Summarised inspection findings

Glassary Primary School

Argyll and Bute Council

21 August 2018

Key contextual information

Glassary Primary School is a non-denominational school situated in the village of Kilmichael, near Lochgilphead in the Mid Argyll area of Argyll and Bute council. Glassary Primary has two large classrooms, which host classes P1-3 and P4-7. At the time of inspection, there were 31 pupils in the school. The headteacher has been in post since August 2017 and there is a 0.6 principal teacher.

1.3 Leadership of change	satisfactory

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

■ The headteacher and staff have created a welcoming, open and nurturing environment within the school. The pre-inspection questionnaires confirm that the headteacher is gaining the confidence of parents and staff in leading the school. Parents comment positively on the open door ethos operated by the school. The headteacher has brought a wealth of experience to the school from previous posts. Staff are very supportive of the new headteacher and speak positively about some of the changes which are happening. All staff know the children well and have an understanding of the social, economic and cultural context.

■ The headteacher has very recently reviewed the school's vision, values, and aims. He has done this through consultation with pupils, parents and other stakeholders. He has worked with parents to develop their understanding of the skills required for learning, life and work pertinent to the school setting. The headteacher is promoting the values through weekly assemblies. Class teachers are displaying the value of the week in their classroom and discussing it when appropriate with the children. The children are becoming more familiar with the values of the school. The headteacher has also recently added the strapline of 'nurturing excellence' to the reviewed vision, values and aims.

■ The headteacher is enthusiastic and ambitious in the improvements he would like to bring about within the school. He has implemented many changes across the school in the short time he has been there. Staff and parents have commented positively on a few of these. The headteacher recognises he must focus this ambition on a few well-timed and well-paced improvements. The headteacher understands that this has the potential to raise attainment across the school.

■ The headteacher has correctly identified the need to carry out more rigorous self-evaluation and further detailed scrutiny of the data available to inform the next steps in the school's improvement journey. He is aware that the school is at the early stages of involving staff in rigorous self-evaluation activities. The headteacher has welcomed the input from the inspection team and support from the local authority.

- The headteacher is planning to carry out professional review and development (PRD) processes within the school. These will link to the General Teaching Council for Scotland standards. The headteacher observes classroom practice and gives feedback to staff on suggestions for improvement. He recognises the need to develop further this process focusing more on the impact of school priorities, inform PRD meetings and whole school improvements.

- The headteacher encourages staff to take up career-long professional learning opportunities and recommends different types to learning opportunities on a regular basis. The headteacher is aware he must ensure that these learning opportunities align clearly to staff's PRD needs and the school improvement plan.

- The staff are becoming more involved in leadership opportunities and have recently joined working groups and courses to develop their knowledge and understanding. They are at the early stages of applying this knowledge within their classrooms. In some cases, they are involving staff in other schools to work with them to develop this further. The staff should continue this positive start and keep on seeking out opportunities to develop further their leadership skills.

- Older children are involved in a small number of leadership opportunities, such as pupil council, reading buddies and tooth brushing monitors. However, there is scope to develop all children's leadership skills and the roles of children within the groups and create more opportunities for increased responsibility within them. The headteacher engaged positively with the inspection team about different ways of developing children's leadership skills.

- The school has received a small amount of pupil equity funding this session. The school has used this to increase the working hours of support staff. In addition, the funding is being used to train a member of staff on the understanding of the developmental stages of early arithmetic learning. In time, this approach has the potential to impact positively on a greater number of children. The headteacher has discussed his plans for using the pupil equity fund next year. This can appropriately support children within the school.

- The headteacher is mindful of the need to be aware of the different cohorts of learners and their progress. There is a need to collect accurate data to inform thinking and decisions made about children's progress. However, the school currently has limited robust and reliable assessment data. The data does not inform well enough gaps between different groups and cohorts of children. Currently this information does not yet support fully learning, teaching and assessment approaches to ensure all children make appropriate progress.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	weak

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

- Positive relationships between children and staff are evident across the school. The majority of children engage well in lessons and enjoy their learning. The recently updated learning walls provide children with particular information to help them with their learning. A review of the use of this information will help to support children and make the learning walls more appropriate.

- The majority of children are able to follow instructions when they are clear. The majority of children complete tasks and activities appropriately. In a minority of lessons, low-level disruptive behavior affected the learning of the class. The staff are aware of the need to better match tasks and activities to meet the learning needs of the children and increase engagement in almost all lessons.

- When given the opportunity, the majority of children work well together. They experience working as individuals, in pairs and groups. Overall, learning is too teacher led. In too many lessons, children are listening to the teachers for too long. There is scope for children to be leading their learning on a regular basis.

- In the majority of lessons, learning intentions are evident. When success criteria are used in the classroom, they have three different levels of difficulty. Staff use a graded system to support children to choose the level of difficulty the children think they should be working at. The school recognises the need for teachers to provide more direction to children to the level of challenge to match their ability. Teachers are at the early stages of developing plenary sessions. In the best lessons observed, staff promote higher order thinking skills through the use of their questioning skills. It would be beneficial for the school to revisit assessment is for learning strategies to ensure a deeper understanding and have consistency across the school.

- Teachers interact with individuals and groups to check understanding and provide support. They need to continue to develop the quality of feedback they provide to children. Where feedback does identify the next steps in learning, it is not always clear if children are getting appropriate and timely opportunities to follow up on this feedback to improve learning.

- In the majority of lessons, staff use interactive whiteboards as a teaching tool. In the classroom, all children have their own laptop. They use these at the upper stages to consolidate learning and create presentations. There is scope to develop the use of digital technology throughout the school and widen the range of activities carried out to enhance children's learning experiences.

- The quality of learning and teaching across the school is variable. Learning activities are not at the correct level of challenge for the majority of children. This is having a negative impact

on the pace of learning and children's progress. All staff would benefit from having a stronger focus on developing a deeper understanding of pedagogy and progression of learning.

■ Assessment is not yet integral to planning for effective learning. The school uses a variety of assessment approaches, including standardised assessment for some children twice per year. The headteacher is aware of the need to evaluate the purpose and use of this practice. In addition, the children have undertaken the Scottish National Standardised Assessments. The school can now use the information from these assessments to help plan areas for development for children and continuing professional development for staff.

■ Further work on building an understanding of national standards will support staff to ensure work is at the correct standard for all children and that there is appropriate pace and challenge within all classrooms. Staff should continue to develop their understanding and approaches to assessment and moderation. This will ensure teachers' professional judgement will become more robust and reliable.

■ The school has recently reviewed its planning for learning format. The staff are pleased with the new streamlined, and more manageable, format. The school can use this initial step to continue to develop its planning to ensure that the structure supports progressive learning for all children.

■ The headteacher has recently introduced a new tracking system. The school is well placed now, following advice from the inspection team, to review this system. Consideration can be given to the content of tracking meetings and what is recorded. Further discussions with staff on national standards will support the quality of the information. It is essential that all staff have a clear and shared understanding of what the school coding system means within the tracking system. The data should help staff to take appropriate action to ensure children make appropriate progress and identify any gaps in children's learning.

■ The school is tracking appropriately children who are facing additional challenges through their health and wellbeing tracker. The headteacher, and staff, knows and understands children's socio-economic circumstances.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

■ See the choice Quality Indicator

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Parents tell us they feel welcome in the school and find staff approachable and helpful. Parents and the community see the school as the centre of the community and a caring environment for their children.

- The headteacher produces a monthly newsletter, which provides useful information for parents about the activities of the school. Parents commented positively on information provided by the parent council on social media. The parent council are very active and have fundraised and successfully applied for funding to pay for the residential school trip.

- The school has recently introduced inviting pupils to parents meetings. Almost all parents are finding this helpful and the children speak positively about it. The school also send home children's learning logs with termly reports on activities carried out in the classroom that term. This would benefit from having a stronger focus on children's areas of strength and next steps to be more informative to parents and children.

- Parents are being encouraged through the 'world of work Tuesdays' to come into the school to talk about their work. Parents have helped with the school garden and have planted vegetables in it.

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 that need to be addressed as a matter for urgency.

| 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion | satisfactory |

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

- Across the school, there are respectful relationships between staff and pupils. There is a caring and nurturing environment within the school. All staff know the children and their families well. Almost all children demonstrate having an inclusive attitude. Staff are becoming more familiar with the wellbeing indicators and should continue with developing their understanding of them to support children.

- From the pre-inspection questionnaires of those children who responded, most children felt that the school helps them to understand and respect other people. The majority of children state that they feel safe at school, are treated fairly, and know who they would talk to if they were worried or upset. Fewer children feel that their views are taken into account. They have the opportunity to talk about their achievements out-with class with an adult who knows them well. A few children are concerned about bullying and feeling safe. All staff feel that they are valued as part of the school community. However, the headteacher is aware of the need to review the recently introduced staff newsletter to ensure content is appropriate for the purpose intended and that it is practical for all staff. The headteacher should consider meeting formally with support staff on a regular basis to improve communication.

- Children are beginning to become more familiar with the wellbeing indicators. They are most confident in being able to discuss what being included means and give good examples of this. A few children are able to discuss how to stay healthy and safe. They are able to discuss how to stay safe when using the internet. The school has recently had a focus on this.

- The leadership team a short while ago introduced a health and wellbeing tracker. This is based on the wellbeing indicators and is recorded under these headings. The tracker is at an early stage of development and the headteacher has engaged well with the inspection team on ways to reduce bureaucracy and increase the impact of the trackers.

- Appropriate processes are in place to identify children who have additional support needs through monthly conversations with teaching staff. For those children who require support plans, the school has relevant plans in place. This follows the local authority guidance on a 3- step intervention strategy. The headteacher is modelling how to write appropriate targets. However, there is scope to develop this further. The headteacher seeks the views of parents and children on the plans. Plans are reviewed on a regular basis. Further to this, the headteacher has recently developed short-term support plans. He is aware of the need to continue to review and support staff to become more confident in writing and evaluating targets.

- Recently the school implemented a new resource for all children to support their health and wellbeing in particular their resilience. The school reports that early indications show that this is supporting the few children that it has been introduced for. The headteacher has also

introduced neuroscience to all children during the assemblies he leads. The school has plans to evaluate the impact of these changes on all children. The school is aware of the need to develop a progressive health and wellbeing curriculum to ensure that children receive their full entitlement to of the curriculum and take account of the needs of the children and the context of the school.

- All staff have undertaken an annual update on child protection and safeguarding and all new staff, volunteers and students have a one-to-one session with the headteacher to ensure they are familiar with school policy.

- There have been effective strategies put in place to support children who are facing additional challenges. The learning assistants support children with additional support needs very well. There is evidence to demonstrate the positive difference they have made to children.

- The headteacher has introduced discussions on diversity and equality through topics at assembly. The assemblies also support the values of the school. The headteacher has also discussed with the children the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This positive start can now be developed further within the classroom in a planned and progressive way.

- The inspection team have asked the school to review its procedures on the storage and review of medication and to check that food provision is appropriate for all children.

| **3.2 Raising attainment and achievement** | **satisfactory** |

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
- The number of children in cohorts varies and is often fewer than seven. Therefore, overall statements have been made about progression to ensure anonymity for individuals.

Literacy and English
- In listening and talking, overall attainment is appropriate and the majority of children are making satisfactory progress. At the early level, children can participate in listening to stories. They can discuss the main ideas and aspects of a book. They talk confidently about the main characters of a story and know the title and author. Children can retell parts of stories relating to the fairytales project they are working on. Children at first level can communicate audibly and clearly. They continue to develop their skills selecting and sharing information using appropriate vocabulary in a logical way. At second level, the majority of children are able to communicate well with adults. However, the majority can continue to develop skills in listening to their peers and in turn taking during a discussion. The majority of children are able to communicate clearly when presenting their findings to the class and can contribute relevant ideas when working on research.

- In reading across the school, attainment in is satisfactory and the majority of children are making appropriate progress. At early level, children can hear patterns and sounds within words and can retell familiar stories in basic detail. Some children are not yet confident in using their phonics skills to read unfamiliar words. At first level, children can read with fluency and are beginning to have a clear understanding of texts read. They are beginning to add expression and can show understanding. They are starting to develop their skills in note taking under relevant headings to gather the main points of a text. At second level, most children can read with accuracy, fluency, and expression. The majority of children are developing their note taking skills. Direct teaching is required to develop further reading techniques and skills and comprehension of text.

- In writing across the school, attainment is weak and most children are not making appropriate progress. Children need to have frequent, planned, and progressive lessons in writing to improve their skills in writing and improve attainment. At early level, children are able to write with some support. However, they need to work on developing their knowledge of phonics in order to help them write independently. They should also work on forming letters more accurately and use capital letters and full stops when required. At first level, children are using punctuation correctly when writing independently. They are beginning to start sentences in a variety of ways. At second level, children can use sentences of different lengths and use a range of punctuation. There is scope to develop further children's use of paragraphs. Children regularly use digital technology to write stories. Children would benefit from frequent opportunities to write at length by hand.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall attainment in numeracy and mathematics is good and the majority of children are making appropriate progress.

Number and number processes

- At early level, children are able to recognise numbers to 20 and count in 10s to 100. The majority can add within 20 and are becoming more confident in subtraction facts. There is scope for children to strengthen their ability to order numbers up to 20 and their mental agility when adding and subtracting. At first level, children have a strong grasp of number to 10,000 and can add and subtract using methods of exchange. Children would benefit from developing their understanding of zero as a placeholder. Children can count forwards and backwards in 2, 5 and 10 and have a good mental recall of their table facts. They can apply strategies for division and could divide whole numbers by 10 and 100. At second level, most children can estimate and round numbers and can demonstrate knowledge of place value to 100,000. Most children can convert equivalent forms of common fractions to decimal fractions and percentages. Almost all children have a good knowledge of time and can give good answers when discussing complex durations. Staff recognise the need to plan opportunities for children to be able to apply their knowledge in new and unfamiliar situations. This has the potential to contribute to raising attainment in numeracy and mathematics.

Shape position and movement

- At early level, children are able to recognise and sort 2D shapes and can discuss how many sides a shape has. They can name some 3D objects. Children understand positional language. They can discuss direction of front, behind, below and above, and are beginning to understand left and right. At first level, children understand the properties of 3D objects and can confidently discuss faces and edges. There is scope to develop further children's understanding of vertices and angles. Most learners are able to recognise 3D objects from 2D drawings.

Information handling

- Learners within early level can use their knowledge of colour, shape, size and other properties to match and sort items in a variety of different ways. Children need to develop further their skills in using digital technologies to display information in graphs and pictographs where appropriate. At first level, children can use and understand bar graphs and tables. A few children can discuss the attributes of Venn diagrams and how these can be used to sort information. At second level, pupils can create graphs with suitable titles and labelling of axes use a scale in line graphs. Children require support to understand the language of probability such as certain/uncertain and possible/impossible.

Attainment over time

- The school has provided two years' of data on Curriculum for Excellence levels of attainment. This data is not yet robust and reliable enough. The school has engaged in moderation activities with other schools. However, this needs to be developed further and become more regular to support teachers' professional judgements becoming more reliable and reflective of national standards.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Wider achievements are celebrated in a variety of ways including assemblies and certificates. Primary 5-7 take on leadership roles through monitoring duties at mealtimes and playtimes and through reading buddies. Pupils are encouraged to take part the wide variety of extra-curricular activities held within the local community. Children bring in photographs of

their achievements, which are displayed within the school foyer. The headteacher has developed a system to record children's achievements. He has asked all children what their achievements are. The headteacher recognises the need to develop this system further to track appropriate achievements in a systematic way and focus more on the skills for life learning and work.

■ Primary 6 and 7 children benefit from attending a residential course bi-annually. The school uses the local areas on a regular basis to complement learning. There is also a trip to Glasgow to support transition. This experiential learning enables children to develop their knowledge and understanding as well as their social skills.

Equity for all learners

■ The school is in receipt of a small amount of pupil equity funding. The headteacher demonstrates an understanding of different factors that may affect equity in a rural community. He ensures that children do not have barriers in accessing school trips.

- Rational and design
- Development of the curriculum
- Learning Pathways
- Skills for life learning and work

■ The headteacher has led the development of the rationale and design of the curriculum with parents, community members, staff, pupils, ex-pupils and local employers. This reflects the school's vision, value and aims. He has supported stakeholders to have a shared understanding of what the vision and rationale are. The curriculum rationale takes account of the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence and reflects the uniqueness of the setting of the school. The curriculum rationale includes the four contexts for learning and references cross-cutting themes such as enterprise, creativity, and sustainable development education. The headteacher has developed a curricular framework overview and a six-year rolling programme. This outlines contexts where learning can take place and areas of the curriculum to be covered. We have asked the school to review the framework and overview to ensure that it maximises the opportunities and achievement for all children.

■ In literacy, the school has recently introduced a programme to improve reading in the upper stages. Parents speak positively about this addition to the curriculum. The school is aware of the need to evaluate the impact of this new development. The school must develop further a planned and progressive programme for reading writing, listening and talking.

■ In numeracy, the school is making improving use of the local authority progression pathways to support planning.

■ The school is at the very early stages of developing its health and wellbeing curriculum. The headteacher is aware of the need to develop further a planned and progressive health and wellbeing curriculum based on the needs of the children.

■ The school has been working on developing interdisciplinary learning and is still cultivating this. Across all curriculum areas, the school, with urgency, should develop progressive curriculum pathways. This will help teachers to develop a shared understanding of national standards and expectations across all curricular areas. The school are aware of the need to monitor and track that all curriculum areas are taught on a regular basis and in a progressive way.

■ The school uses the outdoor environment for learning on a regular basis utilising the different areas of the school grounds. In time, the school will be ready to go ahead with its plans to develop outdoor learning.

■ While work on the Careers Education Standard and Developing the Young Workforce is at an early stage, staff across the school, along with a range of partners, are helping children develop an understanding of skills for life, learning and work. The school has implemented a 'world of work Tuesday' for the upper stages. Local employers and parents are invited into school to speak to the children about their work. The school is very keen to widen the horizons of children to have a greater understanding of the different types of work that is available beyond the local employers and industries.

- The school is reviewing its religious and moral education programme to ensure that it covers the appropriate content. The school has developed a detailed plan outlining which religions are to be covered at specific times.

- The school reports that it is delivering two hours of high quality physical education every week. At times, this is challenging for the school, as staff use the playground in good weather and in inclement weather use a classroom. The children, on the days they do not have physical education, take part in the daily mile.

Explanation of terms of quality

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quality 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.