Summarised inspection findings

Wallyford Primary School

East Lothian Council

21 November 2023

Key contextual information

Wallyford Primary School serves the communities of Wallyford village and the Pinkie Mains area of Musselburgh in East Lothian Council. The school is a member of the Musselburgh Associated Schools Group (ASG) with pupils transitioning to Rosehill High School.

This area is a rapidly expanding community within East Lothian and as a result there is a significant increase of families with children moving into the area. The school moved to a new school building in 2019 to meet the needs of the growing school roll. There are large playgrounds and outdoor spaces. The school roll is currently 456.

The 18 classes this session comprise of a mix of single stream and composite. There is a Nursery Class. There have been significant changes in the leadership team over recent years. The headteacher has been in post since August 2023. She is assisted by two depute headteachers and a principal teacher.

In September 2022, the minority of P6 and P7 children were registered for free school meals. This is above the local and national average. In September 2022, the minority of children lived in quintile one of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), around half lived in quintile two and the minority lived in quintile five. The school received £129,850 Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) this session.

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	

- Children experience a positive and caring ethos at Wallyford Primary School. Almost all children are polite and respectful to adults and visitors to the school. The majority of children feel that they are respected by their peers. Across all classes, there are positive interactions between staff and children and children and their peers.

- All staff consistently embody the school values in their daily interactions. They encourage children to be compassionate, collaborative, and persistent in their learning efforts. Most children regularly make responsible choices and treat their peers with respect. Teachers maintain a welcoming and reassuring atmosphere in almost all lessons. They frequently refer to the school values to help children focus during lessons. The majority of children understand these values well and can articulate the significance of teamwork and helping others.

- The headteacher and staff rightfully acknowledge the importance of periodically revisiting and updating the school's values with both children and families. This ensures that the values remain relevant to the evolving community and are fully grasped by everyone, ultimately enhancing outcomes for children.

- A few children across the school are beginning to contribute to the life of the school through their participation in the Rights Respecting Pupil Group. The headteacher recognises the importance of ensuring that all children are offered leadership opportunities to support them to develop their skills for learning, life and work.

- Most children are motivated and engage well with their learning. Staff support most children well to work independently, in pairs and in groups. Teachers encourage children to support each other in the completion of tasks. Children should now be given greater choice and opportunities to lead their learning. This will allow them to take greater responsibility for their learning and become more independent learners.

- Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) is used to raise attainment in literacy by providing extra teaching support to improve children's phonic skills, reading fluency and comprehension. Children across first level visit other classes to develop their reading skills. As this approach streams children by current attainment levels, staff should carefully consider the effectiveness of this in meeting the needs of all learners.

- Almost all teachers make sure that children are calm and focused on the set task at the start of lessons. The majority of teachers use a variety of teaching approaches well, such as linking learning to real-life contexts and capitalising on children's interests. The majority of children could work at a brisker pace. Teachers should ensure that all tasks and activities are purposeful and designed to ensure all children make good progress in their learning. All teachers need to ensure that learning is set at the right level of difficulty for all children. Senior leaders should now work collaboratively with staff to maximize learning time and ensure all children progress at an appropriate pace.

- Teachers are beginning to make use of a variety of school guidance to help them structure lessons. The 'Wallyford Way' provides a constructive blueprint for structuring high-quality lessons. In most lessons teachers successfully share the purpose of learning and use a few strategies to check children's understanding. Teachers incorporate clear explanations and instructions and use effective questioning to extend children's thinking in the majority of lessons. As planned, senior leaders should review and update this document to ensure improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.

- Senior leaders and staff are committed to play-based learning and have recently devised a framework to embed a shared approach in all four P1 classes. Staff are enthusiastically engaging with national practice guidance to support their understanding of play. Recent staff training has led to environmental changes at P1. There is now an open area where children from different class groups can learn and play together with carefully selected resources. This is increasing children's choice and giving them more options for independent play. Staff have adapted the routines of the school day to provide more play-based learning opportunities. Senior leaders have planned further professional learning, which should inform how staff interact with and observe children learning through play.

- Teachers from the same stage collaborate to plan lessons and create resources. In most classes, children apply their learning effectively by completing practical tasks after whole-class tuition. Children often have the chance to choose creative resources to reinforce their developing skills. In a few instances, children receive the same instructions before selecting their difficulty level. These students would benefit from individualised explanations and personalised tasks to maintain consistent difficulty levels across activities.

- Teachers at individual stages have developed some effective ways to plan learning for children across the curriculum. The headteacher has identified the need to develop a more consistent

approach to planning learning across the school. The majority of teachers do not yet consistently include assessment in their planning for learning and teaching. Senior leaders and teachers should use results from assessments to plan children's next steps in learning. They should use assessment information to better monitor and track children's progress. This will support planning of subsequent learning and will allow children to better understand the progress they are making.

■ The school is in the early stages of working with partners from their ASG to plan moderation and professional learning activities. This should support a greater understanding of national standards within Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. Teachers would benefit from further moderation opportunities within the school to develop their range of assessments. As a next step, teachers should use the generated data they hold about children's levels of attainment to improve their understanding of their collective areas for improvement. This will help them make more effective professional judgements to evidence children's progress.

■ Senior leaders have revised the format of meetings they hold with teachers to discuss children's progress. Although at the early stages, this is helping senior leaders build a more comprehensive profile of children's needs across the school. The process supports staff to identify and monitor the progress of children who need additional support. Teachers use visual timetables in every classroom, and they review and update children's individual education plans regularly. This is helping to meet the needs of children who require additional support for 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	weak

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

■ Children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is weak. In session 2022-2023, a majority of children at P1 and P4, and a minority of children at P7 achieved expected CfE levels in literacy and numeracy.

■ Data provided by the school is based on teachers' professional judgements. Senior leaders should build the confidence of teachers in their use of a range of assessments, data, and moderation activities to ensure professional judgements are robust. Teachers would benefit from engaging more closely with National Benchmarks to ensure they have a rigorous approach to assessing children's attainment and achievement and closely monitor progress. This should ensure professional judgements are reliable and contribute to plans to raise attainment.

■ Overall, levels of attainment in literacy and English, numeracy and mathematics are inconsistent. Too few children are making progress in line with expected national standards. The school does not have sufficient data to indicate accurately the progress of children with additional needs or barriers to learning.

Attainment in literacy and English

■ Overall attainment in literacy and English is weak. The majority of children do not make sufficient progress from prior levels of attainment.

Listening and talking

■ The majority of children who have achieved early level listen well to their teachers and follow instructions. The majority of these children are less confident at using new vocabulary and phrases in different contexts. The majority of children who have achieved first level contribute relevant ideas to discussions. The majority of children at both early and first levels need to develop skills in listening to others' contributions and in taking turns. A minority of children working at second level are confident in discussing topics. All children need to develop their skills in a variety of contexts and for different audiences.

Reading

■ The majority of children who have achieved early level can use known sounds to attempt unfamiliar words. Children working at first level need to build confidence in finding information in texts to learn new things. The majority of children who have achieved first level can read aloud with fluency, expression and confidence. The majority of these children can answer literal comprehension questions, but are less confident at explaining the key features of texts. A minority of children working at second level successfully skim texts to identify purpose and

main ideas. Most children need to develop their knowledge of techniques used to influence the reader, for example word choice and emotive language.

- Across the school children would welcome regular access to the school library. This would support learners to further develop their knowledge of different authors and access a wider range of texts.

Writing

- The majority of children who have achieved early level can spell familiar words and attempt to write at least one sentence using full stops and capital letters. All children who have achieved early level need further consolidation to convey ideas and information in different ways. The majority of children who have achieved first level present writing in a clear and legible way and successfully use a range of conjunctions. Most children need to develop their skills further in planning and organising ideas. A minority of children working at second level use paragraphs and punctuation effectively. Most children are not yet skilled in writing in a range of genres.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, attainment in numeracy and mathematics is satisfactory. Too few children make good progress from previous levels of attainment.

Number, money and measure

- The majority of children who have achieved early level accurately find missing numbers to 20. They can count backwards from 20. They need to consolidate applying addition and subtraction skills to pay the exact value for items to 10p. The majority of children who have achieved first level can write, order and sequence numbers within a thousand. They are less confident at multiplying whole numbers by 10 and 100. A minority of children working at second level successfully round numbers to the nearest 1000, 10,000 and 100,000. Children working at second level need more opportunity to consolidate their understanding of the relationship between fractions and decimals. Across all stages children need to develop their mental agility skills and apply these skills in a range of real-life word problems.

Shape, position and movement

- The majority of children who have achieved early level recognise and describe common two-dimensional shapes. They are less confident sorting three-dimensional (3D) objects according to simple criteria. The majority of children who have achieved first level use compass points to provide directions. They are not yet able to describe properties of 3D objects. A minority of children working at second level accurately use mathematical language to describe and classify a range of angles. Most children working at second level need to develop further their knowledge of complimentary and supplementary angles to calculate the size of missing angles.

Information handling

- The majority of children who have achieved early level use tally marks to organise information. They display information on simple pictorial displays linked to their classroom rewards. The majority of children who have achieved first level use bar charts and Venn diagrams to display information. A minority of children working at second level use line graphs and bar graphs to display information. Children across the school need further opportunities to use ICT to enhance their learning in data handling.

Attainment over time

- Senior leaders acknowledge that robust tracking of attainment and progress over time is at an early stage and have rightly identified this as an important area for improvement. Staff do not yet track and monitor children's progress sufficiently well to give an accurate indication of how

children are progressing across the curriculum. As planned, senior leaders need to take prompt action to develop approaches to gathering data on children's progress. They should ensure rigour in using this data to inform and evaluate interventions. In addition, they should identify trends in children's attainment over time, for example, with particular cohorts of children.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

■ Staff celebrate achievements through assemblies, online platforms and social media. Children have a few opportunities to achieve in a number of different areas. For example, 'Glee Club,' 'John Muir Award' and the 'Awesome Programme.' Senior leaders are working with partners to develop a wider range of after school opportunities. Children are not yet able to identify the skills they develop as a result of their achievements. Staff should help children to identify the skills they develop. This will help children to recognise and reflect on their achievements and progress. Staff should also track children's participation in clubs and activities. This will help identify those at risk of missing out.

Equity for all learners

■ Staff have a good understanding of the socio-economic background of all children. Senior leaders should now take forward their plans to identify the most disadvantaged learners and target resources more effectively.

■ PEF has been invested in a variety of interventions aimed at raising attainment in literacy and in reducing the cost of the school day. For example, assisting the targeted funding of children to participate in the P7 residential trip. These approaches are not yet impacting positively on the attainment of all learners. Staff should consult more widely on how best to invest PEF. Senior leaders need to ensure that they monitor and gather robust evidence on interventions and measure the impact on outcomes for all children. They need to ensure that their approaches to improving equity result in raised attainment for all learners.

Other relevant evidence

■ Most children benefit from high quality, progressive lessons in physical education (PE) from a specialist PE teacher. These lessons do not always amount to two hours per week. As planned, senior leaders should ensure that all children receive two hours of PE provision per week.

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.