

Summarised inspection findings

Glenbarr Primary School

Argyll and Bute Council

8 November 2022

Key contextual information

Glenbarr Primary is a small, rural school located to the north of Campbeltown on the Kintyre peninsula. At the time of the inspection there were four children on the school roll. Children are taught in a mixed-aged, multi-composite class. The headteacher is also the head of Dalintober Primary School in Campbeltown. She is very well supported by the newly appointed depute headteacher at Dalintober, who also has an important leadership role at Glenbarr Primary. There have been a number of additional recent changes within the small staff team. At the time of the inspection, the class teacher and acting clerical assistant had been in post for around three weeks. The school community has experienced significant challenges as a result of COVID-19, including bereavement and periods of absence for children and staff, particularly from September 2021 to April 2022.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very 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

- Children's wellbeing is central to the work of Glenbarr Primary. All staff ensure that the school is a nurturing and caring place, where all children can achieve their potential. Relationships between children and staff are very positive. Children thrive in the safe and engaging learning environment. They enjoy learning together in the close, family atmosphere and are very supportive of one another.
- The headteacher started the shared headship role at Glenbarr Primary in January 2020. Together, with her depute headteachers, they have led the school community in a worthwhile process to revisit and review the school's vision, values and aims. This involved staff, children, parents and community partners. The school community has reflected on the uniqueness of the school, its rural context, its strengths and hopes for the future. Children have created colourful characters to bring the school values to life. This has ensured that vision and values of the school are meaningful, relevant and very well understood by adults and children alike.
- School leaders and staff worked very hard to support children to continue to learn when they were required to stay at home due to COVID-19. Children and families responded very well to the creative tasks and home learning activities that teachers produced. Children have clearly benefitted from this continuity in their learning. As a result, all children have continued to make very good progress across their learning and to achieve very well.
- Teachers provide the right balance of additional support and extra challenge for children, as and when required. Throughout the day, children have an appropriate balance of well-planned opportunities to work individually and as a group. Teachers select contexts and themes that they know will motivate and interest children. This helps to ensure learning is accessible and

meaningful for all. Almost all children understand the relevance and purpose of their learning and can link this to their prior learning.

- Children are energetic, enthusiastic and lively learners. They are keen to share their learning, their stories and ideas with adults. They have individual targets that provide them with clear direction on how they can improve their own work. They enjoy helping to maintain personal learning journey folders that contain examples of their best work and demonstrate the breadth of their learning. Staff are planning to make better use of digital technology to review how children record their own achievements and to share this electronically with parents.
- Outdoor learning is an important feature of learning and teaching at Glenbarr Primary. Staff make particularly good use of the school grounds, local farming community and nearby woodland and beach to provide children with exciting contexts to learn. Children are very knowledgeable about their local environment and they enjoy learning about sustainability. A range of partners who visit the school add much value to the learning experiences of children. These very well planned and relevant outdoor activities result in all children being motivated and engaged in their learning and local community.
- There is clear evidence that the quality of teaching across the school is very good. Teachers plan lessons and activities very well. They use highly effective approaches to differentiate learning and teaching to meet the varying needs of all children. Children are involved fully in planning their learning and in deciding how they want to go about it. They have regular opportunities to peer and self-assess their work. Children benefit from individualised feedback from teachers which helps them to improve and identify their next steps.
- Children make very good use of technology to support their learning. For example, they use tablets confidently to take photographs and to produce videos to capture their learning. They use computers independently to type their stories. Children applied their digital and creative skills particularly well in a recent expressive arts project, where they worked alongside professionals to make their own animated films. The project culminated with the children's films being shown at Campbeltown Picture House. Children are rightly very proud of their achievements and their school.
- The outward-looking and solution-focused school leaders and staff make the most of opportunities to share good practice and expertise across Dalintober and Glenbarr schools. Staff benefit from engaging in highly relevant professional learning that focuses on developing aspects of learning, teaching and assessment, such as moderation of writing. Through joint events with other schools, children benefit by learning alongside new friends from a wider peer group. Parents feel that this supports children very well for moving on to secondary school.
- Teachers are skilled in using their professional judgement to assess children's progress. They are clear about the national perspective of standards and expectations for assessment and achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence level. The headteacher and depute headteacher have developed a strategic and proportionate approach to tracking and monitoring children's attainment. This provides school leaders and staff with an accurate overview of how well all children are progressing as they move through the school. This also allows teachers to pinpoint accurately where children require additional challenge or support, in order for all children to make the best possible progress in across their learning.

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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

very 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

- At the time of the inspection, the school roll comprised children at P4 and P5, with no children at the P1, P2, P3, P6 or P7 stages. Due to this, attainment and progress will be expressed in 'overall' statements, rather than for specific year groups or Curriculum for Excellence levels.

Overall attainment in literacy and numeracy

- The robust data presented by the school demonstrates that in June 2022, all children made very good progress from their prior levels of attainment. A few children achieved appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy, relative to their age and stage. A few children exceeded national expectations in literacy and numeracy. For children with additional barriers to learning, the school's wealth of evidence demonstrates that they are attaining appropriately for their individual levels of need. Parents feel that their children are very well supported by staff at Glenbarr Primary. They very much appreciate the individual encouragement and attention that their children receive from staff. They feel strongly that the school's caring and nurturing approach has helped their children to make better progress. The school's partners feel that the dedication of staff to follow up on programmes set by allied health professionals very much contributes to individual children's very good progress.
- The range of inspection activities confirms the accuracy of the school's assessment data. Teachers use standardised assessments to check children's progress in literacy and numeracy. Staff use this data, in addition to a range of formative and summative assessment information, to inform their professional judgement. Staff are skilled in assessing children's achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence level. They engage in helpful moderation with other local schools, including Dalintober Primary and other small, rural schools.

Literacy and English

- **Reading:** Children enjoy reading and make personal choices about what they like to read. They benefit from a cosy library area and have access to a good range of reading materials. Staff actively encourage children to read across a range of genres. Children share their favourite authors and can explain their reasons why. Children are encouraged to link their reading and writing skills by researching their own personal topics and producing informative reports to share with their classmates.
- **Writing:** Children have regular opportunities to write across a range of genres. A few children demonstrate particular strength in using sophisticated vocabulary to improve their writing. They enjoy developing ideas together. This is often stimulated by stories, learning outdoors and real-life events. For example, all children achieved well to write a personal account of their learning in school now, compared to learning at home during COVID-19. Teachers create individualised writing targets to ensure that all children use appropriate punctuation, structure and increasingly complex vocabulary. They have used poetry particularly well to allow children

to express their feelings and emotions. The headteacher and staff have plans in place to review the resources and stimuli for writing, to ensure these continue to link meaningfully to the school's unique curriculum rationale.

- **Listening and talking:** Staff plan interesting and exciting themes and discussion points that motivate children to share their ideas and opinions. Throughout the inspection activities, all children engaged enthusiastically in discussion about their school, their interests, their achievements and their learning. At times, a few children require support to apply effective listening and talking skills, such as turn taking. In response, staff patiently support and encourage children to be active listeners and considerate of one another.

Numeracy and mathematics

- **Number, money and measure:** Teachers' focus on developing children's mental agility has been successful in raising attainment in numeracy. Children are provided with regular opportunities to apply their numeracy skills across their learning. Practical, real-life experiences, such as using ferry timetables, reinforces children's learning about time. Teachers plan design and technology tasks that enable children to apply their learning. For example, children have to measure accurately to make models of wind turbines. Children can confidently estimate different lengths using standard units. They demonstrate their knowledge about equivalent fractions very well using different concrete materials. Children see the relevance of their learning in numeracy and its link to skills for learning, life and work. They can talk about when and where they use numeracy and mathematics, for example helping out at home or on the local farm.

Attainment over time

- Overall, children are supported very well to make very good progress over time, in both literacy and numeracy, from their prior levels of attainment. Staff have appropriate plans to make the most of their close working relationships with other local schools to help children remain challenged in their learning as they move through the second level.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- There are a range of ways for children to develop the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence, including through the life and work of the school and through worthwhile local partnerships. For example, children demonstrated their knowledge about healthy eating and being active through drama, music and art activities during a joint schools project on the Isle of Gigha. They developed team-working skills at a rugby festival organised by Active Schools Co-ordinators. They demonstrated high levels of creativity and engagement during the recent animation project, where they also applied their skills of reflection and self-assessment to refine their finished film.
- Children's attendance is consistently high and above local authority and national figures for the last four years. Staff track children's attendance and participation in out of school activities and take action to ensure that no child misses out.

Equity for all learners

- The headteacher and staff have strong focus on social inclusion. They have a clear understanding of the socio-economic background of children and families. They strive to ensure that children in Glenbarr have equity of opportunity as learners from larger, urban schools. Staff make the most of all opportunities to involve children in a wide range of out of class activities and projects. As a result, children experiences are enriched and they each have opportunities to achieve success in a variety of ways.

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.