

# Summarised inspection findings

**Laurieknowe Primary School**

Dumfries and Galloway Council

26 November 2024

## Key contextual information

Laurieknowe Primary School is a non-denominational primary school in the town of Dumfries. The headteacher has been in post since 2022 and is supported by a depute headteacher and two principal teachers. Two classes are accommodated in temporary classrooms within the school playground as a result of on-going building repairs.

At the time of inspection, the school roll is 267 children across 11 classes. The majority of children live within Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation data zones 5 - 10. In September 2024, the school recorded around one third of children requiring additional support.

### 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

- Staff create a welcoming and caring ethos, which is built on positive and nurturing relationships between adults and children. The interactions between staff and children are effective and support children's learning well. All staff work together to provide a highly inclusive learning environment for all children.
- Staff and children work collaboratively to promote and develop children's rights linked to the review of the school's vision, values and aims. Children's rights are discussed and celebrated at assemblies. This has supported children to be more aware of the need to treat each other with kindness and respect. Children in all classes have developed individual class charters linked to children's rights. As a result, children's behaviour and engagement in their learning is positive.
- Most children behave well as a result of the stimulating and purposeful learning environments staff create. Staff have undertaken professional development in nurture and ways to support children's wellbeing. A few children can become disengaged when lessons are overly teacher led or the pace of learning is too slow. A few children benefit from a range of well-planned targeted interventions and approaches to support them to regulate their emotions. This includes use of calm, quiet areas and a range of alternative activities, which children can access flexibly as required. Staff support children skilfully in their learning through simplifying instructions and using helpful resources.
- Most children engage well in their learning and are motivated during lessons. Staff have developed effective approaches to support children's engagement in learning. For example, they offer weekly wellbeing focussed afternoons for children. These approaches are supported effectively by a range of partnerships with other agencies and community groups. As a result, children have more opportunities to work cooperatively across classes.
- Senior leaders and staff work together well to agree and develop approaches to high-quality learning, teaching and assessment across the school. This is helping to improve the quality

and consistency of teaching approaches children experience. In almost all lessons, teachers share the purpose of learning with children. They help children to understand how they can be successful in their tasks and activities. Teachers provide children with clear explanations throughout lessons. Most children follow instructions well which helps them to participate successfully in learning activities.

- Teachers make effective use of a range of well-structured teaching approaches. This supports most children to work together successfully during paired and group activities. Staff support and extend children's learning through skilful interventions and direct teaching. In most classes, staff meet children's needs through differentiated tasks and activities. There is scope to provide more challenge for those children who could achieve more. In most classes, teachers provide children with helpful written feedback which supports their learning. In a few classes, children are developing their skills in peer and self-assessment well. Staff should support all children to make this a consistent, more regular practice across the school. This should help children to understand how well they are progressing and to identify their next steps in learning.
- All children benefit from using digital technology such as tablets and laptop computers to support their learning across the curriculum. For example, children use a range of software to create graphs and consolidate and extend their learning in maths. Teachers use interactive whiteboards very effectively to increase children's interaction in lessons and enhance approaches to teaching and learning.
- In most lessons, teachers ask questions which require children to recall information, make links to prior learning and to check for understanding. In a few classes, effective strategies are used to ensure all children are actively involved in thinking and providing answers. Teachers should plan and ask a wider range of questions that will help children to develop their higher order thinking skills.
- Staff have worked collaboratively to develop children's learning through play. They have been supported by the local authority to undertake professional learning and take good account of national guidance. Staff use inside and outside spaces effectively. They provide a range of learning environments which are linked to children's interests. Children engage well in child-initiated activities and adult directed activities. This is developing their literacy, numeracy, creative and social skills. Staff's approaches to planning play supports children to engage effectively in their learning. Staff make positive use of observations to assess individual children's progress. They record children's learning on an attractive wall display. Staff should develop their use of observations further to better inform their planning of children's learning. This will help provide more open ended, challenging activities that extend children's knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Teachers use daily observations of children's work, in a range of contexts, to understand how much and how well children are learning. They use diagnostic and summative assessments, including national standardised assessments for Scotland to help evaluate children's learning. Teachers should now plan regular high-quality assessments which require children to demonstrate specific knowledge and understanding across the curriculum in unfamiliar and relevant contexts. Staff should link these assessments to the national Benchmarks. This should help teachers understand better, how well children apply knowledge and skills from across the curriculum to complete tasks and solve problems.
- Teachers are engaging in useful moderation activities that are helping to develop further a shared understanding of national standards and expectations. This includes discussing children's progress in writing. As a result, staff are becoming increasingly confident when making professional judgements on children's progress and attainment in literacy and

numeracy. As planned, senior leaders and teachers should continue to develop this work across all curricular areas, including moderating with colleagues within the learning community. This will support teachers to develop further a shared understanding of children's progress and achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) level.

- Staff have worked collaboratively to review and update the school's approach to planning. They have developed guidance which sets out clear expectations for teachers for medium- and long-term planning. They use progression pathways appropriately to support planning in numeracy, literacy and health and wellbeing. Teachers are beginning to use a termly overview to take account of recent developments in science, technology, engineering and mathematics and outdoor learning. In a few classes, children contribute their ideas and interests to plans for learning. The school has correctly identified the need to review curriculum pathways to ensure that all learning is relevant and purposeful.
- Senior leaders and teachers use termly tracking meetings well to discuss children's progress, attainment and achievements. They identify children who would benefit from additional support, and plan interventions and adaptations in teaching to better meet the needs of children. Staff should strengthen these meetings further to ensure that children are challenged appropriately in their learning across all curricular areas.

## 2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

## 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

### Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Overall, children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. Attainment is strongest at P1 but this is not sustained as children move through the school. Overall, most children achieve nationally expected standards by the end of P1 in literacy and numeracy. The majority of children at P4 and P7 achieve nationally expected standards in reading, writing and numeracy. There is a need to raise attainment at first and second level.
- Most children who receive additional support for their learning make appropriate progress against their individual targets for learning.

### Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, the majority of children are making satisfactory progress in literacy and English. Progress is stronger in listening and talking for those children at P1 and P7.

### Listening and talking

- By the end of P1 most children listen well to adults and respond appropriately to questions and instructions. They communicate and share ideas confidently within a group. They are building confidence in asking questions and responding relevantly to questions from others in a variety of contexts. By the end of P4 the majority of children contribute appropriately when taking part in group discussions and talk about texts they enjoy. They should now practise the skills needed to present to larger groups using appropriate eye contact and body language. At P7, most children show respect for the views of others and contribute relevant ideas, information and opinions. A few children need to improve their skills in listening to others.

### Reading

- By the end of P1 most children use sounds to blend and read words in simple texts. They are developing their knowledge of sounds to read words independently. By the end of P4, the majority of children read aloud with growing fluency, expression and understanding. They answer a range of literal, inferential and evaluative questions with growing confidence. They should develop their understanding of the writer's use of language including effective choice of words. At P7 the majority of children discuss their favourite authors and genres and share their reasons for their preferences. They should practise identifying the key language features used by the writer.

### Writing

- By the end of P1 most children form lower case letters correctly and write with increasing confidence and control. They should continue to practise writing to convey ideas, messages and information in different ways through play, imaginative and real-life contexts. By the end of P4, the majority of children who have achieved first level write independently. They are developing skills in using interesting vocabulary and common conjunctions. At P7, the majority

of children apply their knowledge of spelling rules and patterns to spell most words correctly. They use punctuation accurately to communicate effectively through written texts. At first and second levels, children should practise applying taught writing skills for a range of audiences and meaningful purposes.

### **Numeracy and mathematics**

- Overall, the majority of children are making satisfactory progress in numeracy and mathematics.

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

- By the end of P1, most children who have achieved early level recall the number sequence within 30 and identify missing numbers accurately. They should practise adding and subtracting within 10 regularly. By the end of P4, children round accurately to the nearest 10 and 100 and identify 24-hour notation in time. They will benefit from working more with simple equivalent fractions. At P7, the majority of children understand the link between a digit and its place and its value for whole numbers to 1,000,000. They calculate time durations in real life problems. They are not yet confident understanding the relationship between fractions, percentages and decimals.

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

- By the end of P1 most children recognise, describe and sort common three-dimensional objects according to various criteria including straight, round, flat and curved. They are less confident with symmetry. By the end of P4, the majority of children who achieved first level use correct mathematical language to describe three-dimensional objects. They require further practice following and recording directions using words associated with direction and turns. At P7, the majority of children identify and classify a range of angles, including, acute, obtuse and reflex. They will benefit from working with complementary and supplementary angles including calculating missing angles.

### **Information handling**

- By the end of P1 most children who have achieved early level, interpret simple charts, including their visual daily timetable. The majority of children retrieve information successfully from simple graphs. By the end of P4, the majority of children display and interpret data using bar graphs and charts. At P7, the majority of children analyse and draw conclusions from a variety of sources, including line graphs and information tables. Children at first and second level should apply their information handling skills to real-life contexts, including using digital technologies.

### **Attainment over time**

- Senior leaders track children's progress over time in literacy and numeracy. They are not yet tracking progress across other curricular areas. The school's attainment over time data shows that levels of children's attainment in literacy and numeracy have been variable over several years. Over the last two years, attainment data has become more robust. Senior leaders and teachers are now gathering and analysing a range of assessment data, including the use of standardised assessments. This is helping to ensure that the school's attainment data is valid and accurate. Current data shows children's attainment at early level is improving. As planned, senior leaders and staff should build on these positive gains at early level to raise attainment overall. Staff should support children to maintain their progress as they move through the school.

### **Overall quality of learners' achievements**

- Children share and celebrate their achievements through assemblies, wall displays and by gaining house points. They are proud to receive recognition through 'Wellbeing Assemblies' that include awards such as, 'Wider Achievement', 'Star of the Week', and the 'Kindness

Award'. These approaches are developing children's self-confidence and their understanding of what it means to be an effective contributor.

- Staff work with local community partners to offer a range of experiences where children can succeed. These include football tournaments, netball competitions, speech making, handwriting competitions and outdoor woodland skills. As a result, children are developing resilience and skills for learning, life and work. Children in P7 participate in a range of committees, including children's rights, charity, news, assembly leaders, events and playground leaders. They are beginning to identify the skills they develop through these leadership roles. Staff are at the early stages of monitoring children's participation in achievement experiences. They now need to identify any gaps and take action to address these. As planned, staff should support children to understand and link their achievements, both in and out of school, to the skills they are developing.

### **Equity for all learners**

- Over recent years school attendance levels remain above local authority averages. Senior leaders are vigilant in tracking the attendance of all children. They act promptly where individual children's attendance dips. Staff follow a school-devised attendance flow chart and local authority guidance to improve attendance levels. They put in place bespoke arrangements for specific individuals and groups of children where attendance levels are low. Staff work closely with parents and partners to address the reasons for absence. This is leading to success. As a result, attendance is improving.
- The headteacher and staff have an in-depth understanding of the social, economic background of children and families. They are sensitive to the increasing financial pressure on children and their families. Staff are supporting families' wellbeing with discretion and sensitivity. For example, children and families have access to a sustainable school clothing bank. Staff use funding appropriately to offset the cost of trips and activities to ensure no child is at risk of missing out.
- Senior leaders and teachers monitor closely the learning progress of individuals and groups of children. This includes those who may require additional support, such as those who are disadvantaged by poverty. They have prioritised the use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) to support children's readiness to learn. For example, school staff who work to promote inclusion provide well targeted support for individuals and groups of children to better engage in their learning. Senior leaders have invested PEF in digital technology resources to better support children's learning. As a result of interventions which promote children's emotional wellbeing and readiness to learn, most children supported by PEF are more engaged in their learning. Senior leaders should identify which PEF funded interventions are having the greatest impact in narrowing the school's attainment gaps. They should now set clear, measurable outcomes for this work and develop ways to measure its impact robustly.



## Other relevant evidence

- The school provide opportunities for healthy physical activity through well-being initiatives and partnership community work, such as netball and football. All children receive their full entitlement to two hours of high-quality physical education each week.
- Across the school, children learn French in line with the 1+2 languages policy. Staff should now use French within daily school activities and ensure consistent third language provision in P5, P6 and P7.
- Children have access to a range of fiction and non-fiction books in class appropriate to their age and stage. The further development of classroom libraries or reading spaces would enhance children's reading for enjoyment.
- Senior leaders plan to develop further consultation approaches with parents, pupils and staff on how best to invest Pupil Equity Funding. This will allow the school community to share their thoughts and ideas on how funding could be spent.

## 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.