Summarised inspection findings

Broomlands Primary School

Scottish Borders Council

16 May 2023

Key contextual information

Broomlands Primary School is a non-denominational school situated in the town of Kelso. At the time of inspection, the school roll was 241 children across ten classes. A few classes are composite classes. The school also has a nursery class which is open 50 weeks a year. Almost all children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data zones 5 to 9. Approximately 15% of children are registered for free school meals, which is below the national average. This academic session, there have been a significant number of staff changes across the school.

1.3 Leadership of change	good
This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are: ■ developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community ■ strategic planning for continuous improvement ■ implementing improvement and change	

■ Broomlands Primary School is a welcoming and inclusive school. Children, staff and parents have a very well-embedded understanding of the school's vision and shared values of courage, compassion and connection. The headteacher and staff discuss these regularly with children at assemblies and in class. This ensures the values have a high profile in school life and remain relevant. Children can talk confidently about how the values meaningfully relate to their own lives. Across the school, children and adults demonstrate these values in their interactions with each other throughout the day. This supports the school's nurturing and compassionate ethos.

■ The headteacher is very well respected by children, staff, parents and the school's partners. He provides effective leadership, underpinned by his aspirational vision and supportive approach. He is assisted very well by the depute headteacher and principal teacher. As a team, they have successfully developed and maintained a positive and collaborative culture, while leading the school through periods of change over recent years.

■ Senior leaders outline the school's approach to raising attainment and improving children's health and wellbeing within the school improvement plan. All staff are involved in evaluating the work of the school and selecting the most appropriate priorities for improvement. Senior leaders inform the Parent Council on the school's plans for improvement. A few children are becoming involved in evaluating the work of the school using 'How Good is OUR School?'. Senior leaders recognise they should give further consideration to the outcomes they want to secure for children when planning improvement. They should now set clear and measurable targets to help staff evaluate the impact of planned changes on children's attainment and progress. Senior leaders should also continue to increase parents, children and partners involvement in planning and evaluating school improvement.

■ Senior leaders have established well-planned quality assurance arrangements with regular evaluation activities. This includes sampling children's work, learning observations and focus group discussions with children. They collate and analyse the information gathered. This is discussed with staff and used to inform school improvement priorities. As a result, staff have a shared understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the school. Senior leaders

should continue to provide regular opportunities for teachers to discuss together and embed the school's bespoke learning and teaching toolkit. This will help to develop consistent high-quality, shared approaches across the school.

- Senior leaders and staff are fully invested in improving outcomes for all children and raising attainment. This session, they set ambitious targets for children's overall progress in literacy and numeracy and reducing gaps in learning. For example, recently staff introduced a new model to support their teaching of writing. Although early in implementation, this is beginning to help children to write a higher quality of text across a range of genres. Most children are also attempting to use an increasing range of vocabulary. As a result, children's progress in writing is beginning to improve.

- Senior leaders empower teachers to lead change in their classrooms and across the school. Most teachers take on leadership roles, for example leading digital technologies and play. They feel well-supported by senior leaders to take forward areas of school improvement. All staff are involved in professional learning and apply knowledge well to support children further in their learning. Positively, staff hold a regular professional reading group to reflect on teaching and learning. This supports them to reflect on their practice and deepen professional understanding. Most staff participate in peer visits twice a year to observe and share practice. Teachers use case studies well to identify and demonstrate the positive impact of planned changes in their classroom practice. Senior leaders link annual staff professional review effectively to the General Teaching Council for Scotland standards and the school's improvement plan. The reflective practice of staff is having a positive impact on children's experiences and is supporting ongoing improvement of teaching and learning across the school.

- Across the school, children are proud to take on aspects of responsibility, such as digital leaders, which support them to develop skills for learning, life and work. From P4 onwards, children can apply and contribute to a few pupil groups, for example, the 'positive press' team. They work with the Parent Council and other partners, for example, to organise new equipment for the playground. They talk eagerly about supporting the work of the school and feel staff listen to and value their suggestions for improvement. They can give a few examples of positive changes they have led, for example, working with catering staff on new school lunch options. Senior leaders and staff should explore and increase opportunities for more children to be involved in leadership across school life.

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

■ Children benefit from nurturing relationships with all staff across the school. This creates a positive and encouraging climate for learning. The school values of courage, compassion and connection are evident in daily interactions between children and adults in all classes. Almost all children are motivated in their learning and are eager to ask and answer questions in lessons. They recognise the value of making mistakes as an important step towards achieving success in learning.

■ Almost all children work together effectively when in pairs and groups and support each other well. They listen very well to instructions and take part in learning activities with enthusiasm. Children respond positively to stimulating classrooms and shared open areas which offer a variety of learning environments.

■ Almost all teachers are highly skilled in using digital technologies to support and enhance children's learning. This is a key strength of the school. Staff confidently integrate a range of innovative technologies into classroom routines and lessons which motivate and engage children very well. Children are very confident using a variety of digital tools independently, such as apps, tablets and programmable toys. Using technology, they revisit explanations and instructions, for example through short video recordings or online assignments. As planned, teachers are continuing to support children to apply their increasingly sophisticated technical skills. As part of this work, they should provide further opportunities for children to become confident in the creation, as well as use of, digital materials.

■ In almost all lessons, teachers share the purpose of learning well with children. This supports children to understand what they are learning and make links to prior knowledge. Most teachers use starter activities effectively to help children focus and provide clear instructions and explanations when setting tasks. Across the school, teachers are developing further effective use of plenaries to summarise learning, for example, using techniques such as exit passes or questioning. This is helping children to stay actively engaged throughout lessons. All teachers use questioning regularly and effectively to check children's understanding of their learning. They should continue to extend their use of questioning to provide further support for children to develop higher order thinking.

■ In most lessons, teachers provide tasks and activities which are well-matched to children's needs, interests and abilities. They provide differentiated activities in literacy and numeracy which offer support for those children who require it. Across first and second levels, a few children require further challenge in their learning. Children enjoy exercising choice and applying their skills across a range of different contexts when given opportunities to do so. This is particularly successful in classes using play approaches. Teachers should continue to explore further ways to help children to take ownership and lead their learning.

■ In the early stages of school, children enjoy effective learning activities in a nurturing environment based on the principles of national practice guidance, 'Realising the Ambition: Being Me' 2020. Teachers offer learning experiences that are motivating and meaningful. They encourage children to take the lead in aspects of their learning across a range of well-considered, stimulating environments, including outdoors. During play, children independently access a variety of resources and experiences appropriate for their age and stage of development. Staff across early level, including nursery, work very well together to ensure that approaches to play are consistent for children throughout their learning experiences. This is supporting children's engagement, curiosity, independence and confidence.

■ Teachers use assessment regularly throughout lessons to check children's understanding and progress. In most lessons, teachers share the steps children should follow to achieve success in their learning. Children use this information well to reflect on how they have been successful in the lesson. All teachers provide encouraging written and oral feedback on children's individual pieces of work. In a few classes, teachers make very effective use of constructive self and peer assessment to support children to reflect on their learning and identify improvements. Across the school, teachers should now support children to set personalised learning targets. This will help children take further responsibility for their own progress.

■ Teachers plan and make effective use of regular assessments within children's reading, writing and numeracy learning. This includes standardised assessments and at key milestones, Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA). They use information gathered from assessments well to identify children who require additional support and challenge with their learning. Senior leaders and staff are re-establishing shared approaches to regular moderation. Teachers discuss learning experiences and assessment across stages and engage in professional dialogue about the progress children are making. This is supporting their professional judgement of children's achievement of a level.

■ Teachers plan together effectively with stage partners which supports progression in learning for children. Senior leaders and teachers develop helpful curricular frameworks which support planning well. This also ensures processes and paperwork are kept manageable. During interdisciplinary learning, children work with their teachers to plan and shape learning. Staff should continue to develop their medium term planning to show more clearly how they are using assessment information to inform children's next steps in learning.

■ Senior leaders and staff hold helpful meetings three times a year to review children's progress and to discuss plans for raising attainment. Teachers bring a wide range of evidence of children's progress to inform these discussions. They identify children who have gaps in their learning and plan support. Working closely together, senior leaders and teachers should to evaluate more rigorously the impact of classroom strategies in raising children's attainment.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

■ Teachers make good use of a number of different resources, programmes and approaches to support the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum. Senior leaders and staff have developed progressive planning across all areas of the curriculum. They recognise the need to review the school's numeracy and mathematics pathway to ensure regular opportunities to revisit concepts and consolidate learning.

■ Across the school children are learning French. Recently, a few classes planned and organised a successful French café and invited parents to attend. This offered children opportunities to apply their language skills and learning in different contexts. Across the school, a few teachers regularly offer instructions in French throughout the day to build children's confidence in using and interpreting the language. French signage and vocabulary are displayed around the building and these are understood well by children. Older children are exploring German as a second modern language. Staff should continue to develop German as a planned part of the curriculum from P5 and learning about the culture should be integrated into children's language learning.

■ Children are engaged and motivated during opportunities to learn outdoors. Children enjoy time spent in the sensory garden, local woodlands and well-resourced, imaginative playground. Visits to areas in the local community help children to develop transferable skills and support wellbeing. Senior leaders and staff should develop further progressive planning for outdoor learning across all stages.

■ The investment in professional learning by senior leaders and staff and their passion and enthusiasm means digital technology has become a significant and strong feature of the school. A group of children work as digital leaders across the school and community to share their digital knowledge and skills. Staff introduced and use digital tools and platforms that allow parents to see children's experiences across their learning and access homework support. Within a few curricular areas, teachers are developing ways to engage children with computational thinking and problem solving. Both staff and children demonstrate confidence and increasingly complex digital literacy. They are proud to achieve formal accreditation for this work.

■ A few classes are not yet receiving two hours of physical education each week. Senior leaders should ensure all children are receiving their entitlement to two hours of high-quality physical education weekly.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

■ Parents value the regular communication they receive about the school. Parents are offered information about what and how children learn. For example, a recent digital café helped parents to learn how to use digital technology to support learning at home.

■ Teachers share helpful curriculum information with parents at the start of each term. They provide an overview of what children will be learning and how parents can support their child at home. This information, together with the school's online learning platform, is improving parents' understanding of how their child learns in school. A few parents would like more regular updates about children's progress. As planned, senior leaders and staff should continue to develop ways for children and families to learn together.

■ The headteacher works effectively with the Parent Council. They appreciate his open approach and feel he keeps them well-informed about the life of the school. The fundraising committee offers another way for parents to be involved in supporting the school. The children have benefited from the funds raised to develop the playground.

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

- Children feel very well supported and cared for by adults across the school. Mutually respectful relationships between staff and children help support an inclusive environment. Children benefit from well-developed nurturing approaches used by all staff.

- Most children demonstrate a clear understanding of the wellbeing indicators. Staff have created impactful characters based on each indicator and these help younger children discuss their wellbeing with confidence. Senior leaders and staff explore the indicators regularly during class lessons and assemblies. Children understand well their relevance to their lives, both in and beyond school. As a result, children can speak confidently about what it means to be safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

- Almost all children feel safe in school and recognise they have an adult they can speak to if they require support. Children feel staff treat them with respect and a majority feel other children treat them fairly and with respect. Children recognise how peers support each other through leadership roles, such as P7 buddies and junior road safety officers. Groups of older children benefit from leadership roles where they offer ideas to improve the school. For example, the pupil council and eco-team. Staff should continue to increase opportunities for children to lead on aspects of wellbeing, inclusion and equality. This will help children learn from each other and develop their leadership skills further.

- Children feel staff encourage them to live healthy and active lives. They value and enjoy opportunities for physical education. Children have regular access to a range of clubs, activities and competitions which offer further opportunities for personal achievement. Staff deliver many of these experiences working effectively with partners and local organisations.

- Senior leaders have recently introduced approaches to monitor and track the wellbeing of children more closely. This is helping teachers to identify ways to support improved outcomes for their class. Staff are making good use of an assessment tool to determine individual children's social and emotional developmental needs. They are using this information well to plan targeted support for individuals who have potential barriers to their learning or wellbeing. This is beginning to positively impact on children's achievement and readiness to learn.

- Senior leaders and staff have developed effective partnership working with other agencies and specialists which result in positive outcomes for children. Parents and staff speak about how children's wellbeing needs are met well because of school-based supports. This includes individual and group interventions and work with children and parents. The headteacher also works closely with partners to support families who are experiencing difficulties with school attendance and late-coming. He has clear procedures and systems in place to monitor and support attendance. As a result of a range of effective interventions, children are developing

healthy routines, addressing barriers to positive wellbeing, and improving their social and friendship skills.

■ Staff identify children who have additional support needs (ASN) and use appropriate approaches to address specific barriers to learning. Senior leaders deploy Additional Needs Assistants effectively to support children requiring additional help with their literacy and numeracy skills. Additional Needs Assistants have a very good understanding of children as individuals and work well in partnership with teachers. As a result, children are supported well individually, in small groups and in class. Staff should now increase the use of child's plans to record and evaluate the strategies used to support children with ASN more rigorously. Within plans, teachers should develop targets for children which are more measurable and challenging. Senior leaders should involve parents and children further in the planning and review of progress in learning.

■ School staff use national anti-bullying campaigns, assemblies and class lessons to raise awareness and share messages about kindness and respect. All staff use restorative approaches effectively when relationship issues arise between children. Senior leaders are reintroducing peer mediator roles for children to support each other with issues of conflict in the playground. Staff, children, parents and partners should now work together to agree a community approach and develop an anti-bullying policy which reflects the unique values and context of Broomlands Primary School. This will help all children to feel respected and valued at all times.

■ Staff meet their statutory duties in relation to wellbeing, equality and inclusion. They have a sound professional understanding of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding, inclusion and meeting the additional support needs of learners. The school's approaches are grounded in legislation and national guidance, such as Getting it Right for Every Child. Senior leaders recognise the need to review approaches used when considering children for a coordinated support plan. This should include children with additional support needs arising from complex or multiple factors.

■ Staff and children are beginning to become more aware of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Senior leaders are beginning to teach children about their rights during assemblies. A few teachers use helpful classroom charters which establish an agreed set of rights-based principles to support a positive learning environment. Children are starting to have more opportunities to learn about children's rights and how these apply to their lives and the lives of others. Staff should continue to build upon this work through real-life and meaningful contexts.

■ In a few classes, children have benefited from learning about neurodiversity and how individuals experience aspects of life differently to them. As a result, children expressed their interest in learning about disabilities and invited a charity to speak to them about severe and complex needs. These children have developed their respect for others and the ability to value and celebrate differences. As planned, staff should continue to extend children's learning about diversity, challenging discrimination and issues of equality in a planned and progressive way. This will help children across the school to continue to develop their understanding of the importance of equality and fairness in society.

■ The school submitted self-evaluation information related to compliance with the Nutritional Regulations and key duties as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007 (the Act). Health and Nutrition Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and children. In addition, inspectors discussed the effectiveness of whole school approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of children through food in school. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and catering service.

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, attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics Curriculum for Excellence (CFE) levels is good, with most children achieving nationally expected levels at key milestones. Most children who require additional support are making appropriate progress from prior levels of learning.

Attainment in literacy and English
- ■ Overall, children's progress in literacy and English is good. At early level, most children achieved nationally expected levels in listening and talking and almost all at first and second level. At all levels, most children achieved nationally expected CFE levels in reading. A few children across the school are making very good progress in reading. In writing, a majority of children achieved at early and first level and most children at second level.

Listening and talking
- ■ At early level, almost all children follow simple instructions and listen to others appropriately. Most children are confident and communicate their ideas well through play. By the end of first level, most children share their views and communicate clearly. Almost all children working towards second level convey information confidently and build on responses of others in discussions. Across first and second level, children will benefit from further practice in applying verbal and non-verbal techniques to engage listeners.

Reading
- ■ At early level, all children choose texts they like and engage well with the text during daily story time. Most children use knowledge of sounds and patterns to read simple words. By the end of first level, most children read with increasing fluency and discuss the main ideas of texts. Children should practise adding further expression when reading aloud. Across second level, children choose fiction when they read for pleasure and summarise these stories well. Most children answer literal and inferential questions well. Across the school, children should read a wider range of texts, including non-fiction, more regularly.

Writing
- ■ At early level, most children form lower case letters correctly and use full stops with increasing confidence. Most children write to convey ideas, messages and information during play experiences. By the end of first level, most children write well across genres. Most children use a growing range of punctuation and common conjunctions. Children will benefit from further practice in starting sentences in a variety of ways to engage their reader. Most children working towards second level use paragraphs increasingly accurately to separate thoughts and ideas. They make notes and can use them to create new texts. Children need further support to increase the length and complexity of their texts.

Numeracy and mathematics

■ Overall, children's progress in numeracy and mathematics is good. In session 21/22, in line with national expectations, most children achieved early level by the end of P1 and second level by the end of P7. Almost all children achieved first level by the end of P4. In the current session, most children are making good progress towards first level in numeracy. The majority are making good progress towards second level, with a few making very good progress.

Number, money and measure

■ At early level, almost all children identify and use a range of coins to pay for items during play. Most children add and subtract with increasing confidence and count forwards and backwards in sequence accurately. By the end of first level, most children identify the place value of three and four-digit numbers. They carry out calculations with developing confidence and accuracy. Children will benefit from further practice using fractions. Across second level, most children demonstrate good mental agility, completing calculations quickly and accurately. They understand and apply links between percentages and fractions with confidence. Most children need further practice in applying their skills to multi-step calculations and word problems.

Shape, position and movement

■ At early level, most children recognise and sort two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. By the end of first level, most children describe, follow and record directions using words associated with directions and turns when working with programmable digital toys. They can use a range of two-dimensional shapes to create tiling patterns. Children will benefit from more practice with right angles. Most children working towards second level use mathematical language confidently when describing and classifying acute, obtuse and reflex angles. They are less familiar with complementary and supplementary angles.

Information handling

■ At early level, almost all children use knowledge of colour, shape and size well to match and sort items. They use early counting skills to answer questions about information they have gathered. By the end of first level, most children use tallies correctly to record responses. Most children working towards second level extract key information and interpret an increasing range of charts, bar graphs and tables. Across the school, all children will benefit from further practice collecting, organising and displaying meaningful, real-life data, including using digital technology.

Attainment over time

■ Senior leaders have gathered and analysed children's attainment data for five years. Children's attainment levels across literacy and numeracy dipped when returning to school after periods of remote learning. Recent school data shows that the number of children attaining nationally expected CFE levels is increasing. Senior leaders identified a gap in children's progress in writing and prioritised this as an area of whole school improvement. This is beginning to have a positive impact on children's progress. Senior leaders record and monitor attainment data for individual children and the whole school. They are beginning to analyse this further for particular groups of children, such as those with barriers to learning. Senior leaders and teachers should continue to monitor progress and attainment to inform and evaluate planned school improvement.

Overall quality of learner's achievements

■ Children feel valued and included by approaches used by staff to recognise and celebrate their achievements. This includes school awards, assemblies, newsletters, and on social media. The 'positive press team' regularly write articles and share photographs of individual and school achievements in the local press which families and children value. Across the school, children have gained formal accreditation for their achievements, such as the John Muir Award.

Older children regularly participate in local and regional competitions and have won awards for events, such as sports and quizzes.

■ Staff have introduced a useful tracking system which records children's participation in achievements within and outwith school. Active School partners also track children's participation in sports activities available across the school. Senior leaders and staff are beginning to use this data to identify children who require further support and encouragement to access further opportunities for achievement. As planned, teachers should continue to support children to understand the skills they are developing through their wider achievements. This is helping them to recognise and value their growing skills, such as teamwork and resilience.

Equity for all learners

■ Senior leaders and teachers have a strong understanding of the socio-economic context of the school and community. They use this knowledge well to inform improvement planning. Senior leaders use Pupil Equity Funding appropriately to support raising attainment in literacy and help improve children's wellbeing. Support staff provide effective targeted interventions which are addressing and reducing gaps in children's readiness to learn and literacy skills. As planned, senior leaders should develop further measures and approaches to monitor progress of children with identified potential barriers to their learning more closely. This information will help staff to ensure targeted supports are accelerating progress and improving outcomes for all children.

■ Senior leaders have arrangements in place to ensure that financial constraints do not prevent any children from taking part in opportunities for learning and achievement. Staff and the Parent Council work together well to tackle the cost of the school day. Staff ensure warm, outdoor clothing and fruit are available to children free of charge. Teachers provide lunchtime clubs at no cost to families. As a result, children and parents feel included and supported.

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.