

Summarised inspection findings

Auchinloch Primary School

North Lanarkshire Council

5 March 2019

Key contextual information

At the time of inspection, the headteacher had been in post for less than a year. During his time in post, he has very effectively identified the school's areas for development and has prioritised appropriately. The headteacher is aware of the school's improvement journey and supplied an accurate self-evaluation for the school inspection. Since taking up post, the headteacher has been a key lead in taking forward school improvement. He is highly respected. Staff are on board in the school's improvement journey and taking forward their role in this.

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

- Overall, children are enthusiastic and engaged in their learning, can work independently and interact well with each other during activities. They are happy to share their learning with visitors. A few children can articulate how their learning links together across the curriculum, for example, in the work in maths and budgeting for building a house. Most children who spoke to HM Inspectors told us the school values their achievements. In response to inspection questionnaires, the majority of children reported that they can seek help when they need it. Most children are capable of taking more responsibility for their learning. Children say that they would like more challenge in their learning. As identified by the headteacher, there is now a need for children to take more ownership of their learning and be more independent.
- We observed children who appear happy at school; however, less than half of children who responded to inspection questionnaires reported that staff treat them fairly and with respect. A significant minority of children reported that other children behave well. During the inspection children were seen to be behaving well. Less than half of pupils reported that the school deals well with bullying. Being aware of these perceptions, the headteacher has introduced a new draft policy in relation to anti-bullying. He has led work with children, through, for example, school assemblies. The headteacher has plans for this work to be taken further soon through learning opportunities for children, staff and parents, in partnership with an external agency. Consideration could be given to moving towards a consistent promoting positive relationships approach throughout the school. This would support addressing perceptions of bullying, fairness and respect, along with the aim to improve the culture of respect, fairness and promotion of equalities.
- Children are consulted about the work of the school and participate in a variety of committees or take on pupil leadership roles. The headteacher has created a new quality assurance calendar, which includes pupil focus groups. The school should now extend pupil leadership of improvements across the school.

- Teachers use a variety of tasks and activities in their lessons. Staff are committed to creating positive and enjoyable environments for learning. However, there are variable experiences of the quality of learning across the school. Lessons can be too teacher directed, and the pace of learning inhibits children from achieving the best they can. Over recent months, there has been a focus on differentiation in teaching, in order to aim to meet the needs of all children. In the best practice, learning and teaching is of a very high quality, well differentiated and appropriately paced for children. In order for children to learn and achieve more, and improve attainment, there is a continued need for sharing understanding of what makes high quality learning, along with higher levels of challenge across the school. The school should continue to build on their best practice, particularly in relation to pace of learning, expectations and challenge for learners, along with looking outwards to gain increased opportunities to learn from best practice from other schools.
- Assessment strategies are being used throughout the school in various ways. In almost all lessons learning intentions are shared with pupils. On occasion, children are encouraged to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in order to move on to next steps in learning. In these examples, teachers give good quality feedback to enable children to make progress. Feedback is most effective when comments on children's work make clear how they can improve. In a few lessons, children are invited to create their own success criteria and evaluate each other's work, providing feedback related to success criteria. There is scope to continue to develop these strategies in a consistent way across the school, to ensure that children have a clear understanding of what they are learning and what they need to do to be successful. This in turn will support children to take ownership of their learning, along with enabling children and their parents to understand what exactly needs to improve and how this can be achieved. The headteacher has correctly identified the need to extend opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning.
- Children are confident in the use of digital technologies, which are used effectively to support learning throughout the school. The school environment is used well to create attractive learning spaces both in and outdoors. As planned, staff should consider how they can further develop outdoor learning. Many parents willingly share their own skills with children across the school, through a variety of learning opportunities across stages, supporting skills for learning, life and work.
- Over recent months the school has revised their approach to forward planning. This has resulted in a more consistent approach throughout the school. Staff use a variety of assessment approaches, including standardised assessments. They monitor children's individual progress through a revised monitoring and tracking system. Progress is discussed with senior leaders on a termly basis. This could now be extended to ensure analysis of individual and group data over time to inform effective planning. As identified by the headteacher, there is now a need for the school to share more detail with parents, regarding children's progress in learning and how parents can support next steps in learning.
- There are well-planned improvement priorities, which focus on appropriate areas of literacy and numeracy. Staff make use self-evaluation approaches from national guidance such as How Good is Our School 4? (HGIOS4?). Staff are developing confidence in assessing standards and applying criteria to support their assessments of Curriculum for Excellence levels. They are using benchmarks in literacy and numeracy, which is supporting them to make more confident and robust judgements about attainment. They work together and collaborate

with cluster schools and staff from Chryston High School, along with their family group of schools, to moderate standards. As identified, the school should continue to undertake moderation with colleagues within and outwith Auchinloch, in order to support the continuation of raising attainment for all.

- Overall, staff know children and their families well. They are committed to supporting those who have additional barriers to their learning. A new monitoring and tracking process has recently been implemented, along with new systems and processes including a variety of interventions to aim to ensure every child makes the best progress that they possibly can. Parents have been involved in decisions regarding the use of resources from the Pupil Equity Fund, which has been focused on improving children's health and wellbeing. Support staff know the children well and provide valuable help for those who need extra support with 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

- Data presented by the school indicates that most children are achieving the appropriate Curriculum for Excellence level in literacy and in numeracy. However, the headteacher agrees that professional judgements are not yet robust. As numbers of children are low at some stages of the school, it is not appropriate to identify individual classes in this record. Overall children are making good progress in literacy and English and satisfactory progress in numeracy and mathematics. Staff should now continue to develop further their approaches to assessment and moderation, which are at an early stage of development. This will enable them to make more accurate and reliable judgements about children's progress and attainment in literacy and numeracy.
- Staff are using the National Standards' Benchmarks and are developing their use of these to inform professional judgement. All teachers should now continue to engage in using these materials to develop a clear and shared understanding of what constitutes achievement of a level, and promote appropriately high expectations for all children.

Attainment over time

- During the inspection, the school was able to provide limited data on children's attainment over time. This session the headteacher is working with the staff to establish and embed structured approaches to monitoring and tracking the attainment and achievement of learners, which take account of a wide range of evidence. A range of summative and standardised assessments have been introduced, along with developing the reliability of teacher professional judgement. Although at an early stage, this is resulting in a wider body of evidence on which to base judgements about achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence level. It is too early to measure the impact of this work on children's attainment.
- The school has made an encouraging start to systematically gathering and tracking attainment data. Although in its infancy, the tracking system allows the headteacher and staff to track the progress of specific groups of children sharing similar characteristics. The headteacher recognises the importance of developing this further and supporting the staff's ability to provide specific, targeted interventions where required.

Literacy and English language

- Overall, from data provided by the school, attainment in literacy and English is good. This data shows that most children are making appropriate progress in literacy and English. However, attainment is too variable across the school, and, as previously outlined, attainment data is not yet robust. Whilst attainment in literacy is good, children are capable of achieving more.

Reading

- Overall most children are making appropriate progress in reading. At the early level, children use their knowledge of sounds to read words with growing confidence. At first level, the majority of children read with a degree of fluency, expression and understanding. In order to achieve more depth of understanding, the children should be supported to further develop their higher order thinking skills. The children need more practice in reading aloud and decoding new words. The headteacher is aware that children could cope with a faster pace and increase in challenge in their acquisition of literacy skills. By second level, P7 pupils are able to demonstrate a good understanding of several different comprehension strategies, which they use to identify the main ideas of a text with appropriate detail. In an example of leading their learning, they are able to effectively create literal, inferential and evaluative questions to pose their peers.

Writing

- Overall most children are making good progress in writing. Across the school, children often write in the context of the class theme or topic. This gives them the opportunity to apply their skills in meaningful contexts. At early level, children are working towards an understanding of punctuation. Attempts to use capital letters and full stops are in evidence by the majority of children. The majority of children are making attempts to spell familiar words correctly and use them in the creation of texts. At the first level, the majority of children use punctuation well to construct sentences. On occasion, there is effective use of paragraphs. The majority of children are developing their vocabulary to make their writing interesting. At second level, most children are able to use sentences of different lengths and vary sentence openings. Punctuation is mainly accurate and most sentences written in a grammatically accurate way. Children should continue to be given greater opportunity to consistently apply their skills and present their writing to wider audiences, where appropriate.
- In order to improve attainment and the progress that the children are making, staff should further develop a structured approach to moderation, with a significant focus on the use of the literacy and English benchmarks.

Listening and talking

- At early level, most children can listen to and follow simple instructions. The majority of children share ideas with their class. There is scope for children to further develop the ability to listen and respond to others appropriately. A minority of children at first level are able to take turns and contribute at the appropriate time when engaging with others. In some cases, staff should ensure that children who are reticent about volunteering answers are fully involved. At second level, almost all children speak confidently and articulately. They are able to communicate clearly in a variety of contexts. They are able to ask and respond to a range of literal, inferential and evaluative questions. They are able to contribute a number of relevant ideas, information and opinions when engaging with others. They listen respectfully to the views being expressed by others and are also able to offer their own viewpoint. To ensure greater consistency and improve skills, there is a need to implement a progressive skills pathway using the benchmarks for listening and talking.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, attainment in numeracy and mathematics is satisfactory. As the school has identified, children across all stages could be making better progress. There is scope for children across the school to be given more frequent opportunities to apply their learning in new and unfamiliar contexts, including greater use of outdoor learning.

Number, money and measure

- At the early level, most children are aware of how money is used and can recognise and use a range of coins in relevant contexts. At first level, almost all children are able to round numbers to the nearest 10 and 100 as well as identify the value of each digit in a whole number with three digits. A minority are able to solve addition and subtraction problems with three digit whole numbers. They are less confident solving multiplication and division problems with numbers up to three digits using mental strategies. Most children would benefit from developing and applying a range of strategies to support their mathematical thinking when calculating mentally. A few are able to use the correct notation for common fractions. The majority are able to tell the time using o'clock, half past and quarter past using an analogue clock. Almost all children working at second level are able to apply their knowledge of rounding to give an estimate to a calculation. They are able to confidently use their knowledge of equivalent forms of common fractions, decimal fractions and percentages to solve problems. They are also able to apply the correct order of operations in number calculations when solving multi-step problems. A recent focus on developing the use of a variety of strategies to address mental calculations in P7 is having a positive impact. The planned development of this throughout the school is encouraged.

Shape, position and movement

- At the early level, children are able to identify many two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. Almost all children at first level are able to find right angles in the environment and in well-known two-dimensional shapes; they know that a right angle is 90 degrees. They are also able to use mathematical language to describe the properties of a range of three-dimensional objects including face, edge and vertex. Teachers should support children working at first level to improve their ability to estimate the length of everyday objects. At the second level, children are able to identify properties of shapes and understand different units of measurement for different challenges.

Information handling

- At the early level, children are able to sort and display information in relevant groupings. At first level, almost all children are able to identify an appropriate use of group tallies to gather information. They are also able to use the language of probability accurately to describe the likelihood of simple events happening. At the second level, children are able to display information in various graph forms.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- The school offers opportunities for children to achieve more widely in relation to the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence. Children have opportunities to develop leadership skills through roles such as school captain and vice-captain, house captains, pupil council, JRSO, P1 Buddies, Reading Buddies and Maths Champions. Children benefit from participating in a variety wider achievement activities and clubs. Parents and partners such as Active Schools provide opportunities for the children to attend various additional activities. Children achieve success in local sporting events. In recent years the school has achieved Sports Scotland's Silver Award and is progressing with their plans to achieve the Gold Award.
- Children's wider achievements are celebrated in school through assemblies and displays. A school blog and Twitter account are also being used well to recognise the children's successes. Children's involvement in wider achievements is recorded as part of tracking meetings with individual class teachers. There is now a need to develop this more systematically at class level to support the children to reflect on their own achievements. This will also ensure clear identification of those who are missing out. Subsequently, appropriate action should be taken to ensure that all children have opportunities for success.

Equity for all learners

- The school recognises the need to monitor the progress of all children and particularly those who face challenges. The newly introduced tracking system, once embedded, will provide the school with a clearer picture of the progress and needs of different groups of children. This will support the school in targeting interventions. The implementation of the approaches to tracking and monitoring, along with new systems and processes have led to increased identification of children with barriers to learning. The new systems and processes are at an early stage of being embedded across the school. The headteacher and staff should continue to develop approaches to identify gaps in attainment.

- Following consultation with pupils, parents and staff, feedback identified priorities for the allocation of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). This is being used to offer universal health and wellbeing support. The particular areas of focus are growth mindset, anti-bullying and resilience. A plan is also being put in place to provide parental ICT workshops with the aim of supporting parents to be able to support their children's learning. The school is at an early stage of measuring impact of such interventions. They should ensure that they are able to demonstrate positive outcomes as a result of these interventions for individual children.

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.