

# Summarised inspection findings

**Georgetown Primary School**

Dumfries and Galloway Council

26 August 2025

# Key contextual information

Georgetown Primary School is a non-denominational primary school situated in Dumfries. It includes Queensberry Learning Centre (QLC) for children with additional support needs. The headteacher was appointed in February 2025. She is supported by two depute headteachers and a principal teacher in the learning centre.

The school roll is 307 children arranged across 13 classes. There are 18 children across three classes in the learning centre. Around 62% of children reside in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles 8-10. Approximately 21% of children reside in SIMD deciles 1-3. There are 38% of children who require additional support with their learning. A few children have English as an additional language.

1.3 Leadership of change	very good
<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community</li><li>strategic planning for continuous improvement</li><li>implementing improvement and change</li></ul>	

- The headteacher and depute headteachers provide highly effective leadership. They have created a very positive environment for learning in which children are happy, motivated and engaged. Staff and children have nurturing and caring relationships across the school. Senior leaders and staff have high expectations of their own practice and of children’s learning and behaviour. The newly appointed headteacher has gained the respect of the school community. She understands very well the context of the school and has a clear vision for continuing to drive improvements and change.
- The school values of learning, respect, responsibility, caring, equality and honesty are firmly embedded in the life and work of the school. Children understand that these values guide their learning and relationships. They demonstrate the values very well in their interactions with each other and in their learning. Children, parents and staff were fully involved in agreeing the values that capture the ethos of their school successfully. Staff and children created the relevant school motto of ‘learning together for a better world’. Their motto reflects Global Goals clearly which are a key element of the school’s work. They support children very well to understand how their actions and their role in society can impact on global issues.
- Senior leaders and staff understand very well the context of the school and the key issues that impact on children and their families. Staff make very effective use of data to identify children and families who require support and interventions to overcome issues. Staff work very well with a range of partners to provide effective support. Senior leaders and staff collect and analyse data skilfully to ensure they target support appropriately and to measure its impact. Teachers and senior leaders hold regular discussions with staff. These are focussed on meeting the needs of all learners and raising attainment.
- The senior leadership team implement robust quality assurance approaches that very effectively monitor and evaluate the work of the school. For example, senior leaders routinely

sample individual children's work to determine if they are making appropriate progress. Senior leaders observe learning and teaching to identify and share practice across the staff team. Senior leaders meet with children regularly to gather information about progress and wider school issues that impact on children's learning.

- Across the school, staff are highly reflective of their own practice. Senior leaders, support and encourage staff to identify strengths and next steps in areas such as pedagogy and what learners expect from lessons. Staff have developed effective approaches for sharing practice across the school. Staff have a strong and collegiate vision for improving their practice and the wider work of the school. Together with senior leaders, staff identify skilfully what is working well and what they need to improve. They understand very well the importance of evaluating their practice to ensure it leads to improved outcomes for children.
- Senior leaders and staff have identified appropriate priorities for improvement that reflect very well the needs of children. These priorities are based on accurate and relevant quality assurance evidence such as data related to children's attainment and the work of the school. Senior leaders and staff focus on key important issues such as raising attainment and improving health and wellbeing. For example, staff identified the need to improve the learning and teaching of numeracy and mathematics to raise attainment. They implemented a new approach that has resulted in improved attainment and better engagement. In addition, children now talk positively about how much they enjoy their learning in this area.
- Across the school, staff are committed to leading and implementing change. They lead on important areas such as play, meta skills, numeracy and literacy. Staff have a clear focus on ensuring that areas in which they lead result in improvements for learners. For example, children at P6 and P7 have a strong understanding of how skills are necessary for learning and life beyond school. Senior leaders work together with staff to ensure their leadership roles provide clear evidence of impact. They encourage staff to develop creative and innovative practices within their classroom. Staff actively seek approaches that improve children's engagement and understanding of learning. Senior leaders support this creativity very well. They work together with staff to ensure that there are clear measures in place to understand the impact of their innovations.
- Children at P6 and P7 participate in a wide range of leadership groups. For example, children are members of groups such as the Global Gang and Human Rights Heroes. This is supporting them very well to develop important leadership skills such as communication and to play an important role in the wider school community. Children in leadership groups work with younger classes to mentor and support their understanding of these whole school issues. Staff should now continue to develop children's leadership roles across the school. Younger children are keen and able to take on more responsibility and to be better involved in leadership roles. Children have started to evaluate the work of the school using national guidance. Staff should continue to support children to participate in evaluating the work of the school and identify priorities that are important to them as learners.
- Senior leaders use Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) very effectively to support children who face barriers to their learning. They use PEF to support children's health and wellbeing and to improve attainment in literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders use data about children's attainment very effectively to identify children who would benefit most from targeted support. Senior leaders are highly focussed on evaluating the impact of these interventions to ensure they lead to improved outcomes for learners.

## 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very 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

- Senior leaders and staff have created a very welcoming and inclusive ethos which strongly reflects the school vision. Positive relationships between children and between staff and children, feature strongly in the school community. Children are increasing their understanding of children's rights and confidently relate these to their own lives and experiences. Children have pride in their school and enjoy learning. Staff and children demonstrate a deep commitment to the Global Goals as part of their learning for sustainability. Children talk confidently about these and how they can make a difference locally and globally. This is helping children to become responsible citizens.
- Across the school, children learn in a calm and purposeful climate. Almost all children are highly engaged and enthusiastic learners. Children are polite and articulate and are able to talk confidently about their learning and achievements. Almost all children develop a strong understanding of meta skills as part of their learning in all classes. Children describe how developing these skills helps them to build resilience and independence. In all classes, staff have high expectations of children's behaviour based on agreed class charters. These are informed by children's rights. As a result, almost all children behave very well in school and in the playground.
- Teachers have worked together to agree the features of high-quality learning and teaching, "What Good Learning Looks Like at Georgetown". In most lessons, they implement this agreed guidance effectively to ensure children experience high-quality learning and teaching across the curriculum. For example, staff have developed a structured approach to developing reading skills. This is ensuring a consistent approach across the school. In most lessons, teachers plan a range of learning activities which are well matched to children's needs. In a few lessons, teachers need to provide more creative and challenging activities. In almost all lessons, teachers build very well on what children already know and provide helpful and clear explanations. Across the school, almost all children are highly motivated in their learning.
- Almost all teachers share the purpose of learning and measures of success with children. As a result, children understand what they are learning and what is expected of them. Children demonstrate increasing confidence in creating steps to success. This is supporting them well to understand their own progress in learning. Teachers should now develop this further across the school. In almost all lessons, teachers provide well timed support and interventions for children's learning. In almost all lessons, teachers ask questions which require children to recall information, make links to prior learning and to check for understanding. In most lessons, teachers use effective strategies to actively involve children in providing answers. This helps ensure that all children engage in thinking which supports their learning. In most classes teachers use questioning very effectively. They support children's development of higher order thinking skills very well.

- In almost all lessons, teachers provide children with highly effective verbal feedback. This helps children to understand what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve. Staff have worked together to implement a consistent approach to developing children's writing. This is supporting children to be more focused on their writing targets and how to improve their writing. Children are developing very well their use of self- and peer-assessment to identify successes and where there could be improvement. Children use quick response matrix bar codes to share this feedback with their peers. This deepens children's understanding of successful learning and is developing their digital and communication skills well. Children work with their teachers to set targets for learning in literacy and numeracy. Staff should build on this positive approach and continue supporting children to have a better understanding of their targets.
- Across the school, teachers' use of digital technologies is successfully enhancing children's learning. Teachers use a progressive framework for digital technology. This develops children's digital skills, critical thinking and creativity. For example, children in P5-P7 now use coding to programme devices as part of their science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) learning in interdisciplinary work. Children, in their role as digital leaders, support and enhance the development of digital technology across the school. As a result, children's digital skills for learning are improving.
- Staff implement play pedagogy very well to support younger children's learning. They use spaces very effectively to create a range of stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environments, linked to children's interests. These provide a motivating context for children to develop and apply their literacy, numeracy and creative skills. The balance of adult directed, adult initiated and child led activities is effectively supporting children's learning. As planned, teachers should use observations more widely to support the assessment of children's learning and development of meta skills through play. This will ensure that there is progression as children move through stages.
- Children's understanding of meta skills is well embedded, particularly at the senior stages. Children make clear links to these skills and the world of work. Children talk positively about the skills they acquire through their interdisciplinary work which provides them with a high level of challenge. As planned, the headteacher and senior staff should develop approaches to track the development of children's skills across the curriculum.
- All teachers use a range of long-term and medium-term plans well to plan children's learning. They make effective use of progression pathways linked to Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) experiences and outcomes across all curriculum areas. This is supporting an increasingly consistent approach to planning across all stages. Teachers take account of children's views and current affairs when planning learning across a variety of contexts. For example, within interdisciplinary learning, children share with teachers what they already know and what they want to know more about at the start of each topic and have choice in how they learn. As planned, staff should continue to extend opportunities for children to lead and plan their own learning. This will continue to increase challenge and give children more ownership in their learning.
- All teachers have worked collaboratively to develop an increased range of appropriate assessment approaches linked to national Benchmarks. This is leading to a more consistent approach to assessment across the school and is supporting teachers' understanding of children's progress in literacy and numeracy. Teachers should continue to ensure assessment approaches are consistent across all classes.

- Staff at all stages plan and moderate together well. They engage well with national Benchmarks as part of their moderation activities. All teachers have engaged in well-planned professional learning for the moderation of writing this session. This collaborative work with partner schools has helped staff become more confident in their professional judgements. It supports a clearer, shared understanding of achievement of a level. Senior leaders should continue to moderate assessments as part of the quality assurance procedures to ensure consistency across the school.
- Senior leaders meet with individual teachers to review children's progress and attainment each term. They use a range of robust evidence and assessment information to identify progress. Staff identify and implement appropriate interventions for children who require support. Staff make increasingly effective use of data to inform these discussions. This includes reviewing the progress of different groups of children, such as those with additional support needs or other barriers to learning, including poverty. This supports staff to identify potential barriers or gaps in learning that need to be addressed in relation to literacy and numeracy. Staff use the school's tracking tool very well to capture children's progress over time. Senior staff should continue to develop their approaches for tracking children's progress across all curriculum areas.



## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- The curriculum rationale reflects a strong commitment to embedding learning for sustainability across the curriculum. All teachers plan effectively using school and local authority developed progression pathways for all curricular areas. They link these pathways to CfE experiences and outcomes. This supports children very well to build on prior learning. Teachers use learning pathways to plan collaboratively across curricular areas. They group CfE experiences and outcomes together to create relevant and purposeful focus areas. These include embedding learning for sustainability, STEM, Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) and global citizenship. This is helping children to understand how they can be responsible local and global citizens. Children are developing their inquiry skills and adding breadth and depth to their learning through this interdisciplinary approach.
- Staff recognise the importance of children learning outdoors to support the development of skills for life, learning and work, including meta skills. Teachers at all stages are committed to taking learning outdoors at least once a week for all classes. Staff should continue to consider how all children can regularly experience a progressive programme of outdoor learning both within the school grounds and wider community. This will support children to become more adaptable and apply their problem-solving and teamworking skills in new contexts.
- All children receive two hours of high-quality physical education (PE) each week. Teachers use the school's progression pathway to plan progressive learning in PE. Children have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle for their wellbeing.
- In all classes, teachers provide progressive lessons to develop children's knowledge of the French language. Children across all stages benefit from a programme in signing. This promotes inclusion and supports communication with children in the QLC. As planned, staff should continue with to introduce British Sign Language (BSL) as the second modern language.
- All children explore diversity and multi-faith issues as part of the religious and moral education programme. As a result, they demonstrate respect for the beliefs of others.

## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Almost all parents say that their child enjoys being a learner in the school. Parents comment positively about their children being treated fairly, equally and with respect. They feel well informed about whole school issues and events through effective communication from staff and the Parent Council. Their views are actively sought through a range of channels. Parents receive appropriate information about their child to support learning at home. A few parents would like more regular and timely information about their child's progress throughout the school year. Staff are taking forward plans to further improve the consistency of communication with families through the use of an online platform. This should help parents to support their child at home and become more engaged and involved with their child's learning.
- Parents recognise the school's strong commitment to celebrating diversity and promoting an inclusive ethos. They value the school's effective support in meeting the individual needs of children and the support provided to families.



## 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

very 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 and staff feel valued and respected through a highly nurturing and inclusive ethos across the school. They demonstrate the school values consistently in all interactions. Staff and children build positive and respectful relationships. The interconnectivity of children's rights, Global Goals and sustainability is a strong feature that underpins the school's vision. Children across the school understand the importance in their role as citizens of the future and their responsibility for the wider world. Children's independence, resilience and self-awareness impacts positively on creating the strong sense of community, inclusion and empathy.
- Children's wellbeing underpins the work and life of the school. Staff and partners have a very good understanding of the importance of wellbeing to children's attainment, achievement and development. Staff work regularly with children to understand and reflect on their wellbeing. Consequently, children know the wellbeing indicators very well and what each means to them. Almost all children feel safe and have a trusted adult to talk to about worries or concerns. Children are happy and take great pride in their school.
- Staff implement a highly effective whole school approach to promoting positive wellbeing through 'Being well, Doing well and Feeling well'. They bring together nurturing principles, wellbeing indicators and the Getting it Right for Every Child principles cohesively. As a result, children across the school are emotionally literate and discuss clearly how their experiences in and out of school improve their wellbeing. Staff monitor and track children's wellbeing formally on a termly basis. They analyse and discuss this information to proactively identify and address any barriers to learning, providing appropriate support and interventions. For example, through this approach, children stated they did not identify issues with extended screen time on digital devices. Teachers delivered lessons discussing screen time that helped children understand how this could impact on their wellbeing.
- All children reflect meaningfully on their emotional wellbeing daily. They use a range of age-appropriate resources effectively to communicate clearly their emotions. This includes how they are feeling with the emotions displayed by the characters in an emotions story. Across the school, staff use children's responses to emotional check-ins to offer timeous support if a concern is raised. As a result, children feel cared for and nurtured.
- All children across the school demonstrate well their understanding of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Children and staff create class charters and class expectations based on children's rights. Almost all children can speak about the benefits of rights in their lives and in school. The school has received national accreditation for its work in this area. Consequently, almost all children feel staff listen to their views and take them into account.

- Children benefit from a relevant and well-planned health and wellbeing curriculum which is cohesive and progressive. This includes a focus on healthy bodies, food and nutrition and mental health. The Digital Dynamos leadership group led an assembly on how to keep safe online and children understand its importance. Children also understand the importance of road and personal safety. Almost all children can discuss how the benefits of eating healthy food, sleep and exercise have a positive impact on their health.
- Children take part in and enjoy physical activity through a PE programme. Children enjoy a range of activities provided by staff and providers that improves their fitness and sporting skills. For example, children have now joined sports clubs and activities out with school. These include ice skating, basketball and bowls. Senior leaders track children's participation and ensure that they address barriers to accessing activities. The 'Get Georgetown Going' initiative, provides children with a further range of useful sports and opportunities to be active as part of the school's curriculum.
- All staff understand and fulfil their statutory responsibilities in regard to child protection and improving outcomes for children. Staff know their children and families very well, including those who may require additional support. Senior leaders and staff use the local authority staged intervention processes very well to assess and support children.
- Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the needs of children requiring additional support. They take an active role in identifying, planning and reviewing targeted interventions. They put robust systems in place to identify children requiring additional support, with well-constructed plans that they regularly review throughout the year. They implement these plans effectively to ensure children make enhanced progress in their learning. Staff should now further strengthen their approaches to involve children and families in the process. Teachers and the senior leaders regularly track the progress of children with additional support needs as part of their attainment and support for learning meetings. As a result, well planned targeted supports and interventions are put in place. This is resulting in improved outcomes for children.
- Staff work very well with partner agencies to help meet the needs of children and families. They consult and seek advice and guidance from a range of agencies to access specialist input and training. As a result, staff are more confident in supporting children's additional support needs effectively. For example, staff work with the cluster nurture teacher to develop approaches to meet sensory needs and manage anxiety in children. Their effective and timely interventions have resulted in children being able to self-regulate more readily.
- Children benefit from effective transition arrangements at every stage of their learning. P1 staff engage in planned visits to the nursery in the school. This allows the development of positive relationships and staff's familiarisation with children's learning contexts. Stage to stage transitions ensure staff share learning and wellbeing information to support continuity and progression. Staff arrange enhanced visits and personalised transition arrangements for children who require additional support. Across all stages, staff implement robust processes where all staff engage in professional dialogue and share key documentation relating to learner progress and wellbeing. As a result, children build confidence, resilience, and independence, ensuring they are well prepared for each new stage.
- All children learn successfully about equality, diversity and world religions through the curriculum and assemblies. Children from a range of cultures and faiths lead assemblies to share more about their religion, and to celebrate the diversity of the school community. Children benefit from learning from each other. More recently, children benefitted from reading and listening to a range of stories from around the world, as part of a literacy celebration event. This widened their understanding about different nationalities, customs and cultures.

- Children in mainstream classes develop their understanding of disabilities with protected characteristics very well. For example, 'Abilities in me' provides important information about children's individual characteristics. This is helping children understand of the range of additional support needs such as neurodiversity. As planned, staff should continue to develop children's awareness and understanding of other protected characteristics. Almost all children demonstrate a sound understanding of the challenges their peers may face. They show empathy towards their peers effectively, explaining very well that the needs of others can differ from their own.

### 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

very 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 numeracy is very good. Almost all children achieve expected CfE levels in listening and talking. Most children achieve expected levels in reading and writing. Almost all children at early level and most children at first and second level achieve expected levels in numeracy. Across the school, a minority of children exceed national expectations in literacy and numeracy.
- Most children who require additional support make appropriate progress towards their individual targets.

#### Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, most children make very good progress from prior levels of attainment in literacy and English.

#### Listening and talking

- At early level, almost all children understand and respond to stories they know and like. At first level, almost all children demonstrate techniques when engaging with others when talking. At second level, almost all children contribute to a discussion, offering an opinion and show respect for the views of others. Children should develop their skills through engaging in debates and presentations to a range of audiences.

#### Reading

- Staff have developed a structured approach to developing reading skills. This is ensuring a consistent approach across the school. Younger children enjoy reading by choosing books from the Reading Bus organised by the junior librarians. Older children borrow fiction or non-fiction from the attractive school library. This is increasing children's enjoyment of and engagement in reading.
- At early level, most children enjoy reading and listening to a range of texts. They hear and say accurately sounds made by a combination of letters and can recognise common words. At first level, most children talk confidently about different texts that they enjoy reading and read aloud with expression. They decode unknown words using familiar letter patterns. They should continue to answer questions to understand a text. At second level, most children use a range of reading skills well to read and understand a text. Children should now continue to read a range of texts by a wider range of authors and different genre, for example poetry and non-fiction.

#### Writing

- At early level, most children use their knowledge of sounds to write simple words correctly. Most children create texts using appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures. At second

level, most children create texts for a range of purposes selecting an appropriate structure and style. They use self- and peer-assessment well to review their writing to make sure it is technically accurate. At first and second level, children should now write across a wide range of genre. Staff should ensure that the quality of written work in jotters is of a consistently high standard.

## **Numeracy and mathematics**

- Overall, most children make very good progress from prior levels of attainment in numeracy and mathematics.

## **Number, money and measure**

- Almost all children working towards early level count in sequence within the range 0-10 and a few extend this to within 30. They are familiar with money and are confident at identifying coins up to £2. They apply this learning to use small denomination coins to purchase items from a class shop. Almost all children at first level confidently round numbers to the nearest one hundred. They solve addition and subtraction problems confidently with two digits. This helps them to solve two stage problems quickly and accurately. Children calculate accurately simple fractions of whole numbers. Almost all children at second level confidently compare costs and determine affordability within a given budget. They are confident using their knowledge of common fractions, decimals and percentages. They should continue to apply their numeracy and mathematics skills across an increasing range of problem-solving contexts.

## **Shape, position and movement**

- Almost all children working at early level recognise and describe common two-dimensional shapes. They understand the language of position, including in front and behind. Almost all children at first level accurately identify lines of symmetry within basic shapes. They have a good understanding of compass points and using words associated with angles to provide directions. At second level, most children can describe and classify triangles and angles using mathematical language including acute and obtuse. They are confident when calculating the area and perimeter of common shapes.

## **Information handling**

- At early level, almost all children sort items with accuracy based on their own criteria. They can interpret information from a simple pictograph to answer questions. Almost all children at first level, understand simple bar graphs and charts and use them successfully to interpret key information. Almost all children working at second level collect data using appropriate methods, create bar charts and analyse this information effectively. Children at all levels would benefit from using digital technology to collect, organise and display information.

## **Attainment over time**

- Attendance in session 2023/24 was 94.1%. This is in line with the national average. Senior leaders use the local authority guidelines to manage attendance very well. Senior leaders continually monitor and track attendance for groups of children, including those who are impacted by socio-economic factors. They act promptly where individual attendance dips below 90%. Senior leaders work with families to provide support to improve children's attendance at school. These interventions are having a positive impact on the attendance of individual children. A few children access the school on a part-time basis. This is referred to as flexi-schooling. These arrangements are at the request of parents and carers. Staff in the school work very well with children and their parents to provide learning at home. They work with parents to help children increase the amount of time they spend in school.
- Senior leaders and staff have developed effective systems and procedures to track children's attainment and achievement over time. They use data very effectively to identify areas where



action is required to address dips in attainment. For example, staff identified the need to address a dip in attainment in reading and writing from early to first level and attainment in numeracy at first and second level. As a result, attainment is improving. Senior leaders implement a clear strategy to raise attainment through developing the curriculum, teaching and assessment in reading, writing and numeracy. This is improving levels of attainment as children progress through the school. As planned, staff should continue to raise attainment in literacy, numeracy and across all curricular areas to ensure all children make the best possible progress in their learning.

### **Overall quality of learners' achievements**

- Staff celebrate children's achievements in a variety of ways across the school, including at assemblies, through awards and attractive displays. Children have worked together to achieve a range of local and national awards and accreditations, including awards for sustainability and children's rights. Children play an active role within their community to raise awareness about global issues. Children organise an annual Global Goals carbon neutral football tournament. This year's tournament focused on reducing inequalities by being open to all abilities. Attendees donated football boots, creating a boot bank to ensure every child could participate. This helps children to become responsible citizens and effective contributors. Importantly, this event allows children to lead and share information about Global Goals across the local community and with children in other schools. Children have developed partnerships with a school in Nepal. They have provided the school with a tablet to support digital learning. This partnership is helping children understand key similarities and differences that impact on children in different parts of the world.
- Children in older classes speak enthusiastically about their range of leadership opportunities. Class representatives undertaking leadership roles contribute to the promotion of specific areas of work across the school, such as community champions, health and wellbeing heroes and junior librarians. They speak confidently about the range of skills they are developing through these leadership opportunities such as working together and communicating with each other. As planned, staff should extend these opportunities to children at all stages of the school.
- Staff track children's wider achievements. They identify children at risk of missing out and provide opportunities for them. As planned, staff should support children to identify the meta skills that they are developing through these activities and record these in a digital profile.

### **Equity for all learners**

- Senior leaders and staff understand the challenges and recognise potential barriers to learning caused by economic disadvantage. The school's rationale for PEF is based on an analysis of a wide range of relevant data and information relating to the needs of children in identified groups. Through the Parent Council, senior leaders consult with parents about the use of PEF. Additional staff, funded through PEF, deliver interventions for targeted children. Senior leaders and staff review a range of data very effectively to measure the impact on gaps in children's learning in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. This data demonstrates these interventions are closing gaps in children's attainment.
- Senior leaders have extended the tracking of children's progress to include a wider range of factors that could impact on children's progress. They should work with parents to explore issues related to the cost of the school day. This will identify further areas where they could provide further support to families.



### Context

Queensberry Learning Centre (QLC) supports 18 primary school aged children from across the Dumfries area who have complex additional support needs. All children follow a highly personalised curriculum. The QLC includes three classrooms, changing facilities, a sensory room and soft play area. The principal teacher, together with the headteacher of Georgetown Primary School have overall responsibility for the QLC.

### Leadership of change

- All staff are committed to ensuring that children who attend Queensberry Learning Centre (QLC) attain as best as they possibly can. The headteacher and principal teacher provide strong values-based leadership. This supports staff to maintain their aspirations to continuously improve their work. QLC shares the mainstream school's values of learning, respect, responsibility, caring, equality and honesty. Senior leaders have helpfully paraphrased the school's values to reflect better the context of the learning centre. Senior leaders have set out clear aims. Collectively, the values and aims in the learning centre help staff and parents to be clear about staff's ambitions for all children.
- Senior leaders are highly approachable and actively seek staff's ideas on how to continue to improve the work of the learning centre. They ensure that improvements focus clearly on improving children's outcomes. Senior leaders manage the pace of change carefully. As a result, improvements are manageable and become embedded quickly into practice. Senior leaders value professional dialogue and learning. Staff have time to reflect on their practice and access appropriate professional learning. All staff actively seek out relevant professional learning. Senior leaders have recently introduced regular team meetings. These support teachers effectively to discuss individual children's progress and identify professional learning to support improvement. For example, all staff, including those in mainstream classes, have been trained to sign. This supports them to communicate well with children.
- Staff at all levels understand fully their role in implementing change. They have a very good understanding of strengths and areas for improvement. Staff work collaboratively to develop a clear rationale for how the learning centre improves children's outcomes. Senior leaders have developed a quality assurance calendar specific to the needs of QLC. Staff embrace opportunities to reflect on their practice and identify areas for improvement. They amend their practice taking account of any potential impact of change. Senior leaders should continue to embed approaches to quality assurance. They need to ensure quality assurance continues to lead to improvements.

### Learning, teaching and assessment

- All staff establish and maintain very positive relationships with children. Children come to school each day keen and eager to learn. They enjoy their learning and engage well in lessons that motivate and interest them. Staff match learning experiences to almost all children's needs well. Staff know each child's preferred mode of communication, including alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) aids, very well. This helps children to express their opinion or make choices.
- The school's values underpin teaching very effectively in the learning centre. Staff use a wide range of environments and teaching approaches to support children to maintain interest in their learning. For example, staff use the outside space in the school playground and the facilities in

a local church effectively. Staff use AAC technologies and other digital devices effectively to support children to access their learning. Tablets and switches help children very well to answer questions or to make a choice. Teachers' explanations of children's learning are clear. They use praise very effectively to help children understand when they have done well. Children's behaviour reflects their additional support needs. In the few instances where children become dysregulated, staff are highly adept at settling children quickly and reengaging them in activities. Teachers are supported very well by highly skilled learning assistants, who support children's learning effectively.

- Staff implement very effective approaches to planning children's placement at QLC. As a result, children settle quickly and attend regularly. Teachers and learning assistants observe children closely each day, noting how well children progress in their learning. They place importance on how well children access their learning, their ability to undertake tasks independently and how effectively they communicate. They use their assessment of children's abilities to adapt planned learning appropriately. This supports children to continue to make very good progress in their learning.
- Teachers plan children's learning effectively using CfE experiences and outcomes. They ensure that planned learning is interesting, motivating and relevant to each child's context. They plan appropriately over different timescales. Teachers plan well across all curricular areas throughout the school year. Teachers gather and record a range of reliable data and information on children's attainment. They use this data and information effectively to track and monitor children's progress. Teachers should continue to monitor children's progress and ensure children develop their skills progressively.

## **Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion**

- Staff provide a nurturing and caring ethos within the learning centre which supports children to feel safe, valued and cared for. All staff show the highest levels of respect to each child and their families. They model behaviour, which promotes the calm and purposeful learning environment very well. Staff's very positive relationships with parents and partners supports a common shared understanding of wellbeing across the QLC community. Children express themselves in ways which staff understand. Staff respond very effectively to children's wellbeing needs.
- Staff's highly developed knowledge of each individual child supports very effectively their understanding of how best to meet their needs. All staff have a very clear understanding of national guidance related to children's wellbeing. They undertake relevant appropriate professional learning to reflect on and improve their practice. This supports them to continually review how they ensure each child continues to develop their wellbeing. Staff work very well with partners. They act effectively on professional advice to ensure children's dignity and wellbeing is maintained.
- Staff comply and engage well with all statutory guidance and codes of practice related to children's wellbeing. They show very high levels of understanding of their responsibilities in ensuring children are safe. Staff use a range of appropriate national and local authority documentation in their planning. As a result, they record up to date and relevant information regarding children's wellbeing. These include personal support plans, individual learning activities, individual learning plans and children's individual targets. Collectively, these approaches ensure all children experience consistent, predictable care and attention each day. This supports the calm, purposeful environment in every class. Teachers should consider how children's individual targets could be developed further to support how they track and monitor children's progress. This should include, involving parents in identifying children's individual targets.

- Staff make very good use of the school campus and local community to support children to develop their wellbeing. This helps children to explore new environments in unfamiliar places. Almost all children have opportunities to attend mainstream classes alongside their peers. This helps them to feel more included as valued members of the school community.

## **Raising attainment and achievement**

- Children's progress is evaluated using a range of measures including the CfE milestones, individual targets and the school's tracking and monitoring system. Overall, all children make very good progress from their prior levels of attainment.
- Staff's very clear focus on developing children's communication supports all children effectively to improve their communication skills. This is helping all children to access the curriculum in ways meaningful to them and to develop their skills in literacy and numeracy. A few children write simple words. They write simple sentences and short stories. Children name things beginning with each letter of the alphabet. A few children add single digit numbers to ten. Children add numbers to twenty. A few children list the price of items up to one pound.
- Teachers' well-developed knowledge of each child ensures they have a very good understanding of how well children are progressing. They track and monitor children's progress closely. This helps them to plan learning at an appropriate level for each child. As a result, children develop their skills very well, building on their prior learning. Teachers should continue to develop robust tracking and monitoring approaches. This will support them to better identify children's progress and positive outcomes.
- All children develop their wider achievement skills through class lessons in the learning centre, whilst attending mainstream classes, at home and in the community. These support children to develop their confidence in accessing new and unfamiliar settings. For example, a few children are developing their understanding of road safety when visiting a local church. Parents regularly share children's personal achievements from home. Staff celebrate children's wider achievements effectively through school awards and at assemblies.
- All children have meaningful opportunities to attend mainstream classes and be involved in whole school events. This supports children to know they are equal members of the school community. The school receives PEF to support all children in the QLC. Senior leaders use this to purchase resources and enhance outdoor learning. For example, a recently purchased sensory swing helps children regulate and be ready to learn. This supports them well to engage and make progress in their learning. Senior leaders should continue to ensure that PEF contributes to improvements in children's learning.

## Practice worth sharing more widely

Children are strongly committed to sharing information about issues that impact on the environment. Through Global Goals, they are learning about and sharing information about issues such as climate change and poverty. They make connections with other local schools to lead this work and raise awareness with other children. The Global Goals carbon neutral football tournament invites other children to attend the school and to become involved in learning about global issues. In addition, children in the school have linked with a school in Nepal to support children there to access information through technology. This link also allows children to understand key issues that impact people in other parts of the world.

## 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.