

Summarised inspection findings

Cathkin Primary School

South Lanarkshire Council

2 May 2023

Key contextual information

Cathkin Primary School and Nursery Class is a non-denominational primary school in Rutherglen, an urban area of South Lanarkshire. At the time of inspection, there are 147 children across seven classes on the mainstream school roll. There is also a nursery class and six classes supporting 46 children with a range of additional support needs. The school's senior leadership team comprises of the headteacher, depute headteacher, acting depute headteacher and two principal teachers. Most children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data zones 1 and 2. Approximately one half of children are registered for free school meals, which is significantly higher than the national average.

1.3 Leadership of change

very 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

- Cathkin Primary School is a warm, welcoming and inclusive school. Children, staff and parents have a well-embedded understanding of the vision and values which underpin the life and work of the school. The headteacher involved the whole school community effectively in the consultation and selection of the values, 'caring, friendly and hardworking'. They worked together well to craft the school vision to ensure it is relevant and meaningful for the school, nursery and supported classes. Children and adults demonstrate the values in their interactions with each other throughout the school day. Senior leaders and staff revisit the vision and values regularly with children through assemblies and in daily conversation. They recognise and celebrate children demonstrating school values through awards and displays. As a result, children can talk articulately about how the values meaningfully relate to their lives.
- The headteacher has been in post for four years and has a deep understanding of children's and families' needs across the school community. She is very well respected by children, staff, parents and the school's partners. She provides highly effective leadership, underpinned by her high standards and aspirational vision. In leading the school through a significant process of change over recent years, the headteacher has successfully developed and maintained a positive, supportive and collaborative culture. She is supported very well by the depute headteachers and principal teachers. Across the school, all staff demonstrate a deep commitment to improving outcomes for all children.
- The headteacher has established effective quality assurance arrangements. Regular, well-planned evaluation activities include sampling children's work, lesson observations and 'learning circle' groups with children at assemblies. There are clear connections between self-evaluation, improvement planning and professional learning. Senior leaders consider carefully and manage the pace of change well. During the pandemic and recovery period, staff continued to implement strategic priorities and, as a result, the school continued to secure positive improvements. The headteacher is increasingly involving all staff, children, parents and partners in the school improvement planning process and in agreeing priorities to take forward. Senior leaders seek feedback regularly from the school community. They listen

carefully to everyone's views and use ideas suggested. The headteacher ensures the school improvement plan is focused on improving outcomes for children and includes clear measures for success and baseline information. There is a robust rationale for change. Senior leaders and staff regularly monitor the school's work and can evidence positive impact on progress and attainment in reading, numeracy and wellbeing for children. Senior leaders should continue to work together to develop shared priorities for improvement across the whole establishment while also responding to the needs of individual aspects of the school's provision.

- All staff feel supported and empowered to lead school improvements, for example outdoor learning and play. They are highly committed to professional learning. Senior leaders link annual staff professional review effectively to the General Teaching Council for Scotland standards and improvement planning. All teachers undertake training, enquiry projects and additional accredited qualifications to enhance their own skills. They participate in peer visits to observe and discuss practice. School support assistants are involved in professional learning and apply their knowledge well to support children in their learning. The ongoing reflective practice of staff is having a positive impact on children's experiences and is supporting continual improvement of teaching and learning across the school.
- Almost all children participate in the pupil council, child-led committees or focus groups, such as curriculum constructors, which contribute meaningfully to school life. Older children are proud to take on roles of responsibility, such as buddies, which support them to develop skills for learning, life and work. Pupil groups lead and secure improvements, such as new playground resources and increased outdoor learning opportunities. Senior leaders and staff make clear to children how their views are positively impacting upon the work of the school.
- Senior leaders have well-considered plans in place to address the poverty-related attainment gap and raise the attainment of all children. These clear, agreed strategies are informed by a strong understanding of the local context and needs of the children and families. The headteacher consults with the school community on allocating the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) which is targeted to improve attainment in literacy and numeracy and to support wellbeing. Parents and children are involved in budgeting and decide together how best to spend funding. As a result, they feel their views are important and that they are helping affect positive change.

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

- Across the school there is an encouraging and supportive ethos. Senior leaders and staff work well together to create a safe and nurturing environment which reflects the school's values. All children are treated respectfully, with patience and understanding. Staff nurture each child as an individual. There is a whole school commitment to relationships and inclusion. This focus supports a positive learning culture across the school. As a result, almost all children say that they enjoy being at school.
- Most children are motivated, engaged and interact well with their learning. In most lessons, teachers plan and provide activities which are well matched to children's individual needs. They ensure learning experiences are interesting and relevant. Staff use an effective balance of group, paired and independent tasks to support learning well. A few children require more planned and purposeful activities to consolidate and extend their learning. Teachers use planning grids well with children to provide opportunities for personalisation and choice in learning. Staff should continue to develop this approach to support children further to increase their independence. Across the school, children have benefited from teachers' focus on addressing gaps in learning that occurred as a result of the pandemic. Teachers should now increase the pace of learning to support children's continued progress and provide further challenge.
- In almost all lessons, teachers provide clear instructions and explanations. As a result, most children engage confidently and cooperatively with their learning. Teachers use questioning effectively to consolidate learning and build curiosity. Senior leaders recognise they now need to support staff to increase their use of higher order questions to extend further children's thinking and understanding.
- In almost all lessons, staff use digital tools and resources well to consolidate and enhance children's learning. For example, teachers use interactive whiteboards skilfully to support lessons. Across the school, children use a variety of technologies with confidence, such as tablets, laptops and applications. This supports their independent learning and choice. Children benefit from using online games regularly to practise their mental mathematics skills. Older children use digital presentation tools to share their learning with others. Younger children enjoy playing and creating with digital toys. As planned, teachers should continue to develop children's digital skills to enrich learning across all areas of the curriculum.
- Teachers create nurturing, engaging classroom environments which support children's learning. They make good use of available spaces to deliver activities and lessons in a range of creative ways. Across the school, staff and children establish and promote a positive reading culture. All classrooms developed 'Book Nooks' and children regularly enjoy reading and accessing a wide range of books in these spaces. This approach is encouraging children to become enthusiastic readers.

- Teachers at early level are introducing a play-based approach to support children's learning. Children are eager and engaged when given opportunities to learn through play. As planned, staff should develop and share their understanding and approach to play, taking account of national practice guidance. This will support progressive learning experiences across levels and allow young children opportunities to lead their learning and develop independence.
- Teachers use a range of formative and summative assessment approaches to evaluate children's progress in learning. They use information from assessment well to inform future planning. At key milestones, teachers evidence children's progress in literacy and numeracy using a wide range of data. They gather samples of children's work to help inform their decisions and demonstrate progress. Although, at times, pandemic mitigations limited joint activities, senior leaders and teachers have processes in place for moderation at school and authority level. All teachers are now involved in moderation groups with colleagues covering a range of curricular areas. They increasingly share their developing knowledge and practice. This is supporting teachers' confidence and accuracy in making professional judgements on children's achievement and progress.
- Almost all children feel staff help them to understand how they are progressing in their learning. Across the school, teachers share effectively the purpose of learning, and in almost all lessons, they discuss what children need to do to be successful. Children receive helpful written and verbal feedback from teachers about their learning. The quality of teachers' written comments varies across the school. Teachers should now support all children to use feedback to set their own individual targets. This will help children take ownership of what they need to do to improve and have a greater awareness of their own progress.
- Teachers make good use of learning pathways to support their planning across curricular areas. They plan together in stages, over different timescales and using Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) design principles. This has helped to secure a greater consistency of quality learning and teaching. Teachers should continue to plan together to ensure children's prior learning and skills are being built upon effectively as they move through the school. Positively, children are becoming more involved in planning curricular learning through a recently created pupil leadership group.
- Senior leaders have established useful approaches to track children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. They have helpful, regular meetings with teachers to review children's learning. Staff use a range of data well to identify any gaps in children's learning and identify any interventions required for individuals. Senior leaders rigorously monitor and analyse children's progress across the school and share this data with staff. The headteacher uses this information effectively when selecting areas of whole school focus, such as raising attainment in writing. As a result, teachers have a clear understanding of the strengths and next steps in literacy and numeracy learning for children across the school.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- The headteacher and school community are reviewing the curriculum to reflect more fully the uniqueness of Cathkin Primary School. Staff, children and parents are working collaboratively to explore how the curriculum could better meet children's interests and particular learning needs. This is already having a positive impact on school life. Children talk enthusiastically about mathematics and art as the subjects they enjoy most. They are excited to plan how they can further develop the curriculum in their school.
- Staff have agreed and developed clear and shared learning pathways which support progression for children's learning, based on a rolling programme. Teachers are supported to provide all children with a well-balanced, broad general education using the school's newly developed approaches to planning across the curriculum. They make increasing use of National Benchmarks when planning for assessment.
- At all stages, children benefit from learning outdoors within the school grounds and the local area, for example Fernbrae Meadows. The environment is used increasingly well to enrich learning experiences across the curriculum. As a result, children are developing confidence and transferable skills, such as teamwork. Children talk positively about being outdoors and feel that it helps them to learn. As planned, senior leaders and staff should embed progressive planning for outdoor learning across all stages. This should include continuing to develop the school grounds to support high-quality learning experiences.
- All children receive their full entitlement to two hours high-quality physical education each week. Teachers make good use of indoor and outdoor spaces to deliver a progressive programme of physical education. School staff work well with partners to identify opportunities to increase engagement and promote achievement through physical activities and sport.
- Teachers plan and provide a skills-based progressive programme for French. Children engage well during lessons and enjoy using the language within their day-to-day school life, such as ordering their lunch. In a few classes, teachers regularly use French when giving whole class instructions. Across the school, children also learn Makaton. During weekly assemblies, children from the supported classes, with the depute headteacher, introduce the school community to a new sign. Children are growing in confidence and enjoy using these to support communication.
- Staff plan and manage arrangements at key points of transition well. At P1, there is a well-established programme in place that is supportive and helpful for families. It includes school visits, family sessions and fun events for all new children. For older children, teachers work well with colleagues from Cathkin High School and there is a planned, regular programme of activities across the year which supports children's move to secondary school effectively. Working closely with parents and partners, staff ensure children with additional support needs receive enhanced experiences. As a result, children and families feel well prepared for changes.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Parents appreciate the very caring and supportive approach of senior leaders and all staff. They feel comfortable approaching senior leaders with questions or suggestions. Families benefit from the range of strategies used to maintain communication, such as the school app and newsletters. A few parents feel communication about their children's learning could be improved.
- Parents welcome opportunities to engage with the school, such as, celebration assemblies and family learning sessions. They find 'Cathkin Chat' meetings with senior leaders useful. Senior leaders provide a variety of ways for parents to share their views including on the curriculum, for example the recently formed relationships, sexual health and parenthood education working group. Senior leaders carefully plan arrangements to provide all parents with a way to participate that suits them best. As a result, parents feel valued and that their views are considered by staff.
- Almost all parents feel encouraged to be involved with the Parent Council and that they are informed regularly of their work. The Parent Council leads a range of fundraising activities, and all children benefit from funded experiences, such as trips and events. Parents also recently purchased a wide range of books which were used to create cosy reading environments in each class.

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

- Staff at Cathkin Primary School demonstrate daily that nurturing approaches are central to supporting the wellbeing and development of children. They apply skills and knowledge from their professional learning on attachment, nurture and positive relationships. All adults work well together to provide a safe, caring and inclusive environment and to provide the right support for each individual. As a result, almost all children feel well supported, safe and included in school. Staff are developing a whole school positive relationships policy to help staff, children and parents to understand shared expectations. They should continue to review and adapt this to ensure it reflects fully the inclusive and nurturing practice they have established.
- Most children are developing an increasing understanding of the wellbeing indicators. They know what it means to be safe, healthy, active and included and can give examples of healthy lifestyles, such as the importance of exercise. Children value their experiences of outdoor learning, physical activities and play. They benefit from a wide range of lunchtime and afterschool clubs, including tennis, sports and cooking. Children are increasingly trying out new sports and activities as a result of encouragement from staff and partners. This is improving their physical wellbeing and helping grow their confidence. Staff record and track children's attendance at activities to help address any barriers to participation. Teachers should now help children identify and discuss the transferable skills they are developing through these experiences.
- Senior leaders and teachers track children's wellbeing effectively. They use useful measures such as daily check-ins and the 'Cathkin wellbeing and motivation profile'. Senior leaders analyse this information to identify children who would benefit from targeted support. As a result of well-planned nurture intervention, staff can demonstrate children have improved their ability to recognise changes in their emotions and wellbeing. Teachers and support staff work effectively with partners and third sector organisations to support children's wellbeing. For example, a specialist support team provide bespoke programmes for individuals which are helping increase children's resilience at times of difficulty. Staff evaluate and review the impact of any interventions regularly and adapt their support responsively. Children and families benefit from these approaches to support wellbeing. Children reflect on how the support they receive enables them to be more ready to learn and develop their social skills.
- Staff and children are beginning to become more aware of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. They are exploring their understanding of children's rights through school assemblies and creating classroom charters. Children are starting to discuss how these apply to their lives and the lives of others.

- Staff and children work together well to maintain a calm and inclusive school environment. Makaton signs, symbols and visuals are used throughout the building which further support communication. 'Nurture nooks' and relaxation spaces help children to feel cared for and valued. All children can access quiet time or receive support from an adult if they are worried, distressed or anxious. Teachers are working with a pupil leadership group to lead and provide a focused 'nurture week'. This aims to help parents and the local community to find out more about the school's nurturing ethos. As a result of the school's approaches, children demonstrate growing confidence, readiness to learn and feel secure.
- Staff have implemented a balanced health and wellbeing programme which supports skills progression across all stages. They make links in learning across curricular areas and outdoor learning experiences such as art, orienteering, and problem solving. This is engaging children's interest and supporting them to transfer and extend their health and wellbeing skills across curriculum areas. For example, they are applying their skills of planning, judgement and resilience in new situations.
- Senior leaders have a well-established, robust system in place for managing staged intervention. They regularly engage in professional learning which supports their understanding of legislative requirements. As a result, all staff are knowledgeable of their responsibilities, including child protection and safeguarding. This is helping to ensure all children with additional support needs or barriers to their learning receive the most suitable support or intervention.
- Teachers, children, parents and partners agree short term learning or wellbeing targets where required, and these are reviewed regularly. Staff seek children's and families' views and use these to help plan next steps. School support assistants have a very good understanding of children's needs and work well in partnership with teachers. As a result, children are supported well, individually and in small groups. Specific interventions staff use to support children's literacy and numeracy needs are also evaluated regularly by senior leaders. Using a range of evidence, staff can demonstrate that almost all children with additional needs are making good progress towards their individual targets.
- Senior leaders have well-considered plans in place to support raising levels of children's attendance. Currently, attendance levels are below the local authority and national averages. For a few pupils, this is impacting on their progress in learning and attainment. The headteacher has clear procedures and systems in place to monitor and track attendance. She works closely with partners to support families. For a few children this is beginning to remove barriers to attending school and is reducing instances of late coming. The headteacher and staff have worked well to significantly reduce the number of occasions where exclusion is used. They work closely with agencies and partners to support children and families experiencing difficulties. Staff should continue to develop further their approaches to promoting positive relationships to support a small group of learners and reduce further exclusion rates.
- School staff use national anti-bullying campaigns, assemblies and class lessons to raise awareness and share messages about kindness and respect. The whole school community participate in anti-bullying week events annually. A few children feel the school could support them better when responding to their experiences. Staff, children, parents and partners should now work together to agree a community approach and create an anti-bullying policy which reflects Cathkin Primary School.
- The local authority submitted self-evaluation 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. The HNI also examined documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole-school health promotion duties as far as they relate to food and

nutrition. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.

- School staff provide religious observance in line with national guidance. The school has well-established links with different faith groups and staff use assemblies to mark and celebrate occasions and festivals as a school community.
- Children experience a range of learning activities which help them to understand and appreciate diversity through assemblies and class lessons. Cathkin Primary's strong, inclusive approach supports all children to thrive in their school community. Senior leaders and teachers include children from the supported classes fully in the wider life of the school. Children attend mainstream classes for aspects of their learning and hold roles in the pupil council and other child-led groups. They build friendships and socialise with peers in the wider school, during play and lunch experiences. Children from across all aspects of the school's provision participate in assemblies and events. As a result, the supported classes are an integral part of the school community.

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 data provided by the school indicates that, across the P1, P4 and P7 stages, children attained higher levels of attainment than comparator schools in literacy and numeracy for session 2021/22.
- Children's attainment in literacy and numeracy decreased post pandemic. However, there are now positive signs of improvement, particularly in reading. At key milestones, most children are achieving nationally expected CfE levels in listening and talking, reading and numeracy. Overall, the majority of children are achieving nationally expected CfE levels in writing. Last session, there was a decrease in the number of children achieving writing at early level. Senior leaders and staff are now focused on raising attainment in writing across the school.

Listening and talking

- Overall, most children make good progress in listening and talking. At early and first levels, most children listen well to instructions. They share their views confidently when working with adults and in small groups. Most children working towards second level are confident speaking to peers and adults across a range of situations. Most children listen well to differing opinions and understand how to influence others' views by using appropriate emphasis, pace and tone. Children should continue to build and use an increasing range of vocabulary when listening and talking. Across the school, a few children require further support to apply their listening and talking skills effectively.

Reading

- Overall, most children's progress in reading is good. Whole school approaches are used effectively to ensure children engage regularly with reading.
- At early level, most children are developing their knowledge of initial sounds and blending these to read simple words. They enjoy listening to stories. Most children read an increasing number of familiar words with confidence. A few children are making very good progress with their reading. At first level, most children are building a range of strategies to support their understanding of text. Most children read familiar texts fluently and with growing expression. At second level, children are increasing their knowledge and understanding of a range of texts. Most children can discuss favourite authors and talk confidently about current class novels. They answer literal questions with confidence. They require further practice responding to inferential and evaluative questions.

Writing

- Overall, children's progress in writing is improving. Most children working towards early level are developing independent writing skills, such as writing orders in the café during play. They will benefit from regular practice of different ways of recording their experiences, ideas and information. At first level, most children can write appropriately across genres, for example information leaflets. Most children make good use of planning tools to support their story writing. They require further practice in using an increased range of vocabulary to engage the reader. Most children working towards second level write well for a range of audiences. They are beginning to use increasingly complex sentences and develop interesting characters and settings using imagery. A few children require support to structure and organise their ideas more clearly. Most children will benefit from further practice identifying and discussing writers' styles and other features, such as word repetition and rhetorical questions.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, children's progress in numeracy and mathematics is good with the majority of children achieving expected CfE levels. Attainment in numeracy and mathematics is improving, returning to pre-pandemic levels. Across the school, children will benefit from continued regular opportunities to revisit concepts regularly to deepen their learning and continue to improve recall.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, most children count confidently to 20 and a few children can count accurately to 100. Children add within eight confidently and make good use of concrete materials and visual prompts to support their calculations. They would benefit from further practice counting backwards and should continue to be supported to develop their addition and subtraction within 10. At first level, most children have a very good understanding of place value. They increasingly select and communicate their processes and solutions clearly. Most children need further practice demonstrating, linking and applying their multiplication and division skills. Most children working towards second level demonstrate an increasing knowledge of key number facts and convert between common units of measurement using decimal notation accurately. They require further support to understand and apply links between percentages and fractions.

Shape, position and movement

- At early and first levels, most children identify and name an increasing range of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and objects. At early level, children are beginning to explore the language of position and direction. At first level, most children use the correct mathematical language to describe the properties of shapes. They will benefit from revisiting learning on angles and compass points. At second level, most children accurately identify and illustrate line symmetry on a range of two-dimensional shapes. They require further practice demonstrating, linking and applying their knowledge and skills of angles and shape.

Information handling

- At early level, most children use their knowledge of colour, shape and size well to match and sort items. They use their early counting skills to answer questions about information they have gathered or from a simple display. At first and second levels, most children can extract key information and answer questions from an increasing range of charts, bar graphs and tables. Across the school, all children would benefit from further practice collecting, organising and displaying meaningful, real-life data in a variety of ways, including using digital technology.

Attainment over time

- Senior leaders have established robust measures to track children's progress and attainment over time in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Children's attainment levels in writing dipped on the return to school after periods of remote learning. Senior leaders identified this gap quickly and implemented a new whole school approach to teach writing. This is beginning to build and sustain children's progress and increases in the number of children attaining expected levels are evident at each key milestone. School data shows most children requiring additional support are making good progress from their individual prior levels of learning and a few children are achieving nationally expected levels. Senior leaders and teachers should continue to closely monitor and track attainment of individuals, cohorts and groups of children to inform and evaluate planned school improvement.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Staff nominate children for star and gold awards to celebrate successful learning and positive attributes. Regular assemblies and awards ceremonies ensure children feel valued for their achievements. Cathkin's house system is developing children's sense of collective achievement and they enjoy working together towards a goal. Most children are involved in leadership roles or committees which help them to develop communication and decision-making skills. For example, junior road safety officers organised a competition and led an assembly to raise awareness about dressing brightly in winter. Across the school, all children regularly take part in a wide range of sports activities, outdoor learning, reading campaigns and special events such as 'marvellous maths day'. These experiences are supporting children to become successful learners and confident individuals. Senior leaders and staff should now support children to identify the attributes and skills they develop through participation in these activities. This will support children as they begin to set and evaluate their own learning targets.

Equity for all learners

- Senior leaders effectively track the progress and attainment of groups of children with potential barriers to their learning. Staff identify poverty-related attainment gaps using a range of appropriate data. They use this information well when planning targeted support for individuals. Across the school, staff have been successful in narrowing and closing gaps in learning. They can evidence the positive impact interventions have on children's progress in reading, numeracy and wellbeing. An increased number of children are on track with national expectations at their age and stage. Universal approaches are used well and are improving progress and attainment in writing. Senior leaders continue to plan for and address remaining gaps.
- The school community's work on ensuring equity and reducing the cost of the school day is a strength. Senior leaders have well-considered arrangements in place to ensure that financial constraints do not prevent any children from taking part in opportunities for learning and achievement. Staff ensure warm, outdoor clothing, stationery and fruit are available free of charge. They organise and facilitate breakfast and homework clubs, as well as wider achievement clubs at no cost to families. Staff regularly signpost agencies, grants and financial aid to help families. The school community supports pre-loved uniform swaps and food parcels. As a result, children and families feel included and supported.

Context

The six supported (ASN) classes at Cathkin Primary School are a local authority-wide provision for children with additional support needs. The classes support 46 children across P1 to P7. Over half of children within the provision have a diagnosis of autism, although this is not required for placement. The classes aim to develop children's language and communication skills and support them to achieve their learning potential through nurturing approaches and personalised support. Where appropriate, children are supported to attend classes with mainstream peers and most engage with peers at break times, assemblies and school events.

Leadership of change

- Senior leaders and staff in ASN classes share the school's vision and aims. Staff encourage and support children's awareness of how to be ready, respectful and responsible learners. They are making notable progress in developing consistent and inclusive approaches to communication across the school environment through signing, pictures, cues and objects of reference. The acting deputy headteacher shares the children's Makaton sign of the week with mainstream peers at weekly assemblies. Staff encourage children, where possible, to take on leadership roles as members of the pupil council. Teachers regularly seek the views of children about learning activities and demonstrate and commend children who show respectful attitudes to staff and each other. In planning for improvement, senior leaders regularly ask parents and partners for their views. As a result, parents feel included in supporting their children's learning. Partners who work with supported classes commended senior leaders and teachers for seeking proactively and acting on their advice.
- Teachers engage in professional dialogue and learning opportunities to ensure that good practice is shared. Effective teaching approaches are now used consistently across supported classes to improve outcomes for learners. In recent years, the authority and senior leaders have taken significant steps to improve the environment for learning in supported classes. Secure entrances to classroom areas ensure the safety of children. Improvements include access to outdoor areas, a sensory room and a small number of low stimulus areas. These are supporting children to learn outdoors, manage their anxieties and carry out individual tasks and activities. Space and breakout areas in classrooms remain limited for larger class groups. As a result, a few children with more complex needs experience significant difficulty in engaging with learning and self-regulating. Senior leaders should continue to keep under review children's individual needs across the supported classes to ensure that staff can provide the right level of support for all children.
- Senior leaders work closely with teachers in class to provide helpful support for children. They offer valuable advice to staff and track children's progress. They have developed and implemented progressive and coherent programmes for literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. These include children who are not yet working at the early level. While teachers welcome and appreciate the quality of informal advice and support from senior leaders, lesson observations are not yet recorded systematically. Senior leaders recognise that an overview of recorded observations would help to inform next steps for improvement in learning and teaching.

Learning, teaching and assessment

- All staff are sensitive to children's needs and ensure a friendly and welcoming ethos for learning through nurturing approaches. Teachers regularly seek children's views and feelings about learning and match learning activities to their needs and interests. In almost all supported classes, children have regular opportunities to choose activities and take responsibility for leading aspects of learning where appropriate. Children respond well to regular opportunities to be independent and are encouraged to show confidence and pride in their achievements. They respond particularly well in learning activities where the purpose of learning is clear, and teachers check regularly for their understanding of tasks.
- In almost all lessons, teachers make effective use of a wide range of visual cues and prompts to support communication and children's understanding of their learning. These include picture prompts, concrete objects of reference, signing, symbols and digital images. In all classes, staff encourage children to interact positively with staff and peers where they can. Teachers are making increasing use of outdoor learning environments. This includes participating in a local rewilding programme to support children's health and wellbeing and understanding of the environment. Post COVID-19, teachers are re-establishing links with the local community to support literacy and numeracy activities through visits to shops and cafes.
- Senior leaders and teachers have developed and implemented a systematic approach to assessing children's progress in learning. The approach takes account of their additional support needs. This provides accurate information about children's progress and working levels towards and within CfE. It also provides a strong base for planning the next steps to support children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Senior leaders and staff should now develop approaches to tracking children's progress across other areas of the curriculum. Staff use a range of assessments to inform next steps or confirm judgements about children's progress. They are planning to further develop approaches to assessing the progress of learners with more complex needs.

Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

- Ensuring the wellbeing, safety and inclusion of children in the life and work of the school is a key strength of support classes. Teachers and support assistants place a strong emphasis on promoting respectful attitudes and recognising the potential and worth of each child. As a result, most children are confident and feel valued and able to communicate with adults and engage in learning activities with peers. Careful and sensitive management of movement between learning activities, breaktimes and to the next stage of their education, ensures that children settle quickly and engage positively with learning.
- Children's additional support plans (ASPs) take appropriate account of the wellbeing indicators. Staff use these to inform practice and identify individual support needs, risks and rights. Learning targets are reviewed regularly in agreement with parents/carers and partner agencies. Children are involved, where appropriate, in identifying their targets. Across the school, most are making good progress towards achieving targets. Children's ASP targets are displayed for reference in some classes. Staff could further develop more visual, child-friendly ASPs to support children's understanding of their own targets and progress. Senior leaders track the progress and provide effective additional support for children and families who face additional challenges. This has ensured that children continue to make good progress in their literacy, numeracy and social skills.

Raising attainment and achievement

- Most children are making appropriate progress from their prior levels of learning in literacy. A few are making good progress in literacy and numeracy.
- Taking account of children's additional support needs, their progress in literacy and numeracy shows a clear pattern of progress as they move through the school. In P1 to P3, most children are working towards early level in literacy and numeracy, and a few are working within the early level of CfE. At P4 and P5, the majority of children have achieved early level in numeracy and around half are working within aspects of the first level in literacy. At P6 and P7, over half are working at the first level in literacy and just under half in numeracy. A few children can talk about skills they are learning and know what they need to do to improve.
- Staff recognise children's achievements within and out with the school in newsletters and through golden and star writer awards. Two senior classes are developing skills for life and work by running the school's E-cafe for children and parents. Children order, purchase and serve food and drinks supported by a local business. E-cafe runs throughout the year and parents and children welcome and enjoy the experience. There is potential for children to have more of their achievements in the community and outdoors recognised through accreditation. Within supported classes, children's achievements are shared through learning journals. Parents value opportunities to support and share their children's learning journeys at home.

Other information

- Parents think that staff are approachable, responsive and flexible in their approach to meeting their children's needs. Teachers and partners help parents to develop their own skills to support their children's learning through home packs. Staff tailor packs to include children's stories and activities which take account of children's interests and support their sensory needs and communication skills. Parents feel that their children are very well supported to move to the school and that staff value regular communication with them.
- Teachers have reviewed and developed the curriculum to provide flexible learning pathways which are meeting the needs of learners with complex needs. Planning ensures that children make progress across key, identified life skills in all curriculum areas. Learners are well supported to build on prior learning and develop key literacy and numeracy skills which link to pathways at early and first levels.

Practice worth sharing more widely

Tracking children's progress in the supported classes

Staff in the supported classes have successfully implemented a systematic approach to tracking children's progress at pre-early and early levels of CfE. This approach ensures accurate information about children's progress and working levels which takes account of their individual needs. It provides a particularly strong base for planning the next steps to support children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

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.