

# Summarised inspection findings

**Auchtergaven Primary School**

Perth and Kinross Council

20 June 2023

## Key contextual information

Auchtergaven Primary School and Nursery Class is a rural primary school that serves the village of Bankfoot and surrounding areas in Perth and Kinross.

Currently, the school has 137 children, organised across six classes. The nursery class has 20 children aged between three and those not yet attending school. The nursery class is located in the school grounds.

The school is led by the headteacher and a recently appointed principal teacher who teaches four days each week. The headteacher has overall responsibility for the primary school and nursery class.

The school have faced significant challenges due to staff absence over recent years.

### 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

- Senior leaders and staff have developed a warm, inclusive and welcoming ethos where children are cared for and valued. They have worked hard to promote strong relationships between pupils, staff, parents and the wider community. This positive ethos and strong sense of teamwork is underpinned by the school's values of achieving, healthy, happy, responsible and resilient. Most children feel well-supported, safe and respected at school. Senior leaders and staff know children and families very well. They are aware of local circumstances and use this information to offer support to families and children.
- The majority of children are enthusiastic and engage well when given tasks and activities that offer the appropriate level of challenge. Across the school, children are supported to work independently, in pairs and groups. In most classes, staff are building children's resilience through supporting them to understand that mistakes are part of learning. As a result, most children are developing confidence to tackle new learning activities. Older children show kindness and empathy towards younger children by supporting them in their play and learning.
- The majority of staff give clear explanations and instructions. Most teachers share the purpose of learning and ways in which children can be successful. In a few classes, children and teachers work together to create helpful learning targets. Teachers should support children to have a clearer understanding of their own specific learning targets to enable them to reflect on their progress. In the majority of classes, learning is appropriately matched to children's needs however, in most lessons, the pace of learning is too slow. Staff should ensure a brisk pace of learning and that children have the right level of challenge. In most classes, children are now ready to have a greater role in leading their own learning.

- The majority of teachers use questioning skilfully to engage whole classes and groups. This is supporting children to develop their higher order thinking skills. Older children are regularly engaged in rich and enjoyable learning experiences., For example, teachers use drama to help children reflect on difficult decisions in health and wellbeing. Across the school, teachers make positive use of real-life and relevant contexts to deepen learning for children.
- Teachers are beginning to review their classroom environments and activities to ensure that they are inclusive for all children. Senior leaders and staff should now work together to ensure there is a consistent approach to high quality learning and teaching across the school.
- Across the school, children use digital technology confidently to support their learning. Children can create their own compositions through digital music applications. Across the school, children use tablets effectively to support learning in numeracy and literacy. Children can independently select and share learning with their parents through online platforms. Older children can use a variety of applications to create and display their work, for example, they create digital presentations in health and wellbeing.
- In P1 teachers and support staff are successfully developing play -based learning linked to national guidance. They plan and provide a well-considered balance of direct teaching of groups and individuals and wider play opportunities. Working together, teaching staff and nursery practitioners discuss their progress towards implementing high-quality play. They regularly evaluate the quality of the learning environment and assess the impact this has on the experiences of the children. They use questioning effectively to challenge children and promote deeper learning. As a result, children are growing in independence, becoming more confident and engage in their play for sustained periods.
- Teachers support regular reading for enjoyment through the effective use of school and class libraries. Older children help to foster a love of reading in younger children by helping them to choose books from the mobile library. Staff welcome children's suggestions for improving the library or new book purchases. The Parent Council have recently supported the creation of a new reading nook that is encouraging children to read.
- Almost all teachers provide helpful oral feedback to children on their effort and engagement with learning tasks. Most teachers make regular checks for understanding. Most teachers support and provide opportunities for children to self and peer assess their work, particularly in writing lessons. In a few classes, teachers provide clear written feedback that focuses on strengths and outlines what children need to do to improve. Senior leaders should now ensure that this approach is more consistent across the school.
- Support staff assist children well and are sensitive to the needs and wellbeing of children. They provide a range of interventions which are supporting children to practise learned skills. They support children well to access the curriculum. Individualised educational plans and child's plans are in place for children who require support. Senior leaders and staff now need to ensure that targets are more specific and have a greater focus on addressing barriers to learning. Teachers should ensure that targets are short-term, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound, to be able to measure children's progress more clearly. This will also support children's understanding of their targets and what they need to do to achieve them.
- Teachers are developing their understanding of national standards through moderating children's learning with stage partners and within a small school cluster group. Senior leaders now need to ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of nationally expected levels, especially when moderating children's work in literacy and numeracy. This will support

teachers to improve the reliability of their professional judgements of children's progress and better help them to understand progression through Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels.

- Senior leaders and staff have developed a clear assessment calendar and use a range of ongoing assessment opportunities including diagnostic assessments. The headteacher meets teachers each term to discuss the progress children are making. It is not yet clear how all staff use assessment data to inform their planning. Senior leaders should support teachers to reflect on and analyse the information gathered as a result of assessments. This will support all teachers to identify clearly where children require support and challenge within their learning.
- All teachers use agreed whole school progression pathways and approaches when planning learning and teaching. Teachers plan regularly together which is supporting greater consistency across classes and stages. They also plan for opportunities for children at the same stage to learn together. Teachers are beginning to explore how children can contribute to the planning process through a range of approaches. They are beginning to develop a better understanding of learning across subjects to ensure that children experience more consistency, breadth and depth in their learning.

## 2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

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

### 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

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

- At the end of session 2021/2022, overall, most children attained nationally expected CfE levels in literacy and numeracy in P1, P4 and P7. A majority of children at first and second level are capable of achieving more. There is a need to maintain children's progress from prior levels of attainment in early level.
- A few children requiring additional support are making good progress from their individual prior levels of learning, however a majority of children are capable of achieving more. A few children with barriers to learning are achieving nationally expected CfE levels at key milestones.

#### Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, at early and second level, most children are making good progress in literacy and English. Most children working towards first level are making satisfactory progress.

#### Listening and talking

- At early and second level, most children are making good progress. Across first level, the majority of children are making satisfactory progress.
- At early level, most children listen well to instructions. They share their views confidently when working with adults in pairs and small groups. Across first level, a few children share ideas and listen to others when working in small groups. Most children can contribute ideas and opinions when working with adults. Most children need further practice to extend their skills in listening and responding to others appropriately in respectful ways and opportunities to applying their skills effectively across the curriculum. By the end of second level, most children are growing more confident when speaking to peers and adults across a range of situations. They enjoy participating in debate, listening and considering differing opinions. They are less confident discussing non-verbal features for example, making eye contact to engage their listener.

#### Reading

- Overall, most children are making good progress and a few children are making very good progress in reading. Staff use whole-school approaches effectively to ensure children engage regularly with reading.
- At early level, most children blend sounds to create and read simple words. They enjoy listening to a variety of stories and texts and answer simple questions. By the end of first level, most children read familiar texts with growing fluency and expression and can identify the main idea. They require more practice answering literal and inferential questions. At second level, most children select and use an increased range of strategies when reading.

They read with fluency, expression and use appropriate pace and tone. Children ask and answer questions which demonstrate their understanding of a range of texts. Children should continue to develop their skills in identifying and discussing writer's style and other features.

## Writing

- Overall, most children are making satisfactory progress in writing. At early level, most children are increasingly forming letters correctly and writing familiar words. They are growing in confidence when writing sentences independently and for a range of purposes. At first level, the majority of children can write appropriately across genres, for example imaginative stories and reports. They are beginning to make use of planning tools to support their writing. They can link sentences using common conjunctions. Children require further practice in writing at increasing length and using knowledge of strategies to help spell familiar words. At second level, the majority of children create texts across a range of genre for different purposes and audiences. They use an increasing range of punctuation accurately within their writing and use paragraphs well to separate ideas. The majority of children can include a few examples of figurative language to engage their reader. Children need support to create increasingly complex sentences and should continue to develop interesting characters and settings using imagery. Across first and second level, the majority of children need further support to present their work in a clear and legible way and develop their presentation and layout skills.

## Numeracy and mathematics

- Almost all children at early level are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. The majority of children at first and second levels are making satisfactory progress in their learning.

## Number, money and measure

- At early level, children recognise, write and use numbers up to 10. They are able to confidently create and describe patterns using concrete materials. At first level, the majority of children are able to solve addition and subtraction problems with three-digit whole numbers. They are able to calculate total amounts of money spent and change. Most children require practice working with fractions, particularly, comparing sizes. At second level, the majority of children have explored complex number patterns, such as the Fibonacci sequence. They apply their knowledge of square numbers to explain the rule and apply it to the pattern. Most are less confident in working with decimals.

## Shape, position and movement

- At early level, almost all children recognise common two-dimensional shapes. They can create patterns and describe the shapes included. At first level, the majority of children know that a right angle is  $90^\circ$  and can identify accurately four compass points. They are less confident estimating, comparing and describing angles in relation to a right angle. At second level, the majority of children can identify and illustrate the line of symmetry in a wide range of two-dimensional shapes. They require practice applying this understanding to complete a range of symmetrical patterns, including through the use of digital technologies.

## Information handling

- At early level, almost all children can use tally marks and create pictorial displays of data collected. At first and second level, the majority of children can identify the most appropriate way to gather and display data for a given subject. At first and second level, most children would benefit from further practice collecting, organising and displaying data in meaningful, real-life contexts, including using digital technology.

## Attainment over time

- The headteacher has gathered children's attainment data for literacy and numeracy for over five years and holds tracking meetings with teachers to discuss individual children's progress. As a result of recent analysis of the school's overall attainment information, staff have correctly identified numeracy as a priority area for improvement for first and second level.
- The headteacher recognises that teachers' professional judgement of children's progress in learning is not yet consistently reliable across the school and needs further support. Senior leaders are at the early stages of analysing, tracking and monitoring the performance of specific groups of children, such as gender and those facing barriers to learning. They are beginning to share this information with teachers, and this is supporting an increasing understanding of whole school strengths and gaps in learning. Senior leaders and staff need to consider how this information is used effectively to meet children's needs.

## Overall quality of learner's achievements

- Older children speak confidently about their leadership roles, such as house captains and buddies. They articulate well the value these roles bring to their peers and school life. Most children across the school participate in a range of leadership groups, such as pupil council and 'fiction addiction owls'. These opportunities are developing children's skills for learning, life and work, such as collaboration and communication. Children achieve success and develop confidence through educational outings, clubs and activities, such as cycling, gardening and the expressive arts. A few classes are developing confidence and creativity through woodland-based activities. Children enjoy when staff recognise and celebrate their skills and learning regularly. For example, they do this in class, at assemblies, certificates and the 'over and above' board. Families also share children's achievements from their home life which are valued and displayed by staff. All children work together well gaining national accreditation, such as Rights Respecting Schools bronze award.
- Senior leaders are not yet tracking children's participation in wider achievement experiences. This would help identify and support children who may be at risk of missing out. As planned, staff should help children to identify the skills and qualities they develop when participating in activities in and out of school. This will support children to recognise and reflect on their achievements and progress.

## Equity for all learners

- Senior leaders use a range of data and their knowledge of individual children and families to inform a few approaches to equity. They have a plan in place for the use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). This session PEF has been used for support staff additional hours and to purchase resources for numeracy. It is not yet clear the impact these have on children's attainment and progress. The headteacher recognises the importance of gathering robust evidence to monitor and evaluate the impact interventions have on children's wellbeing and learning.
- Senior leaders have arrangements in place to ensure that financial constraints do not prevent any children from taking part in opportunities for learning and achievement. They help address the cost of the school day for families in a range of ways, such as providing subsidised transport for outings and free school clubs.



The school submitted information relating to compliance with the revised Nutritional Regulations 2020 and key duties as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007. The Health and Nutrition Inspector (HNI) discussed this information with relevant staff and children. In addition, the HNI examined documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole-school approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of children through food in school. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.

## 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.