Summarised inspection findings

Cluny Primary School

Moray Council

25 June 2019

Key contextual information

Cluny Primary School is a non-denominational school situated in the town of Buckie in Morayshire. The local area is a mixture of social and privately owned housing. The school has 362 children and 14 classes. The school Free Meal Entitlement in 2017-18 is 11%. The school building was opened in 1937 and includes a large gym, a separate dining area and considerable space in the playground area.

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	

■ The headteacher is well supported by all staff in leading a strong positive culture across the school. The school ethos reflects the values of respect, responsibility and resilience, which are evident in all relationships and interactions. Children are respectful of each other and of staff within classes. Staff are very proud of their school and are highly committed to their work and to the school. The social demographic within the local area has changed over the last five years. The headteacher has taken good account of the changes and implemented new approaches to support the wellbeing of children and the relationships across the school community.

■ In classes, children are well behaved and are happy in their learning. Children experience a variety of class activities which are interesting and enjoyable. They are almost all attentive and on task. In most classes however, learning is often directed towards the whole class, with a few examples of work being differentiated. Staff now need to make sure that children are involved in leading their own learning in order to increase their levels of motivation and engagement. There is scope to further support children to understand the purpose of their learning, and how they can achieve success.

■ Teachers have worked hard to make sure learning is interesting and engaging for children. There are many opportunities for children to learn in a variety of contexts. This is enabling children to develop a positive approach to learning. A next step would be to make sure the pace of learning in classes is effectively tailored to meet the needs of each individual. The feedback given to children both verbally and in jotters is beginning to help children to understand their next steps in learning.

■ Across the school, the environment for learning is interesting and well organised. Teachers are very well supported in their classrooms due to the allocation of a large number of support staff. The headteacher should continue to monitor the impact of this support to make sure there is a clear link to improving outcomes for all children.

■ Teachers support children's wellbeing very well through the nurturing approaches which are evident in the classrooms. Each class has developed their own class charter to support the

positive ethos and children are confident in talking about these. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) could be used as a basis for further developing children's understanding of their rights.

■ Teachers have successfully developed their style of teaching in the last few years to include a variety of activities and tasks. They are beginning to use digital technologies successfully to engage and motivate learners. The headteacher, together with teachers, should continue to build on their understanding of what constitutes high quality learning and teaching that supports the needs of all learners.

■ Staff are involved in a variety of professional activities to review and evaluate teaching and learning. These are supporting the team of staff to share their knowledge and understanding. Staff should continue to include the progress of individual learners within their professional discussions. This will enable teachers to focus clearly on meeting learner's needs.

■ A variety of strategies are used by class teachers to assess learning across the stages. Staff collate data relating to experiences and outcomes and assessments of children's progress. The headteacher should continue to make sure that the collation of data and tracking information is proportionate and links clearly to the outcomes for all children. Teachers are increasingly working collegiately to plan learning and to moderate their work which is resulting in greater continuity and improved progression across levels. The school could now begin to develop further opportunities for children to be more involved in planning their own learning.

■ The headteacher has established effective approaches to track and monitor children's progress in numeracy and mathematics and literacy and English. Monitoring the progress in other curriculum areas is at an early stage and the headteacher has made plans to overtake this aim in the coming sessions. Teachers value their meetings with senior staff to discuss the progress of individual pupils in their classes. They make helpful predictions about children's attainment of a level against which progress is measured. Staff should continue to keep under review, the body of evidence used to ensure reliable and robust professional judgements of achieved levels.

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 mathematics and numeracy and English language and literacy is good. The data provided by the school demonstrates that most children across P1, P4 and P7 attain appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels in reading and listening and talking. The majority of children attain appropriately at both first and second level in writing. Most children achieve appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels in numeracy at early, first and second levels.

■ Staff track children's progress well in literacy and numeracy and review the opportunities for children to improve attainment year on year. Where there is a risk of attainment slipping, staff take appropriate action. They should continue to review the rigour and effective use of the monitoring and tracking of progress at all stages. This would enable realistic yet challenging targets to be agreed for all children. Teachers should make sure they plan effectively for groups of children with specific barriers to learning.

Attainment in literacy and English

■ Children's attainment in literacy and English language is good. The data presented by the school demonstrates that children across the school are making good progress in reading, writing and listening and talking.

Reading

■ Overall, most children are engaging well with a range of texts across learning. At early level most children recognise initial sounds and tricky words and use these to read familiar words. They read aloud familiar texts with attention to simple punctuation. Children working at first level can add expression in reading and show good understanding of literal questions. They need more support to understand their reading when meaning is inferred. Children at first level would like to have more opportunities to read for enjoyment. Teachers should expand further the reading material available to reflect the interests of the children. By second level most children use a range of strategies to read and understand text including skimming, scanning and predicting. They make notes in their own words when carrying out research in other curriculum areas. Most children read independently and with good comprehension. Across the school, there is scope for children to discuss vocabulary used by authors and to develop their thinking skills in reading.

Writing

■ Overall, most children are making good progress in writing. At the early level most children are developing the confidence to write independently. They form most lowercase letters legibly and know their sounds and those of some uppercase letters. At first level most children organise their writing in paragraphs, start sentences in different ways and make effective use of conjunctions. Children effectively demonstrate their writing skills across the curriculum and

write for a variety of purposes. For example, some children take part in the Press and Journal's Junior Journalist project. This provides a context within which to explore their learning in a meaningful and relevant way. Children working at second level are making good progress overall. Most write well-crafted pieces across a variety of genre and know how to apply their skills in other curricular contexts. Children in most stages self- and peer-assess the quality of their writing effectively using agreed criteria. This practice should be developed further across all curricular areas.

Listening and talking

■ Most children are making good progress in listening and talking. Across the school children listen well to instructions from their teachers. At early level children are learning to take turns when talking and listening to others. They successfully share ideas with small groups as well as within large class groups. The majority of children working at first level are good at taking turns and contributing at an appropriate time. A few children are still learning the importance of listening respectfully to one another. Increasing opportunities for children to deliver prepared talks would support further development of listening and talking skills. At second level children contribute relevant ideas, information and opinion when engaging with their peers or the adults working with them. They build on the ideas of others by asking relevant questions including literal and evaluative questions. They are very clear about the difference between fact and opinion and demonstrate appropriate uses of these.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

■ The data presented by the school demonstrates that most children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics.

■ As a result of a focused approach over recent years to developing consistent teaching in numeracy staff have created home learning packs for children in P1 and P2. These supports have helped increase children's confidence and understanding of number, leading to improvements in attainment. Further increasing the pace of learning for children would support the improvement of attainment overall.

Number, money and measurement

■ Across the school, children are developing their understanding of place value and number processes using an increasing range of strategies. At early level children can recognise the number of objects in a group, count backwards and forwards from zero to 20. A few count confidently to 100. At first level children confidently count forwards and backwards in multiples of numbers and add and subtract three digit whole numbers. Most children are confident when multiplying and dividing, however this, and telling the time, are areas which for a few would benefit from additional reinforcement. At second level children read, write and order whole numbers to 1,000,000, multiply whole numbers by two digit numbers and apply knowledge of rounding to give an estimate. There is a need to maintain a focus on improving children's knowledge and application of fractions, decimals and percentages.

Shape, position and movement

■ At early level children understand and demonstrate one line of symmetry. They recognise, describe and sort common 2D shapes. At first level children know and use the compass points North, South, East and West and use grid references. Children name and identify a range of different 2D shapes and 3D objects but a few lack confidence in using mathematical language to describe their properties. At second level children have a sound grasp of estimating, rounding and most number processes. There is scope to extend children's learning by applying these skills in real life situations.

Information handling

■ At early level children collect and organise objects for a specific purpose, and they contribute to pictorial displays in their classroom and across the school. At first level children select and use appropriate ways to gather and sort data, including the use of titles, labelling and scales. There is scope to further develop the use and analysis of data, including digitally. Children at second level would benefit from developing a greater understanding of the language of probability.

Attainment over time

■ Staff at Cluny Primary School aim for a climate of high attainment through enjoyable and interesting learning experiences. Senior staff meet with teachers regularly to review children's progress and to plan interventions as appropriate. Attainment has fluctuated in the last few years and there are now clear plans to raise attainment for all children.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

■ A range of opportunities provided by the school allows the children to develop the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence. Most children are developing skills in citizenship and enterprise by fundraising for a number of charities including Blythswood Care and Lepra. The school has good links with many partners in the community. There is a well-established relationship with a local care home and children have the opportunity to visit the residents. The children take part in competitions run by community organisations such as the RNLI and the Heritage Museum enhancing opportunities for wider achievement. Children enjoy success in the Buckie Blethers Doric Writing competition which is helping to keep the heritage of this dialect alive. In addition, children take part in a range of inter-school sporting tournaments. They have enjoyed recent success in the Associated School Group's Cross Country Championships.

■ Achievement is celebrated in a number of ways including at assemblies, through class displays and the weekly recognition of Charter Champions. A few children have the opportunity to take on leadership roles such as being a Learning Council class rep or a Young Rotarian. The children have identified a number of clubs that they would like to be run in school. Currently there are no school clubs although many children attend a variety of events and activities in the local community. Golden folders are beginning to be used in a variety of ways to record achievements and attainment. A next step would be to develop a more consistent approach to the content of the folder. This would make sure that children can highlight their own strengths, their skills and development areas.

■ As recognised by the headteacher, senior staff should now establish a system to track children's engagement in activities to make sure that all are involved and are recognised for their participation and achievements. This would enable the school to identify children who may miss out on involvement in broader achievements. There is also scope to work with children to make them more aware of the skills they are developing as a result of their involvement in wider achievement. An increased awareness of these skills would enable children to make clearer links with the world of work.

Equity for all learners

■ Staff are sensitive to children's backgrounds and are committed to supporting the wellbeing of every child. There is an awareness of the cost of the school day although a review of school spending would be important to make sure every child has equal access to events and activities. We have asked the school to review their use of the Pupil Equity Fund.

■ Some children are now able to access a relaxed start to the school day which is leading to improved attendance for these children. Teachers are supported by senior leaders in termly conversations regarding the progress of all children. Discussions focus on barriers to learning for specific children as well as possible interventions to support these learners.

Other relevant evidence

- There would be merit in developing the school Charter system to extend to the playground area. This would support a calm and safe space for play.

- The Pupil Equity Funding allocation should be more closely linked to improving outcomes for individuals and groups of children.

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.