

# Summarised inspection findings

**Canal View Primary School**

The City of Edinburgh Council

23 May 2023

## Key contextual information

Canal View Primary School and Nursery Class is a non-denominational school situated within the Wester Hailes area of southwest Edinburgh. There are 334 children on the school roll and 62 children are currently enrolled in the nursery class. There are 15 classes and a nursery class. Most children (79.5%) live in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles 1 and 2. The school has a wide variety of cultures, ethnicity and languages spoken by parents and children accounting for a quarter of their school roll. Just under half of the children (49%) receive free school meals. Canal View Primary School receives significant funding from the Pupil Equity Fund and Strategic Equity Fund.

There has been a significant change in the senior leadership team over the last few years. The newly appointed headteacher has been in post since August 2022 and has responsibility for the school and nursery class. The deputy headteacher has been in post since March 2021. The substantive principal teacher is currently seconded to the central team at City of Edinburgh Council to support development in mathematics. Since March 2022, two teachers have fulfilled the role of acting principal teacher on a job-share basis for the duration of this secondment.

### 1.3 Leadership of change

good

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

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- All staff show care and compassion for the children and families at Canal View Primary School. Children benefit from the calm, inclusive and supportive learning environment that has been created across the school. Relationships between staff and children are strong. The emotional and social wellbeing of all children and their families lie at the heart of all interactions. The school vision, 'Learning, growing and achieving together' is in place and reflects the school's vision for the future. Recent consultation with all stakeholders has resulted in the creation of the revised values of 'achievement, equality, kindness and respect.' The school rules of 'ready, safe and respectful' are well embedded and have helpfully provided all staff and children with a consistency of language and expectation.
- The headteacher was appointed in August 2022. She provides strong leadership, setting a positive tone and leading by example. All stakeholders hold the new headteacher in very high regard and appreciate her kind, strong and supportive leadership style. The deputy headteacher and principal teachers support the headteacher well and together they work effectively as a leadership team. The new senior leadership team has reviewed the effectiveness of many aspects of school life, and they are now clear about the strategic direction for improvement. Senior leaders should now develop clear remits to provide clarity regarding roles and responsibilities as they continue to lead identified improvements.
- The headteacher has secured the trust of children, staff and the wider school community. Staff embrace positively the support and strategic direction offered by the headteacher. Almost all staff feel the school is led and managed well. Staff report they feel very well supported by senior

leaders and benefit from strong collaborative teamwork with their colleagues. The staff team use the tagline #onlyatcanalview, to share school activity and celebrate the uniqueness of their setting more widely with their community. Senior leaders actively encourage and support staff to undertake leadership opportunities. For example, they lead aspects of improvement related to sustainability, reading, numeracy, digital literacy and equality.

- The headteacher has successfully introduced a helpful quality assurance calendar which coordinates the wide range of approaches used to engage staff in reflecting on the work of the school. These include, evaluative activity using How good is our school? 4<sup>th</sup> edition, professional dialogue through attainment meetings, planning discussions and following shared classroom experiences with teachers. As a result, almost all staff are beginning to develop a clearer understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Teachers are increasingly confident to talk about their own professional learning and how this informs their teaching approaches.
- Senior leaders and staff have a clear understanding of the school's social, economic, and cultural context. They are acutely aware of the increased challenges families face due to the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. Teachers benefit from professional learning to help them understand the impact on children of poverty and trauma. Using a range of data, all staff show a clear commitment to reducing inequalities and improving outcomes for all. Staff make use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) and Strategic Equity Funding (SEF) to target support for individuals and groups to reduce inequity and raise attainment. Senior leaders recognise the need to identify clearer measures for all planned interventions. This will support them to review and monitor the impact of their plans more effectively.
- The headteacher has recently introduced new systems for tracking the attainment and achievement of all learners over time. In addition, senior leaders engage regularly with staff to discuss individual progress and potential support needs. Effective interventions are then identified for each child. Staff are building their confidence in using a variety of assessment evidence and National Benchmarks to support decisions about attainment. As a result, more reliable data of achievement of a level is being captured. Senior leaders plan to continue moderation activity and professional dialogue to support this further.
- Staff have recently introduced opportunities for a few children to develop their leadership skills. For example, the Rights Respecting Schools group, equalities activists, reading leaders and pupil council. Senior leaders have correctly identified that now these groups are established, they should monitor their purpose and impact more closely. Staff should provide these groups with further opportunities to contribute to the planning and evaluation of their work. Senior leaders should look at further opportunities to allow more children to undertake leadership opportunities.

## 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

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

- Staff have a strong focus on developing positive relationships resulting in a caring and nurturing ethos across the school. This demonstrates their clear commitment to improving children's experiences. Staff have a sound understanding of children's wellbeing needs resulting in almost all children feeling safe at school. Across all classes, there are positive interactions between staff and children and children and their peers.
- Staff support children well in developing an understanding of their rights. For example, class charters can be seen in almost all classes and aspects of children's rights are reinforced through assemblies and wall displays. Across the school children can talk about how adults support their rights. Supportive and nurturing relationships are helping to build children's confidence and wellbeing.
- Staff have created a learning and teaching toolkit which provides teachers with useful strategies to support learning. This, along with regular formal and informal professional dialogue is beginning to build a more consistent approach to learning and teaching across the school. At present, the quality of learning and teaching is inconsistent across the school. Building on the positive start, the leadership team should continue to work with staff to improve the quality of learning and teaching.
- The majority of children are engaged in learning, respectful towards each other and are keen to learn in class. A significant minority of children are disengaged with learning at times. Senior leaders and staff should consider how to support all children to engage in learning more successfully. Children benefit from learning through a range of approaches including, group tasks, teacher directed learning and independent tasks. Teachers should ensure all tasks are well matched to children's needs and interests and the resources and support are available to allow children to be successful.
- In almost all classes, teachers explain the purpose of learning and in most classes, teachers share with the children how they can be successful. In a few classes, children's understanding is enriched further through discussions with the teacher as to how they will be successful. As acknowledged by senior leaders, the quality of teacher's feedback to children is not yet of a consistently high quality. Across the school, teachers should ensure that children are involved in leading their own learning, setting targets and knowing what they need to do to improve.
- The majority of children with barriers to learning are supported well through the use of visual prompts, quiet spaces, trusting relationships and appropriate individual learning tasks. Where tasks and activities are set at the right level, children display greater engagement and participation in their learning. Children in receipt of targeted support benefit from helpful discussions that take place between additional support needs (ASN) teachers and class teachers. Senior leaders now need to ensure there is a consistent approach to support all

children who need help with their learning. They should develop a more rigorous overview of the interventions and measure the impact of these to ensure all children receive the right support at the right time.

- Staff have firmly established play pedagogy in the early level following several years of professional research and training, including Realising the Ambition. Teachers have shared their practice with colleagues across the cluster and at a national event. Children benefit from a carefully planned, enabling environment which is helping them to develop skills such as creativity, problem solving and independence. Most children interact well, are focused on their tasks and teachers effectively involve children in the planning of their learning. To support their development, children engaged in free play would benefit from increased interaction with any available staff while others receive direct teaching.
- Canal View Primary School has extensive outdoor spaces including a woodland area and school farm within the grounds. All children enjoy outdoor learning experiences and talk enthusiastically about learning for sustainability through the farm experience. In the farm, children learn about planting, growing and woodland walks. Moving forward, and as staff confidence grows, school leaders should monitor children's experiences across all stages to ensure all activities are purposeful and avoid repetition. Senior leaders have correctly identified the need to create an outdoor learning programme that ensures progression in learning.
- In most classes, digital technology is used well to enhance and support learning. Children use the interactive whiteboard, digital tablets and matrix barcodes to record and enhance learning. For example, in the P1 and P2 classes staff encourage children to be reflective by being 'Learning Detectives' where they record their learning on the tablets to discuss with their class during daily reflection time. As planned, teachers should continue to embed the recently developed digital learning framework to ensure progression of skills across the school.
- Teachers gather a range of formative, summative and standardised assessments. This information provides teachers with evidence of progress in children's learning. Teachers should review how they use this information to support them to make more robust and reliable judgements about children's levels of attainment. Engaging in moderation in writing and numeracy both within school and outwith across the cluster has supported teachers' awareness and understanding of National Benchmarks. Through this collaborative work on the moderation cycle, teachers are making more accurate predictions of achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels, leading to more robust tracking discussions.
- Assessment is not yet integral to the planning of learning and teaching. Senior leaders have correctly identified the need to review approaches to planning and assessment across the curriculum.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Children experience regular opportunities to learn in literacy, numeracy and mathematics. Staff at each stage work together to plan learning which uses links across different subjects studies. A designated staff member supports staff in the delivery of health and wellbeing, and physical education. A series of 'learning weeks' allow for more focussed learning, for example, internet safety. The staff team makes use of The City of Edinburgh Council learning pathways to plan learning over the year. These include a whole school approach, focusing on 'MADD About' (Music, Art, Dance and Drama). For example, children enjoyed developing dance inspired by icons including Marcus Rashford and Lewis Hamilton. Children also enjoy aspects of drama, supported by an external partner. However, as children move through the school, they have insufficient opportunity to develop skills and knowledge in music.
- Staff are actively involved in reviewing and refreshing the curriculum for the children at Canal View Primary School. As this develops, staff should ensure the use of plans and learning pathways supports progression across all areas of the curriculum.
- Senior leaders and staff have identified a range of opportunities for all children to experience during their time at school, indoors, outdoors and across the city as participants in a 'Journey Through Canal View'. This approach recognises the role the school can play in closing gaps in children's life experiences. As the team continues to refresh the curriculum, there is also a need to review contexts for learning. The children attending Canal View Primary School should be offered high quality opportunities to learn more about their city and Scotland. Staff should ensure learning contexts offer children relevant opportunities that extend their world, and support them in developing skills for learning, life and work.
- School leaders should ensure that all children at all stages experience two hours of quality physical education each week.

## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- All staff at Canal View Primary School show a strong commitment to building positive relationships with their children and families. The school team recognises the importance of working in partnership with families to improve wellbeing and reduce barriers to learning. Almost all parents feel the school takes into account their views when making changes and are comfortable approaching all staff with questions, suggestions or a problem.
- The Parent Council is supportive of the school and is keen to encourage more parents to become involved with the Parent Council. Parents regularly receive information about pupil achievements and the work of the school through termly newsletters, social media, text messages and the school website. The school provides some opportunities for parents to engage in the life of the school through events such as Meet the Teacher and the Coffee and Chat events. A few parents have also participated in classroom storytelling activities and have completed the local authority 'Raising Children with Confidence' programme. In partnership with the Parent Council, senior leaders should continue to identify opportunities for parents to engage in learning and play a more active role in the school improvement process.

## 2.1 Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.



### 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- The wellbeing of children and their families is central to the work of Canal View Primary School. All teachers and support staff know their children and families very well and understand that wellbeing underpins learners' ability to achieve success. Positive relationships are clear throughout the school, creating a caring environment which supports children to participate and improve their wellbeing. The headteacher ensures that staff wellbeing is recognised as essential to whole school mental health and wellbeing and is a strong feature of the school. Children value being able to talk to staff and a school counsellor on a one-to-one basis about their feelings. Most children feel that they have trusted adults who care for them and keep them safe in school.
- Most children understand the wellbeing indicators. Children can give a few examples about what it means to be safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. For example, eating healthily, exercising, and caring for themselves. Staff should develop further the language of the wellbeing indicators. This will help all children to have a shared vocabulary for talking about wellbeing and support them to apply their knowledge and understanding about wellbeing indicators to their own health and wellbeing.
- At the start of each term, all children complete a wellbeing assessment. Teachers consider the children's responses and discuss any concerns with the school Wellbeing Team, resulting in planned work to support children. Staff should track children's wellbeing assessments to allow them to demonstrate impact over time following support interventions. Teachers should take time to discuss this wellbeing assessment with children. This would help children to be able to understand and discuss their feelings and wellbeing with confidence.
- Canal View Primary School has achieved accreditation for their work in raising awareness of children's rights. In classes, teachers and children create class charters, and the Rights Respecting Schools group is supporting children to become more aware of their rights through assemblies. Children report that recent work on school rules of 'ready, respectful and safe' has ensured an improvement in respect between children and has impacted positively on behaviour in classes. Most children and almost all parents and partners feel that staff treat children fairly and with respect.
- Canal View Primary School is a highly nurturing school and children who require significant additional support to engage with learning are benefitting from well-considered nurturing approaches. For example, the use of small group work, nurture principles in classes and a targeted nurture class ensure that children are developing their emotional wellbeing well. They are learning to talk about their feelings, and are developing ways to manage difficult emotions, including recognising the physical responses in the body. This is leading to increased attendance and children spending more time in class. As planned, staff should continue to

develop this valuable work and ensure there is a consistent approach offered in both nurture bases and classrooms across the school.

- The school has implemented a wide range of approaches to provide children with a nurturing, trauma informed, restorative school environment. Senior leaders should now review all targeted interventions and plan specific measures that evaluate them to ensure they meet children's needs and impact positively on children's progress.
- Children benefit from a targeted programme that helps them manage loss and change delivered by trained staff within the school. As a result, children receive timeous support to help them cope through challenging periods of their life.
- Senior leaders use PEF effectively to support attainment and achievement for targeted learners in a variety of ways. For example, support from additional staffing and resources for nurture and wider achievement opportunities after school and during lunchtimes. Families facing financial hardship are well supported through a variety of supports offered by the school. For example, direct access to food banks and clothing.
- Teachers deliver a range of health and wellbeing resources and programmes. The school would benefit from aligning all health and wellbeing resources to the City of Edinburgh Council's health and wellbeing progression pathway. This would enable the school to ensure progression of learning for children and support tracking of progress through CfE levels.
- The school Wellbeing Team regularly track and monitor attendance for all children across the school. They also meet with the Education Welfare Officer from Wester Hailes High School to share information. This is leading to the identification of trends, support needs, the provision of the appropriate levels of support and ensure patterns of attendance continue to improve for children. Staff have made adaptations to the week, such as introducing Fantastic Fridays and changing assembly days, which is helping to increase attendance. Senior leaders should now include a focus on the correlation between attendance and progress during regular professional dialogue meetings with each teacher.
- School staff have an appropriate understanding of their responsibilities and statutory duties related to child protection, wellbeing, equality and inclusion. All children who require additional support interventions have individualised programmes and plans in place. Their voice is heard by senior leaders and staff when creating their targets for learning.
- Children benefit from religious and moral education which celebrates and promotes the diverse culture and multi-faith community within Canal View Primary School. All children receive their entitlement to religious observance.
- Children's understanding of equality and diversity is strong. They learn about the importance of respecting differences in a variety of ways, including school celebrations and as part of the curriculum. Library books have been updated to include more diversity in the texts children access. Whole school learning weeks around Black History Month, anti-racism and Language Week Scotland, have contributed to children being aware of their own uniqueness, celebrating diversity specifically related to their context and community.

### 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

- Overall, children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. Across the school the majority of children are making satisfactory progress in their learning.
- The majority of children who have additional support needs are benefitting from a range of supports and interventions and make appropriate progress from prior levels of attainment.
- Achievement of a level data gathered over recent years is not robust and therefore does not provide a reliable picture of children's attainment over time. The headteacher is supporting staff to review their approaches to assessment and moderation and to develop a shared understanding of national standards. As a result, staff have set more accurate predictions for children's attainment for this school session.

#### Attainment in literacy and English

- Across the school the majority of children are making satisfactory progress in listening and talking, reading and writing. The majority of children are on track to attain appropriate national standards by June 2023.

#### Listening and talking

- The majority of children working towards early level listen well, follow simple instructions and respond well to questions from adults. The majority of children working towards first level are beginning to develop confidence in expressing their views and ideas. A few children listen well to each other in small group discussions. Children are developing skills in note taking as they listen and watch in activities outdoors. The majority of children working towards second level would benefit from regular opportunities to develop further their skills in listening and talking. They need to listen more effectively and show respect for the views of others. Across the school children need to develop improved skills in listening and talking in class and group discussions. A significant minority of children across the school require continued support with speech and language development to develop communication skills. This will build their capacity to take part fully in class and groups discussions.

#### Reading

- The majority of children working towards early level are developing early reading skills by using their emerging knowledge of sounds and letters to read words. Children at early level enjoy recalling well-loved stories and acting them out in the class area and outdoors in the woodland. The majority of children working towards first level read confidently from their group texts and can answer literal questions about texts. They now need support to improve fluency and expression. Children working towards second level are developing skills in finding and using information from a variety of sources. Across all stages children would benefit from regular

access to the school library. Children do not have a wide knowledge of different genres of authors. To promote reading, and support children to share their skills with their families, staff should develop approaches to ensure all children have opportunities to take books home.

## **Writing**

- The majority of children working towards early level are developing confidence in emergent writing skills. Supported by the teacher they make labels and write simple sentences with a capital letter and full stop. To support fluency and pace in writing, children at early level would benefit from support to use pencils and pens with increased control. Children working towards first level are beginning to spell common words correctly although they need support to apply these skills in their writing across the curriculum. The majority of children working towards second level are developing skills well in using appropriate punctuation and structure in their literacy tasks. Supported by teachers, they are prompted to use paragraphs well. Across the school children need regular opportunities to write across a range of genres and for a range of purposes and audiences.

## **Attainment in numeracy and mathematics**

- Across the school the majority of children are making satisfactory progress in numeracy and mathematics. The majority of children are on track to attain appropriate national standards by June 2023.

## **Number, money and measure**

- Children working towards early level can count forwards and backwards to 20. A few children can count beyond 30. Children can add within 10 although they need further practise at subtraction. Children working towards first level are confident in reading and ordering numbers within 1000. They can add and subtract within 100 but are not yet confident beyond 100. They can share equally but cannot confidently link multiplication and division. Children working towards second level can calculate simple fractions and percentages and use this knowledge to solve problems. They use mental strategies to answer addition and subtraction calculations and can explain their answers. A few children at second level are not yet confident in place value up to 1000000.

## **Shape, position and movement**

- Children working towards early and first level can recognise and name two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. They can sort shapes and patterns into groups. At first and second level, children use mathematical language to describe the properties of shape, such as side, edge and base. Children working towards second level can match nets to three-dimensional objects. They do not yet understand the terms diameter and radius. At first and second level children need more opportunities to develop their understanding of positional language and angles.

## **Information handling**

- Children working towards early level can match and sort items based on colour, size, and shape. Children at first and second level can answer simple questions from graphs and charts. They would benefit from more opportunities to display data in a variety of ways, including digitally, with labelled axes and scales to share information they have collated. Across the school children would benefit further from applying skills in information handling in a range of real-life and meaningful contexts.

## **Attainment over time**

- The leadership team has developed a new tracking system to gather and discuss attainment at different points over the year. Used effectively, this system will support more accurate

monitoring and tracking of children's progress across all stages over time. In addition, this will provide the staff team with reliable data to better inform their improvement agenda.

- Senior leaders and teachers should analyse further all data relating to attainment and achievement for individuals, different cohorts of learners and whole classes. This should help staff raise attainment and accelerate progress for all children over time. In doing this, they should ensure this analysis and discussions inform next steps for improvement across each class, group and for targeted individuals.

### **Overall quality of learner's achievements**

- Regular assemblies provide the opportunity to celebrate success and children are proud to receive star awards and recognition. Staff are taking steps to offer children more opportunities for achievement during the school day, including at break and lunchtime. The staff team works effectively with a range of partners to support and enrich the learning experiences of children at all stages. In addition, some partners offer targeted support to children and their families and provide opportunities for learning beyond the school day. These partnerships are supporting improved outcomes and providing a few opportunities for children to develop skills for learning, work and life. Staff have recently begun to track children's achievements. This is already supporting staff to identify children who may be at risk of missing out, and to ensure children experience a breadth of opportunities.

### **Equity for all learners**

- Senior leaders and staff have a very good understanding of their school context and are committed to improving the life experiences and chances for all children. Staff work with a range of partners, services and agencies to help meet children's physical, mental and learning needs. For example, counselling services, mental health charities, fitness and creative drama groups. A number of these interventions are at an early stage of implementation and there is evidence of emerging positive impact. School leaders should continue to monitor and measure the quality of all approaches, to ensure all strategies lead to improved outcomes for targeted children.
- Senior leaders and staff ensure that the cost of the school day is not a barrier to children's participation. They work well with partners and charities to ensure children and their families are provided with food each week and receive the necessary support. For example, they ensure families for whom English is an additional language, access vital home repairs and that all children have sufficient clothing.
- As a feature of their strategy to improve attainment, the senior leadership team and school staff have taken steps to improve attendance. Attendance is closely monitored, and support provided is having a positive impact on attendance, particularly for children who often missed Fridays in school.

## 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.