together and children who attend the enhanced provision (EP) are integrated well in mainstream classes. Teachers could helpfully review their approach to promoting positive behaviour, particularly in relation to the house points system, to ensure that it is consistent with other work around children's rights and empowering children to develop the four capacities.
- Teaching staff have termly meetings with the headteacher to discuss the progress all children are making in their learning. During these meetings, they identify and evaluate interventions to overcome barriers to learning and consider the most effective approaches to meeting children's learning needs. As a result, any additional learning needs experienced by children are being met effectively. Pupil support assistants are providing good support to children in this regard. Teachers should ensure that these termly meetings maintain a clear focus on securing

improved outcomes for all children. In planning measures for additional support, teachers need to ensure that SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and trackable) targets are in place for children. These should be agreed in consultation with all relevant personnel.

- The headteacher makes good use of PEF to provide appropriately targeted support. Teachers should ensure there is greater rigour around the measuring and analysing the impact of the interventions in place for all children to enable all involved to measure progress being made by individual children. They should monitor and evaluate the impact of pace, challenge and differentiation to ensure that all children are included fully in all lessons and learning is well matched to their needs and further promote inclusion. This will contribute to children being able to achieve their full potential. Most children are capable of having more challenge in their learning.
- Attendance levels are in line with the national average and the school is proactive in dealing with any attendance issues which may arise.

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

- In 2017/18, the majority of children in P1 achieved the appropriate level in reading, less than half did so in reading and most did in listening and talking. The majority of children achieved the appropriate level in numeracy. In P4, less than half of children achieved the appropriate level in all aspects of literacy and in numeracy. In P7, the majority of children achieved the appropriate level in reading, writing and numeracy. Most of the children in P7 achieved the appropriate level in listening and talking. However, the headteacher acknowledges that teacher judgements, while now more evidence-based, are not yet sufficiently robust. Any data the school has prior to the most recent year is not reliable. The school does not have robust evidence of children's progress over time.
- Teachers' predictions for the current session are for improved levels of attainment overall across all stages. There is a clear and consistent strategy for assessment and teachers are beginning to use the National Benchmarks to support a shared understanding of expected standards. There is evidence that gaps in learning are now being successfully identified and addressed. Overall, most children at all stages are now making satisfactory progress in their learning in literacy and numeracy. As planned, teachers should increase their opportunities to engage in moderation activities in order to continue to develop more robust judgements of how children are progressing in their learning.
- A new tracking and monitoring system has been implemented by teachers in the past session. This is enabling them increasingly to analyse and take account of factors that may affect children's progress in learning. They should continue to develop their data analysis skills in order to ensure that they make the most effective use of tracking and monitoring to maximise progress in learning for all children. The headteacher is also making a start to tracking the involvement of children in opportunities for wider achievement. This is helping to identify those children who may be at risk of missing out on appropriate opportunities to extend their learning and develop skills. Teachers are starting to support children to develop appropriate language to identify and discuss the skills they are developing. As the tracking system is developed further, it will be helpful if it also takes account of how children are progressing in their skills development. This will enable wider achievement opportunities to be targeted appropriately through informed discussion with children and other stakeholders.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Children are making satisfactory progress from prior levels of attainment in literacy and English language. They increasingly recognise the relevance of literacy as a skill for learning, life and work. There is some evidence emerging that children's progress in literacy and English is beginning to improve. Teachers now need to develop a more consistent approach across the school to ensure that children know the levels at which they are working and how they can improve.

Reading

- The very recent change in the school's approach to the teaching of reading is beginning to increase children's motivation and enthusiasm across the school. Children at first level have limited confidence in reading and knowledge of authors. At second level children can discuss their favourite authors and identify their style of writing. They are able to discuss some aspects of the writers' craft. Some of the older children can articulate good reading habits which they have adopted. By the second level, children are able to define different reading skills. Across the school, children are able to select from a wide range of books and make regular use of the new school library. The recent introduction of new reading materials is also motivating children to read. As a result, children across the school read fluently and with expression.

Writing

- Across the school, staff need to raise their expectations of what children can achieve in writing, and encourage them to write more at length. There is scope to increase further the range of texts that children produce. For example, children are able to recall only a few occasions when they developed their skills in note taking. The presentation of work and quality of handwriting is too variable across classes. Teachers are focusing on improving children's handwriting skills, but it is not always clear how children are supported in improving their spelling of common words. For some, this could be developed in the context of writing rather than being a separate activity. There has been a recent review of the school's approach to assessing writing which is taking account of the National Benchmarks. Teachers provide regular, written feedback to children on how to improve their writing. However, this feedback is not always sufficiently detailed to support children to make the necessary improvements. Teachers should now, as planned, ensure that formative feedback results in identified improvements so that children can understand their own progress and next steps in learning.

Talking and listening

- Children are clear and articulate in their oral communication. In almost all cases, they demonstrate grammatical accuracy. They are respectful in situations in which they are talking to an adult, to each other and in discussions. Children at early level can give simple responses to questions. They share their experiences, views and opinions. They would benefit from more situations in which they are developing their imagination through role-play and retelling stories. At the first and second levels, children do not demonstrate effective listening skills with each other. By the second level, children can recall a number of contexts in which they developed their skills in talking. In most cases, the focus on vocabulary is extending children's range. Teachers should make more use of open-ended questioning to enable children to contribute their views, ideas, information and opinions more regularly. There is scope to have a consistent and progressive approach to assessing talking and listening for all children.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, children are making satisfactory progress in numeracy and mathematics. Teachers are planning learning using the local authority progression frameworks. This is supporting teachers to plan more effectively and identify gaps in learning. As teachers address these gaps, this is beginning to make a positive difference by ensuring greater continuity in children's learning.
- At the early level, most children can count to 20 with support. Most children can write numbers and estimate and count up to ten. They can recognise patterns and vertical lines of symmetry, and the properties of a few basic 2D shapes and 3D objects. Most can recognise the number of objects in a group and sort into sets of up to ten. Children are confident in using a 12-hour analogue clock to tell the time.
- Most children at the first level are confident in addition and subtraction with whole numbers up to three digits. They can make accurate use of appropriate mathematical language. They can

explain basic fractions, using appropriate notation, and can equate these to percentages for a half and a quarter. They can calculate perimeter and area, and recognise the basic features of 2D shapes and 3D objects. A few children are not confident in describing all the basic characteristics of 3D objects. Most children can represent and read information using bar graphs and Venn and Carroll diagrams. They can use 12-hour notation in telling time but are less confident with 24-hour notation. Most children are not confident with times tables over seven and are unable to recall any work they have done with angles. They would benefit from work to improve their mental agility and conceptual understanding, particularly in relation to number bonds.

- At the second level, most children demonstrate good mental skills in relation to basic number operations. However, they do not always express confidence in their own abilities, for example, in calculations involving the eight - or nine - times tables. Most are not familiar with calculations where the answer is expressed as a decimal fraction. Children can confidently discuss and calculate equivalent fractions, square numbers, cubes and roots. Most can recognise sequences, such as Fibonacci, and different types of angle. They can calculate the perimeter, area and volume of basic 2D shapes and 3D objects, such as a cuboid. Most children are confident in using money and measurement involving multiple calculations, for example, in identifying the best value food deal or costing supplies to refurbish a room. They make these calculations in real-life contexts, which is helping them to develop skills in budgeting and spending money. Not all children are confident in calculations involving time periods, and most would benefit from increasing their confidence in their mental agility and in data handling.

Learners Achievements

- Children have leadership roles as achievement officers. They record and celebrate all the achievements of children across the school. Children's achievements are celebrated in various ways, for example, the 'Sandhaven star award' and the 'achievement award'. These celebrate a wide range of achievement across various sports and activities such as music, art and dance. They also include examples of children's classwork across the whole school. The pupil council includes representatives from P6 and P7. Teachers should continue to support children to identify the skills they are developing and also explore opportunities for accreditation. There is an increasing range of well-considered opportunities to support children's wider achievement. The new tracking of participation is helping to identify children who would benefit from greater support to take advantage of these opportunities.
- The headteacher has identified that some children require support to develop skills of independence, emotional regulation and confidence to successfully address barriers to learning. Appropriate interventions are being provided through PEF, along with expected outcomes and how impact will be measured. In evaluating the success of such interventions, it will be important to maintain a focus on which learning outcomes for children are improving as a result, and how far they are improving.

Choice of QI : 2.6 Transitions

- Arrangements to support learners and their families
- Collaborative planning and delivery
- Continuity and progression in learning

- As a result of consultation with parents, teachers have improved arrangements for reporting. Reports are made more regularly and in more detail, and this has been welcomed by parents. There are regular 'Sharing the learning' assemblies, and teachers and children use learning journals and social media to inform parents about children's learning. Open sessions have been popular with parents and well-attended. Almost all parents, in the pre-inspection questionnaire and the school's own survey, agree that they receive helpful, regular feedback about how their child is learning and developing.
- Teachers from the school, other cluster schools and cluster secondary school have recently evaluated the effectiveness of arrangements for transition from P7. The views of young people from the current S1 were sought and taken into account during the evaluation. As a result, there have been significant improvements to transition arrangements for the current session. Teachers are now more focussed on improving children's skills and confidence and giving them better information about the secondary school. A few teachers from the school and the secondary are involved in visiting each school. Teachers across the school would welcome more opportunities to engage with secondary colleagues in subject areas to improve progression in children's learning. They would also welcome greater professional dialogue around the use of information about children's progress in learning.
- Effective arrangements are in place to support children who require enhanced transitions. Teachers have a clear focus on meeting the needs of children and ensuring that they build a good relationship with a known adult. As a result of the recent self-evaluation, teachers feel that there is now more effective organisation of enhanced transitions and greater clarity around respective roles and responsibilities. Teachers should continue to ensure that there is an increasing focus on progression in learning across curriculum areas as well as addressing children's pastoral needs.
- A transition calendar has been introduced by the headteacher and nursery staff to support improved transition for children into P1. Staff are focusing on activities to familiarise children with staff, routines and the new environment. Teachers from the school would value opportunities to be in the nursery more regularly across whole session to build children's skills. Staff should continue to develop the calendar to be more detailed in how it can support continuity and progression in learning.
- The headteacher has worked with teachers to develop appropriate arrangements to ensure a smooth transition for children between years and stages. This is supporting teachers to have increasingly more detailed dialogue around children's progress and needs in learning. Teachers should continue to develop their use of progression frameworks, and a greater range of assessment, to ensure that they have high expectations of all children to achieve their best progress in learning throughout school.

Context

The Enhanced Provision (EP) within Sandhaven Primary School meets the needs of children with additional support needs who live in Sandhaven and Fraserburgh. Children are placed in the EP as a result of a Multi-agency Action Planning Meeting and a resulting admissions panel. At the time of the inspection, there were nine children ranging from P2 to P6 in one class. Provision in the EP is overseen by the headteacher. The EP focuses on learning and teaching of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. All children access mainstream classes with their peers for part of the week for other curricular areas.

Leadership of change

- There is a clear vision for the school and EP developed with staff, children and their families which reflects the local rural and coastal context. Inclusive approaches are central to meeting the needs of all children, who spend much of their day in mainstream classes with their peers. As a result, the headteacher and her staff have built positive, trusting relationships with children and their families.
- All staff are involved in self-evaluation to improve the school. Staff take important leadership roles in taking forward improvement priorities, for example leading a review of the health and wellbeing progressive curriculum pathway. They recognise, as a priority, the importance of planning for individuals and developing teaching approaches to meet the needs of children. Together with the headteacher, staff are beginning to develop a strategic overview of the tracking of individual children's progress in literacy and English, numeracy and mathematics and health and wellbeing. Teachers should explore further ways to track children's progress towards their individual education plan targets, as well as their levels of support and of engagement. Staff are enthusiastic, they are keen to learn all they can about the individual needs and the barriers to learning which children are experiencing. As part of their professional learning, staff would benefit from opportunities to visit and build relationships with other services within the local authority and beyond.
- Staff have developed positive relationships with parents, who feel well-informed and supported by the school. The use of a range of communication strategies, such as daily home-school diaries, review meetings, newsletters, the school website and social media platforms is resulting in parents feeling well informed about their child's progress. Parents feel part of the Sandhaven Primary school community and feel their views are not only sought, but acted upon.
- All children within the EP are included in whole school activities such as assemblies, sports days and social events, and are included in lessons in the mainstream school. All children contribute positively to the life of the school as members of school houses. They take on leadership roles in the class and across the school. Children express preferences about which community group they wish to be involved with, for example in the library, health group, Eco committee, and as digital leaders. Through fundraising events, children raise money for Comic Relief, Red Nose day and local third-sector organisations. In doing so, children are gaining an understanding of the contribution they can make to the lives of others.

Learning, teaching and assessment

- Children benefit from the warm, nurturing ethos within the EP. They are motivated and engage in a variety of learning activities. The pace of learning is good and there is an effective balance between teacher-led and independent tasks. There is scope to differentiate tasks to meet individual needs more directly. The EP provides an overall environment for learning and teaching which demonstrates a commitment to children's wellbeing and development. Almost all children have opportunities to learn within the school's mainstream classes for literacy and numeracy. This is a strength of the school. Inclusive pathways for children should continue to be developed across all curricular areas as appropriate to individual need.
- Staff know the learning and pastoral needs of children very well and work effectively as a team to meet them. Staff work with children to develop their confidence and resilience in preparing them to be ready to learn. Overall, almost all children show an interest in lessons for most of the time. Children are building their capacity to focus on tasks for an increasing length of time.
- Teachers use a range of strategies to guide children's learning, they scaffold learning well through a well-rehearsed and understood 'small steps' approach. Lessons build effectively on prior learning. Small episodes of learning ensure that children remain on task and are interested and motivated by their work. There is scope to plan more individualised learning activities to better meet the needs of a few children.
- Children are clear about what they are learning in the EP. Teachers check children's understanding throughout the lesson, making appropriate adjustments and adding further scaffolding if necessary. At the end of the lesson children assess their work to give them a sense of achievement. This self-assessment helps children understand what progress they are making and what they need to do to improve. There is a blend of teacher and learner assessment. Feedback from teachers in jotters highlights how successful children are being in their learning. As a result, children know what they are learning and their next steps to improvement.
- Good use is made of a range of learning environments, both within the school and in the wider community. For example, children benefit from regular use of the hall for physical education, and 'real-life' experiences, such as shopping. The school's coastal classroom programme utilises the rocky coastline as children explore rock pools and learn about ecology. This outdoor classroom provides an ideal learning environment to support all areas of the curriculum. Teachers should continue with plans to develop its use further.
- Children talk positively about the use of digital technology to support their learning. They research the design of science fiction characters on television before using what they have learned to build a model. There is scope to use digital technology further to support children's learning and develop their skills.
- Teachers use the Aberdeenshire 'Inclusive pathways' for literacy and numeracy and they are refreshing the pathway for health and wellbeing which has been developed for children in both the EP and the school. This collaborative approach to developing learning pathways appropriate to individual needs should continue to be developed for all curriculum areas.
- Staff use observations and professional judgement to evaluate children's progress. The headteacher, through tracking meetings with teachers, effectively monitors the progress children are making. Comprehensive individual education plans are in place for each child, developed with key partners where appropriate. Regular reviews of targets set within these enable staff to monitor children's progress.

- The school improvement priorities for the EP are to improve the use of symbols for communication and to increase fluency in signing. Teachers need to continue to develop their confidence to use symbols and signing to support children's listening and talking.

Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

- Almost all children enjoy being at school. Attendance is high and, as a result, children benefit from maximum access to learning opportunities. The EP provides an environment where children are treated with dignity and respect. All staff demonstrate a commitment to children's wellbeing and development and this is improving outcomes for children. Staff have built effective relationships with parents and, as a result, know the children and their families very well. Pastoral care needs are managed sensitively. Individualised transition programmes have enabled children new to the school to settle in quickly. During the inspection period, almost all children accessing the EP were observed to be calm and engaged.
- All children have opportunities to learn about healthy lifestyles appropriate to their age and stage. For example, children are actively involved in talking about their emotions, big issues little issues, so that they develop appropriate strategies to self-regulate their behaviour. They benefit from two hours of Physical Education (PE). Children are aware of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and have drawn on it to form class charters. Staff are familiar with the wellbeing indicators and should now plan to ensure that children are assisted in making links between the wellbeing indicators, the emotions programme and the UNCRC.
- School leaders and staff take appropriate account of the legislative framework relating to children's wellbeing and additional support needs.
- Opportunities for meaningful and individualised inclusion into mainstream classes enable all children access to timetabled learning with their peers. A few children will join their mainstream peers for a residential experience. The EP has worked hard to develop relationships with other professionals, for example, secondary staff, the psychologist and the speech and language therapist. Children access learning in different contexts such as visit to the park, seaside and the shops. These opportunities are providing almost all children with wider experiences outside of the EP and school.

Raising attainment and achievement

- Children in the EP are making good progress from their prior levels of learning. Data presented by the school indicates that most children are achieving within Curriculum for Excellence early level in literacy and numeracy with few children working in aspects of literacy and numeracy at an appropriate level.
- Across the EP, most children demonstrate spelling consonant vowel consonant words using phonics, letter recognition and practice handwriting. They use capital letters and some punctuation marks including a full stop. Most children can write sentences and a few can write stories at length. Almost all children can write for a range of purposes. They write instructions, recipes, persuasive texts, letter and imaginative stories. A few children can self-correct their work and present it using a computer.
- Children show an interest in words and how they are spelled. A few ask for the meaning of words. Most children can read and discuss texts, retell a story and ask and answer questions appropriately. A few children can talk about characters in a book. A few children show expression when reading and can read aloud with appropriate pace and intonation. They can recognise rhymes in sentences.

- Almost all children listen well for most of the time. They can take turns, giving attention to another child or adult when talking. Most children talk in sentences and have appropriately developed speech. They can understand instructions and can answer simple questions.
- Across the EP most children count to 20 and beyond, count on and back, add and subtract, multiply and divide to two, three, four, five and ten, and recognise coins to £1. A few have begun to develop an understanding of time, angles, coordinates and fractions.
- Children enjoy practical numeracy to work out the perimeter and area of a 2D shape. A few children know the properties of 3D objects well. Most know the days of the week and a few can recite the seasons. They use the terms yesterday, today and tomorrow accurately. Most can tell the time to the hour and a few can tell half past, quarter to and quarter past the hour. Most children can weigh ingredients for a recipe accurately using digital scales.
- Most children can record their findings from a survey in a simple tick chart. A few children can represent favourite Burns supper foods in a bar graph.
- The school ensures equality of opportunity by ensuring that children in the EP have access to the same range of opportunities as their mainstream peers. For example, attending residential camp and participating in the wider achievement activities such as cricket, swimming, and girl's football. Almost all children are included in mainstream classes for literacy and numeracy and actively engage in the specific interventions being used to raise attainment. Assessments used to measure the impact of these interventions show early signs of progress.

Parental engagement

- Staff have developed positive relationships with parents. Parents recognised that skilled staff are supporting almost all children to make effective progress.
- The use of a range of communication strategies, such as daily home-school diaries, monthly reporting sheets, review meetings and newsletters is resulting in parents feeling well informed about their child's progress. Parents value the review of the reporting process which has taken place. They say that reports and pupil learning profiles are helping them to understand where their child is in learning.

Transitions

- Enhanced transitions into the EP are well planned. Staff visit the previous placement to gather information about the individual and their family, and any plans are shared. Parents and children visit the EP to become familiar with the school before children attend for the first time. Information about the EP is provided to the child as a social story and they are invited to visit the base to meet staff. This reassures them and means that children who are new to the EP settle quickly.
- Transitions throughout the day are supported by well-established routines. Increasingly children have individual timetables in mainstream classes to support their understanding of their day. Staff use symbols to support a few children to understand how their behaviour impacts on their own learning and that of others. This results in almost all children attending well in both mainstream and EP lessons and enables them to maximise learning. Mixed-stage community groups provide children with opportunities to work together with mainstream children.
- A transition document is prepared by each mainstream teacher and as children from the EP move on through the classes this is passed to their new mainstream teacher. This helps children to make the transition to a new class effectively.
- Enhanced transitions out of the school to the local secondary are individualised sufficiently well to meet the needs of children and their families. A few of these enhanced transition plans can be initiated over a year before transition to secondary takes place giving children time to adjust to new surroundings different staff and different teaching strategies.

Learning pathways

- A whole-school curriculum rationale is in place which was developed in partnership with parents, children and staff. Aberdeenshire individualised flexible learning pathways are in place and provide for personalisation. Teachers use these pathways to provide children with choice in their learning. The school should continue with its plans to revise the health and wellbeing pathway to ensure its relevance for all children.
- At the time of the inspection all children who attend the base receive their entitlement to two hours quality PE.

Practice worth sharing more widely

The school's approach to inclusiveness, particularly in relation to children who attend the enhanced provision.

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.