

Summarised inspection findings

Bonnyrigg Primary School

Midlothian Council

12 March 2019

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

- Teaching staff are adopting a range of creative learning and teaching approaches to help motivate and engage children in their learning. In almost all lessons, children enjoy their learning, are enthusiastic learners and work conscientiously through tasks and activities. They respond well to organised, structured activities, which incorporate a variety of learning approaches including independent tasks, collaborative working and a mix of practical and desk-based activities. A few activities do not provide sufficient challenge for learners resulting in less than half of pupils being disengaged from learning unnecessarily. In these circumstances, teachers need to ensure that higher achievers are provided opportunities to build on prior learning and apply what they have learned in challenging and, at times, unfamiliar learning contexts.
- Across the school, all teachers and learning assistants have positive and caring relationships with children. They help children to feel safe, happy and confident in seeking support when required. This supports children with additional support needs to feel included and helps them overcome any anxieties they may have with their learning. Children are well behaved, polite and keen to share their learning and achievements. They are very proud of their school.
- In line with the 'Midlothian Learner' initiative, children are taught 'Bonnyrigg Learner Qualities'. Learner qualities are consistently referred to in classes across the school. Children at all stages speak confidently about the qualities required to be a good learner including growth mindset, practising and resilience. This is having a positive impact on children's ability to engage fully, recognise success and recover from any mistakes they make during the course of a lesson.
- Children benefit from opportunities to take responsibility, express their views and influence decision making across the whole school through, for example, participation in the pupil council and being buddies, junior road safety officers (JRSO) and prefects. At classroom level, in a few lessons, children take responsibility for leading their learning and independently taking decisions to determine future learning. As recognised by the school, there is scope to develop this further and help children to fully understand the skills they are building through undertaking these roles of responsibility.
- Overall, the quality of teaching across the school is good. In order to help improve this positive position further, teachers would benefit from an increased focus of what constitutes effective learning, teaching and assessment. This will support consistently high-quality learning and teaching experiences for all children across the school.
- Teachers and non-teaching staff work hard to provide bright and stimulating learning environments. Classroom spaces and resources are well organised and are conducive to positive learning and teaching. There are variable levels of differentiation and challenge in

learning and a few occasions where the pace of learning is too slow. At times children are offered lengthy teacher-led discussion before engaging in active learning activities. Further development of higher order thinking skills and enquiry based learning, matched to children's needs and interests, would support a deepening understanding of learning.

- Instructions and explanations are clear and most children are aware of the purpose of learning. In most lessons, teachers make effective use of questioning to encourage children to think and build on prior learning. Praise is used well throughout the school, resulting in children who are eager to respond and answer teachers' questions. There are a few examples of children developing skills for life and work by relating their learning to real life contexts. There is now a need to further develop opportunities for children to apply their skills and understanding more in this area.
- In almost all classes, teachers use digital technology effectively to enhance learning. There are good examples of children responding well to the use of technology. This is being deployed well to support children's creativity and curiosity. In moving forward, the school should continue to explore ways in which learners can independently access digital technology.
- Children enjoy learning outdoors in the playground and school garden. The school is developing partnerships with the local community to enhance children's learning experiences and deliver learning in real and relevant contexts. Teachers should continue to develop their approaches to outdoor and community learning.
- Teachers use a variety of formative assessment approaches to let children know how they are doing in their tasks in class. Teachers use a number of standardised, and periodic, assessments to provide evidence of children's ongoing progress in their learning. The school used the Scottish National Standardised Assessment (SNSA) as part of its assessment approaches for the first time during the last school session. Going forward, the school should now consider how teachers use standardised assessments and determine if these add anything of significance to the evidence they gather on children's progress. Teachers should plan to make better use of the detailed individual assessment information that the SNSA provides on each child.
- Through their participation in moderation activities in the school, and in the local area school group (ASG), teachers have become more confident in making professional judgements about children's progress in writing. They recognise the need to continue to develop their confidence in using national benchmarks to make accurate professional judgements about when children have achieved a Curriculum for Excellence level in all aspects of literacy and numeracy. Teachers are working with colleagues across ASG to develop holistic assessments to check children's understanding and application of learning in new and unfamiliar contexts.
- The school is making good use of the progression pathways provided by Midlothian Council to plan cohesive and progressive learning experiences for children in literacy, numeracy and social studies. They should continue to develop their use of the full range of pathways to assist all children consistently to make appropriate progress across all areas of the curriculum.
- There is a need for all teachers to develop a shared understanding of the standards expected of children as they progress through all areas of the curriculum. The work that has already been completed in the ASG's development of a progression framework in social studies is an example of good practice that could provide a helpful model for developing other curriculum areas. Teachers now have a framework that they use across all stages of the school to teach skills and knowledge and assess children's learning in social studies.

- The senior leadership team provide teachers with a range of helpful data about all children in their class. All staff report that they find termly tracking meetings to monitor children's progress useful to help ensure that individual children's needs are identified and planned for. At these meetings, teachers work with the senior leadership team and the support for learning teacher to put in place additional supports, which address barriers to learning. Children are being well supported through this approach.
- Teachers take some account of children's interests when planning for learning. We have asked the school to continue to develop approaches to include children more consistently in planning across all classes.

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, attainment in numeracy is good and attainment in literacy is satisfactory.

Numeracy

- Learners are making good progress in numeracy. The data presented by the school demonstrates that most children are achieving well in numeracy at early, first and second level. From inspection activity, the inspection team agrees that teachers are becoming more confident in their professional judgements of Curriculum for Excellence levels in numeracy. These judgements are also supported by national assessments and cross-referencing to the national benchmarks. Recent professional development on numeracy strategies and methodology is having a positive impact on raising attainment of most learners across the school. The senior leadership team must now ensure that the good practice evident in most classes is embedded across all stages. This will help to ensure consistency in learning and teaching in numeracy and impact positively on raising attainment for all learners. The school is making good use of staged Intervention to plan appropriate learning experiences to meet the needs of a few children requiring additional support.

Number, money and measure

- At early level all children are developing skills in counting the number of objects in a group to 10. They recall the number sequence forward and count back from 20. At first level, most children confidently estimate and round to 100 and 1000. They correctly identify place value of digits including 0 within 1000. They can work out an unknown number in addition, subtraction and multiplication of numbers to 10. They identify quarters and halves and recognise the relationship between the two fractions. Most children at second level can read and write large numbers to 100,000 and show confidence in identifying place value of digits within 1,000,000. They can round to the nearest 1000 and 10,000. Children working within second level recognise simple fractions and explain how to calculate equivalent fractions. These children share a good understanding of percentages and the link to fractions. Most children are developing skills in mental agility to calculate answers to challenge questions on number facts and multiplication tables. Staff should encourage children to show and talk through their thinking to better understand and explain their own learning strategies. Children determine the reasonableness of a solution and in particular regularly use rounding and estimation skills to calculate and confirm accuracy. They should be further supported to experience multi-step questions and solve problems as well as developing accuracy with algorithms.

Shape position and movement

- At early level children sort three dimensional objects according to various properties such as, 'shapes that roll, that have straight edges, are round'. They understand and use the correct language of position and direction such as backwards and forwards, above, below, behind, in front of. Working towards first level children identify, name and classify a range of simple shapes and three dimensional objects. They use appropriate language to describe the properties of three dimensional objects such as side, face, edge. At second level, most children use the correct language to describe properties of shapes such as circumference, diameter and radius. They can understand and interpret scale plans of simple models to find actual sizes.

Literacy

- Overall, children's attainment in literacy is satisfactory. Data provided by the school shows that the majority of children achieve expected levels of attainment in literacy. Over the past few years assessment data provided by the school was informed by standardised assessment. The school is working with colleagues across the ASG to improve the accuracy of teachers' professional judgements. Children with identified barriers to learning make good progress from prior learning. However, there is a need to improve the depth and challenge of learning in literacy for the majority of children across the school.
- Data provided by the school shows that the majority of children make good progress in listening, talking, reading and writing. From a range of inspection evidence, inspectors found that there is a need to improve expectations of children's attainment through a level. Expected standards are not high enough for the majority of children. Across listening and talking, reading and writing, children do not respond consistently well enough to the level of challenge set out in the experiences and outcomes for each level. There are gaps in children's abilities to build on each other's ideas providing justifications, write sufficient high quality pieces of writing and read for pleasure.

Listening and talking

- Overall children's attainment in listening and talking is satisfactory. At early level children listen well to each other. At first level they collaborate well and listen to each other during classroom tasks. There are examples of children justifying their answers and taking turns during simple discussions. At second level, children work well in small groups responding to texts that they read as a group. However, the school is at the early stages of implementing a progressive and systematic approach to developing children's skills in listening and talking. As a result there are a number of missed opportunities to develop and apply children's listening and talking skills across all areas of the curriculum. While children are articulate and able to share their views, approaches do not build well enough on their prior knowledge. There is a need for increased focus on listening and talking across the school.

Reading

- The majority of children are making satisfactory progress in their reading with less than half making good or very good progress. Children do not read enough for pleasure. There is a need to reinstate children's access to the wide range of engaging books in the school library and class areas. In doing so, this will enhance the literacy circle approach to reading that features across the school. Children describe their favourite authors and older children choose the book that their group will read from a good range of books set at the appropriate level. At early level children are identifying initial sounds and the majority can blend words. A few can read simple texts aloud. At first level the majority of children read aloud fluently. They decode

unfamiliar words and respond to the author's style. At second level, children analyse text critically. A minority respond well to higher order questions. The school needs to continue to improve the pace of children's progress through Curriculum for Excellence levels ensuring breadth and challenge.

Writing

- Overall, children's progress in writing is satisfactory. Most children know an appropriate range of taught strategies to support their writing. They take notes and understand the importance of audience. Presentation is a priority and children take pride in their work. There are examples of children writing well across the curriculum. However, there is a need to extend the range of children's written texts and ensure high quality vocabulary features in these written texts. Children would also benefit from applying their writing in a wider range of contexts. At early level children attempt to write words and spell them accurately. At first level they create instructions, persuasive letters and newspaper articles. At second level there are a few examples of discursive texts. Children learn to spell words from spelling lists and use dictionaries and a thesaurus to establish their meaning. Children should now be better able to apply these words in their written texts.

Attainment over time

- Staff use standardised assessments, benchmark assessments and education authority guidance to support their professional judgement. Data informs tracking and attainment meetings. Staff welcome these meetings and the opportunities they give to discuss children's progress. In both literacy and numeracy there is a need to continue to build on these existing strengths in monitoring and tracking. In doing so, the school should continue to improve systems to identify patterns and levels achieved through better use of available diagnostic information including SNSA. The school has maintained a good level of attainment in numeracy for most learners across most levels in recent years. Most children make good progress from their previous level of attainment but there remains scope for the pace of progress to increase. In literacy and English, previous improvement plan priorities impacted well on outcomes for children with more children achieving levels earlier than expected. Clear guidance informs staff of approaches to develop children's skills, knowledge and understanding in literacy and English, informed by clear progression pathways. However, there is a need to revisit the implementation of literacy and English across the school. In doing so, ensure that the school can demonstrate how they add value as children move through the school.
- The headteacher and staff team recognise that by developing a consistent approach towards methodology, agreeing on shared standards and engaging in more moderation activities both within the school and with other schools, they will be better placed to continue to improve attainment over time. Further moderation with colleagues from other schools and across sectors will help teachers to make robust and reliable judgements on children's progress and attainment across the curriculum. Tracking systems and effective interventions are in place to support children's progress in learning.

Achievements

- Children achieve some success across most areas of the curriculum notably social subjects, expressive arts and physical education. However, children do not yet fully understand the progress they are making across all areas of their learning. In recent times, staff have developed a coherent, progressive pathway for social subjects. Led by the senior management

team, staff now need to build on this by developing pathways across the curriculum. This will help children to understand how their skills are developing.

- Staff across the school are committed to achieving success for all children. Children and their families place a high value on the wide range of lunchtime and after school clubs offered by the school. Lunchtime and after school clubs are well attended and offer children a number of sporting and physical activities to participate in including martial arts and football. These clubs are opportunities for further learning with children developing new skills and mixing with a wider peer group, helping them build relationships, and develop their confidence and self-esteem. There are only a few opportunities for children to participate in clubs that do not involve sport or physical activity. Children would benefit from more opportunities to participate in activities in other areas such as expressive arts, culture and digital technology.
- The school celebrates success and achievement including encouraging children and families to share any achievements gained from outwith the school. As planned, the school should continue to develop a consistent and planned approach to tracking and recognising achievements of all children across the school. This will support children to see the progress they are making in developing skills through their successes and achievements.
- Children's achievements are occasionally enhanced by accreditation including Children's University Awards and Active Schools certificates. The school should build on this through identifying and introducing more opportunities for children to gain accreditation for their successes and achievements.
- Children contribute to the life of the school and its wider community. Children influence change through participation in the 'bingo balls' approach and the pupil council. Senior children take on responsibility through roles such as prefects, JRSO and buddies. The school should consider providing further opportunities for children to participate more in evaluative activities such as planning and reviewing learning experiences. Children from Bonnyrigg Primary School support the local community with events such as the school choir performing at a local retirement home. As planned, the school should build stronger links with partners from the local community to provide increased ways for children to achieve outwith the school and build their skills for life and work.

Equity for all learners

- Staff know their children well. They use this knowledge to identify gaps and ensure that children benefit from a range of interventions. Relationships across the school are positive and inclusion is embedded into practice. Of note is the coherence of approaches used to support children who are deaf within the mainstream environment. British Sign Language (BSL) is taught in the school with many children choosing to learn BSL in order to better communicate with children who are deaf.
- The school has identified ways to use the pupil equity funding to target and support children affected by poverty. Interventions such as the class teacher using dedicated time to support small groups is positive. Staff have identified correctly the need to ensure that the short, medium and long term outcomes for children are evaluated to show an improvement in children's attainment and attendance.

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.