

# Summarised inspection findings

Lochside Primary School and Nursery Class

Angus Council

3 October 2023

## Key contextual information

Lochside Primary School is a non-denominational school serving the Montrose community within Angus Council. The headteacher has been in post since 2018 and is supported by a depute headteacher and principal teachers.

The current roll in the primary school is 386. The nursery currently provides early learning for 72 children. The school has four resource rooms where 30 children with additional support needs receive specialist support from staff. These children also access learning in the mainstream primary school. 14% of the total number of children who attend Lochside Primary School are recorded as having additional support needs.

32% of children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles 1 to 3. Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) allocation for Lochside Primary School is £72,000. This funds additional staffing.

Attendance figures are in line with the national average at 93.3%.

### 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

- Lochside Primary School has a positive, respectful, and inclusive ethos, which is underpinned by the recently reviewed school values. Senior leaders regularly seek the views of children and act upon them. Children are very friendly, confident and welcoming, and demonstrate consideration of the views of others. Senior leaders and staff work well together to create a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment. Children speak positively about the support they receive with their learning and from adults who help them. Children who face challenges and barriers to learning are very well supported through the strong, trusting relationships across the school and early identification of their needs.
- Most children engage well in their learning and want to do their best. Relevant contexts for learning are supporting children to be motivated in classes and participate in a range of well-planned and well-structured activities. Support and encouragement from class teachers helps children in a few classes to lead their own learning through for example ,cocreating success criteria and taking on leadership roles during lesson activity. This supports children to set their own targets and take greater ownership of their learning. More frequent opportunities for all children to lead their learning more consistently across the school would further support children's creativity and independence.
- All staff are very aware of children in their classes who face barriers and challenges to their learning and achievement. These children are well supported by staff. This is evident in their interactions with children and the sensitive ways in which they support children with their learning. Staff have focused on reducing anxiety and improving social interactions. One-to-one

support, the effective use of pupil support assistants and the use of nurture spaces are making a positive difference to children who face these challenges and in accessing learning effectively.

- In almost all lessons, teachers provide clear instructions and explanations. As a result, most children understand the expectations of them and engage well in their learning. Teachers offer children a variety of approaches to learn, with elements of personalisation and choice in the tasks they undertake. Children participate well in paired and individual work, supporting each other appropriately. Most teachers use questioning effectively to consolidate learning and build curiosity in children as learners. In a few lessons, learning can at times be overly teacher-led with an overemphasis on whole class activity.
- All staff participate in effective professional learning to further improve and extend their approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. The professional learning focus on improving approaches to reading, and to developing mathematics and numeracy programmes are having a positive impact on learning across the school. Training on ways to further support the learning of all children, including those who are neurodiverse is supporting teachers to better meet their needs in classes. Opportunities for staff to share ideas together and develop creative approaches to learning and teaching support staff to further develop and enhance their practice. Senior leaders should now consider ways in which they can share the good practice which currently exists in classrooms across Lochside more widely to further improve approaches to learning, teaching and assessment.
- Teachers have developed a clear framework for the delivery of digital learning which provides clear guidance on using technology to enhance children's experiences. A significant investment in tablet devices means that children have regular access to digital technology to enhance their learning. This includes, for example, using websites for research and creating and presenting their work using a variety of applications.
- Most teachers provide effective feedback to children through regular learning conversations. They enhance learning through useful opportunities for children to participate in self and peer-assessment activities. They provide comments on children's work digitally, as well as orally and in written form. Most children agree that the feedback they receive helps to improve their learning. As a result, children are able to confidently discuss their learning and next steps. Senior leaders and teachers should continue to develop this quality feedback for children.
- Teachers are developing play-based pedagogy successfully at early level. Children working at early level enjoy choosing activities from a range of appropriate high-quality resources. Responsive planning is enabling children to learn in ways which motivate and engage them. Investment in professional learning and a focus on national guidance will further support staff to develop their practice in this area and help to ensure that play-based learning becomes a stronger feature of classroom activity. This will better support children's curiosity, problem solving and creativity in learning.
- Senior leaders and teachers have developed effective systems which allow them to assess children's progress, participation and engagement in wider achievement activities. As a result, children are developing a wide range of skills, including teamwork, communication and resilience. As a positive next step, senior leaders are planning how best to capture and track the skills that children are developing through their work in class and through their wider achievements.
- All teachers participate in moderation activity across the school within Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. They regularly share children's assessments and achievements with

each other in order to make robust and reliable professional judgements about achievement of a level. Planned moderation activity with colleagues from other schools will further support and strengthen teachers understanding of the quality of learning, teaching and assessment against national standards and expectations.

- All teachers use appropriate approaches to assess the progress children make, including the use of formative and diagnostic assessment. Regularly assessing children's progress enables all teachers to identify gaps in learning and implement appropriate strategies to support them to make good progress and achieve well. Providing children with opportunities to apply skills in new and unfamiliar situations will further improve assessment activities and enhance children's experiences. The use of National Benchmarks to regularly track the progress of children and to plan a variety of appropriate assessments will further support staff to continue to make confident professional judgements about how well children are progressing .
- Senior leaders and teachers track children's progress and attainment in literacy and numeracy well using increasingly reliable assessment evidence. They track children's progress well at key milestones and at every stage. There are robust processes in place to track the progress of children who require further support to be successful in their learning. This links clearly to whole-school monitoring and tracking. This ensures that the needs of children who may be at risk of not achieving are being reviewed continuously and appropriate interventions used and monitored regularly. A strength of the school's work is in supporting all children with significant barriers to their learning to participate well and be successful in 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. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

### 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

- Overall, children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is good. Most children are achieving appropriate CfE levels across literacy and numeracy. A few children are working beyond expected levels of attainment.

#### Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, most children are making good progress in reading, listening and talking. Most children at early and second level are making good progress in writing. Progress at first level is less strong with most children making satisfactory progress.

#### Listening and talking

- At early level, most children listen to their teachers well, can take turns during class discussions and can follow directions well. At first level, children ask and answer questions articulately. They listen appropriately for information and can build on the opinions and views of others during group work. At second level, most children express their views effectively and listen respectfully to the opinions of others. They discuss confidently the skills required to perform in front of an audience.

#### Reading

- Across the school, children can articulate well the reading skills they are developing and express a preference for different authors. At early level, most children are building their knowledge of sounds, letter patterns and common words and recognise these in simple texts. They enjoy listening to stories. At first level, most children read familiar texts with fluency and expression. They can summarise the main ideas from a text and identify different features of the writer's use of language. At second level, most children can identify techniques used to influence the reader and share thoughts and main ideas about structure, characters and setting. At first and second level, a few children require further practice responding to inferential and evaluative questions.

#### Writing

- At early level, most children use capital letters and full stops accurately to punctuate sentences. They use single sounds and letter blends to spell familiar words correctly. A few children are capable of producing more complex writing and would benefit from more regular opportunities to write independently. At first level, the majority of children can write fact files and persuasive letters using the relevant features of these texts. At second level, most children write well for a range of audiences and are beginning to use increasingly complex sentences and develop interesting characters and settings. Across the school, staff should increase their expectations of children's writing, including spelling, punctuation and presentation. At all levels,

children should continue to develop their writing skills through a range of short and extended texts for different purposes.

### **Numeracy and mathematics**

- At early level, children are making very good progress in numeracy. As children progress through the school progress is less strong. Children at first and second level, need greater opportunities to consolidate their learning. They need more opportunities to apply their numeracy skills across a range of more challenging and relevant real-life contexts.

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

- At early level, most children measure well in learning and through play. They order and sequence numbers within 20 and add and subtract confidently to 10. They would benefit from greater practice in splitting whole objects into smaller parts, for example splitting into halves. At first level, a majority of children round numbers to the nearest 10 and 100 and identify accurately the place value to 1000. At second level, most children multiply and divide whole numbers by multiples of 10, 100 and 1000 successfully. Most children at first and second level need to make better use of their mental strategies by when solving problems.

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

- At early level, most children recognise common two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects well. Most children use positional and directional language well. They identify days of the week and some months accurately. At first level, the majority of children identify successfully a range of simple two-dimensional shapes and some three-dimensional objects. They are less confident identifying and describing their properties. At second level the majority of children identify an increasing range of angles, including acute, obtuse and reflex. Children at second level need to improve their knowledge of complementary and supplementary angles.

### **Information handling**

- At early level, most children use their knowledge of colour, shape and size to match and sort items correctly. At first level, the majority of children present data appropriately in bar graphs and tables and extract key information. At second level, the majority of children analyse, interpret and draw conclusions effectively from a variety of data. Across all levels, all children would benefit from further practice in collecting, organising and displaying data using digital technologies. Children across the school need to develop and extend their skills further in information handling within relevant contexts.

### **Attainment over time**

- Senior leaders and staff track attainment in literacy and numeracy over time. They identified gaps in children's attainment in reading in 2020/2021 at first and second level. Senior leaders and staff made appropriate changes to teaching approaches across the school to address this successfully. As a result, attainment in reading has improved. Senior leaders have identified correctly the teaching of writing as a priority for improvement. At second level, staff have introduced new approaches for teaching writing. There are early indications that this is having a positive impact on attainment.
- Senior leaders and staff analyse data well to illustrate accurately trends in progress and attainment over time for all children. They should continue to develop this rich information about children's progress to identify which children require support in specific areas of their learning. They should also continue to track the performance of specific groups of children, particularly those impacted by low attendance, to ensure that they are not at risk of missing out. This will support further understanding of children's progress over time and identify gaps

which need to be addressed. As planned, senior leaders should now develop approaches to gathering information on children's progress across all areas of the curriculum.

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

- Strong partnerships across the local authority and with national and local businesses help to provide relevant and enjoyable experiences for children to be successful. For example, a group of children have recently joined a local rugby team. Partnerships with Dundee and Angus College and 'Angus Alive' help to provide wider achievement experiences for all. This supports the development of important skills for children, including communication, teamwork and resilience. Recent experiences for children include working with groups to increase physical activity, learn new skills in the forest environment and work with Angus Cycle Hub.
- Senior leaders have developed a useful achievement tracker. Staff are using this data effectively to capture children's participation in achievements in and out of school. This allows senior leaders and teachers to identify individuals and targeted groups of children who would benefit from wider curricular experiences. As planned, senior leaders should continue to develop the tracker to include the range of skills that children are developing through wider achievement.
- Families are very involved in celebrating children's wider achievements. Families contribute routinely to a termly letter of update and children's successes. Children's successes and wider achievements are celebrated regularly at assemblies. Parents join their children in the school's 'VIP café' to celebrate successes.

### **Equity for all learners**

- Staff understand their responsibility to remove barriers to learning for children in Lochside. The school provides a well-used food bank on site and school uniform items to support families address the cost of living. PEF is used to provide learning and emotional support for targeted children through additional staffing. This is impacting positively, particularly in the children's progress in reading. In addition, 81% of children supported by PEF are involved regularly in wider achievement opportunities provided by the school to develop their skills and their wellbeing. These transferable skills are having a positive impact on children's readiness for and attitudes to learning, and to meeting their learning targets.
- There is no cost to families in relation to school trips, outings and events. Significant fundraising and donations from across the community support a free breakfast club for all children which is very well attended. Parents describe their appreciation of the wide range of supports they can access through Lochside Primary which support their children to achieve and attain.



## Quality of provision of Special Unit (contributes to school evaluations)

### Context

Lochside Primary School hosts an enhanced provision for primary aged children who have a wide range of additional support needs from across the Montrose cluster. Children follow individualised learning programmes based on their learner profile. At the time of the inspection, 30 children attended the enhanced provision across four multi-composite classes. Most children attend mainstream classes at varying times throughout the week.

### Learning, teaching and assessment.

- Across the enhanced provision classrooms, staff have developed a calm, caring and nurturing culture. All children enjoy positive relationships with staff who demonstrate high levels of care and sensitivity towards them. Staff provide children with regular opportunities to be independent and are consistent with routines. They understand the needs of the children very well. 'My Passport' contains useful information. It helps staff understand each child, their needs and interests, how they communicate, and identifies strategies they need from adults to help them. Staff observe children closely and respond appropriately with well-timed interventions to support them to re-engage in learning. If a child becomes anxious or distressed, staff use individual strategies well to support them to regulate their emotions and re-engage in learning. As a result, children feel safe, included, and confident in seeking support when required.
- In most classes, children are engaged actively in activities that suit their needs and work in a range of group and individual tasks and activities. In a few lessons, children find their learning activities too easy or too difficult, resulting in disengagement. Teachers need to ensure that all learning activities match children's needs appropriately and provide sufficient challenge to meet the learning needs of all children. Teachers should continue to develop their understanding of children's individual developmental needs, particularly those children who find engaging in tasks more difficult. This will help ensure that all learning activities are pitched at the right level. Staff should ensure that targets set within individual education plans (IEPs) demonstrate more clearly how staff plan to reduce barriers to learning. Targets should be specific and measurable to ensure children make the best possible progress in their learning.
- Teachers make good use of the local community to support and extend children's learning. This includes using outdoor spaces around the school. Children's participation alongside peers in mainstream classes adds to their social experiences and helps develop and extend their communication and learning. Teachers' explanations and instructions are clear. They use visual symbols and signs well to support children. Teachers should continue to develop total communication strategies, including visual symbols and bespoke communication approaches. This will support children's transition throughout the day better and help children participate as fully as possible in learning.
- In most classes, teachers provide children with a range of resources that offer play-based learning opportunities. Most children have regular access to play-based choosing and structured play activities. As a result, children are beginning to explore, discover, and problem solve in more playful ways. Children are also developing social, turn-taking and communication skills. Staff should continue to develop approaches to play, taking account of national guidance to further strengthen this work.
- Teachers provide feedback to children using verbal and physical responses and encourage a few children to check their own work and peer assess. Recent, relevant professional learning

opportunities are beginning to impact positively on teachers' confidence to meet the needs of all children. Senior leaders should continue to support staff to develop the range of skills required to meet the diverse learning needs of children through appropriate professional learning. Teachers should continue to develop approaches to planning and assessment. This includes using Education Scotland's milestones, which will help staff monitor children's progress more effectively over time.

## Raising attainment and achievement

- Taking account of individual learner profiles, most children are making good progress in literacy and numeracy from prior learning. A minority of children are making very good progress from their prior learning. A few children need to be challenged more appropriately with their learning in order to achieve more.
- Overall, a minority of children achieve very good attendance at school. However, the attendance of the majority of children needs to improve.
- Most children are developing their listening and talking skills well and are able to show progress from prior levels. Most children would benefit from staff having a more consistent approach to communication strategies to support better children's ability to develop their skills. This will ensure that all children are able to participate in conversations using their preferred methods of communication. As planned, senior leaders and partners should support staff to develop greater consistency of approaches. This should include the development of alternative and augmentative communication to meet the needs of all children better.
- Senior leaders and staff provided data and supporting evidence, including IEPs and reports. These illustrate that most children are making good progress with their learning, engagement and wellbeing over time. Senior leaders and staff now need to ensure the assessment and tracking of children's progress over time is more detailed. This will help capture more effectively the small step progress children are making. Increased moderation activity both in house and with other schools will support teachers improve their confidence in making professional judgements about how well children are attaining and making progress with their learning.
- Bespoke and extended transitions support children and families to settle well into the life of the school. A few children have made successful full-time transitions into their mainstream classes. Senior leaders should track any interventions for children more robustly and recognise when these have been effective in enabling children to return to their mainstream class.
- Across the enhanced classrooms, staff recognise and celebrate children's achievements effectively in class, in newsletters and through the use of digital platforms. Children's achievements are displayed prominently across the school. Children are very proud of their achievements.
- Senior leaders have a strong understanding of the complex additional support needs and socio-economic background of children and families. Staff provide targeted, equitable support to help alleviate any challenges faced by children and families. This is ensuring that no child misses opportunities for learning or in experiencing opportunities which enhance their 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.