

# Summarised inspection findings

Knockando Primary School

Moray Council

28 November 2023

## Key contextual information

Knockando Primary School is a small, rural school situated in the village of Knockando, near Aberlour. The school has a catchment area extending across the River Spey to include the Inveravon area.

The acting headteacher has been in post since January 2020. The school has 44 children, organised into two multi-composite classes. The acting headteacher has a 0.5 full time equivalent teaching commitment. Almost all children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) zones six to nine. The school receives a small amount of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF).

### 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- The acting headteacher and staff have worked well together to create a supportive and caring ethos. All staff know children as individuals and model positive relationships. Overall, most children feel well-supported, safe and respected at school. Older children support younger children well and act as positive role models.
- The acting headteacher consulted children, parents, staff and the local community to refresh the school's vision, values and aims in 2021. Most children clearly understand and demonstrate the school values of community, kindness, resilience, curiosity, initiative and achievement. Staff reinforce the school values well through teaching and whole school assemblies.
- The acting headteacher recently introduced a range of well-considered approaches which have improved consistency in learning and teaching across the school. This includes a focus on professional learning to explore features of effective learning and teaching. As a result, in almost all lessons teachers provide clear instructions and share with children what is to be learned. In most lessons, teachers scaffold learning activities well. Teachers use digital resources effectively to support and extend learning across all areas of the curriculum. For example, interactive whiteboards and laptops are used regularly to engage children and support learning.
- In both classes, most children are engaged and enthusiastic about their learning. They respond well to learning planned around interesting themes and contexts, which are often linked to children's interests. Children enjoy using the extensive school grounds and nearby woodland to extend their learning. They benefit from a wide range of experiences which promote sport and physical wellbeing.
- Children's experiences are enriched by visiting professionals and trips. For example older children benefit from a city trip to Edinburgh and ski residential trips. Parents and local

community partners are invited into school to share their expertise and skills with children. This is helping children to develop an understanding of skills for learning, life and work. Teachers have recently introduced a focus on meta-skills. As planned, children should now be supported to take a lead role in profiling the skills they develop as they learn across the curriculum.

- In most lessons, teachers provide effective oral and written feedback to children. The majority of children have opportunities for self and peer assessment. As planned, teachers should continue to use feedback to support children to have an accurate understanding of their progress in learning and what they need to do to improve.
- At the early stages, teachers make effective use of play-based learning approaches. This encourages children's independence and creativity. Staff should continue to evaluate their approach, considering the balance between adult-directed, adult-initiated and child-initiated play experiences in line with national guidance.
- Teachers use local authority curriculum pathways to support planning for most of the curriculum. A few children would benefit from increased pace and challenge in their learning. This would support them to make better progress. Teachers should review planning to ensure a balance between direct teaching, collaborative activities and independent learning. This will enable teachers to allocate time more effectively to teach groups of children within multi-composite classes.
- Teachers use a range of formative and summative assessment approaches effectively to evaluate children's learning, particularly for literacy and numeracy. Teachers use evidence from standardised assessments, such as Scottish National Standardised Assessments, to support professional judgement on achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. Teachers should continue to develop their use of high-quality, ongoing assessment.
- Teachers have engaged successfully in moderation activities with each other and colleagues from other schools. As a result, they are developing a shared understanding of national standards and make increasingly robust professional judgements about children's progress and attainment in literacy and numeracy.
- The acting headteacher has developed and implemented a well-judged and proportionate approach to tracking and monitoring children's progress in literacy and numeracy. Teachers participate in termly planning and attainment meetings with the acting headteacher. Where any individual children are not making expected progress, interventions and approaches are discussed and agreed. The acting headteacher and teachers should continue to monitor how well teaching and learning approaches are supporting strategies to raise children's attainment.
- Staff work effectively with partners to meet the identified needs of individual children. Individual education plans (IEPs) include clear learning targets. Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) is being used appropriately to enhance staffing to support targeted interventions.

## 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 that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

### 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 and progress will be expressed in 'overall' statements, rather than for specific year groups or Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. This is because of the small numbers of children at each stage.

#### Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Overall, attainment in literacy and numeracy across the school is satisfactory. The majority of children have achieved or are on track to achieve national standards in literacy and numeracy. A few children are capable of achieving more in their learning.
- Overall, children who require support with their learning are making satisfactory progress against their individual targets.

#### Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, most children are making satisfactory progress in listening and talking, reading and writing.

#### Listening and talking

- Across the school, most children are confident and articulate. They are eager to contribute their ideas and bring much from life experiences and interests to discussions. Younger children benefit from being explicitly taught listening and talking skills. This is helping them to focus well, take turns and listen respectfully to others. Most older children share enthusiastically their ideas and opinions through class discussions. They should develop further their ability to build on the ideas of others by asking or answering questions.

#### Reading

- All children benefit from access to a range of reading materials provided by class and school libraries. They have regular opportunities for personal reading and can explain preferences for different types of authors. Most younger children are making a good start to their reading by developing their phonic skills. They can use decoding and blending skills well to read unfamiliar words. Most older children read with fluency and expression, using appropriate pace and tone. They can find, select and sort relevant information from a range of sources. Children are beginning to develop their ability to respond to inferential and evaluative questions as they progress through the school.

#### Writing

- Younger children are learning to form letters correctly. Most can write simple sentences, using appropriate punctuation. Older children have been working on newspaper reports and recounts. They now need increased opportunities to write more often and for a greater range of purposes. This will help them to strengthen their ability to convey information, describe

events and share opinions in different ways. Older children would benefit from creating individualised writing targets. This will help improve children's attainment in writing.

### **Numeracy and mathematics**

- Overall, most children are making satisfactory progress in numeracy and mathematics. Overall, children would benefit from increased opportunities to develop their numeracy and mathematic skills in new and unfamiliar contexts.

### **Number, money and measure**

- Most younger children recognise a range of numbers, count forwards and backwards in sequence and add and subtract. Younger children learn about the days of the week, and months of the year through daily routines. Older children identify place value of numbers accurately and show confidence when rounding. Older children would benefit from more practice with fractions, decimals and percentages.

### **Shape, position and movement**

- Younger children demonstrate an understanding of the properties of shape. Older children can describe two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. The majority have a good understanding of different types of angles.

### **Information handling**

- Older children know how to collect information using tally marks and display their data in graphs and charts. Across the school, children should have more practice collecting, organising and displaying information in a range of ways, including using graphs.

### **Attainment over time**

- The acting headteacher has introduced effective systems to support tracking of children's progress in literacy and numeracy over time. The acting headteacher and staff should now develop approaches to track children's progress across all curriculum areas.
- The small roll and cohort size has influenced trends in attainment data over time. Overall, the data presented by the school demonstrates that the majority of children are achieving appropriate CfE levels in literacy and numeracy. Teachers should continue to monitor children's progress towards individual targets in literacy and numeracy to ensure all children make as much progress as possible.
- Staff plan transitions for children well as they move into and move on from school. This includes planned transition processes for children with additional support needs. This is supporting children's continuity of learning well.

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

- Children's achievements are celebrated in a variety of ways, including at school assemblies, on wall displays, and through school newsletters. Children are encouraged to reflect on their achievements on a regular basis through learning profiles.
- Children have leadership opportunities as sports leaders and members of the pupil council. Older children take a lead role in running a breakfast club. Children have access to a range of lunchtime and after school clubs and activities. Children are not yet confident in discussing the skills they are developing as a result of these wider achievements. As planned, staff should develop systems to track children's achievements and capture the skills they are developing as a result. This will help to support children to identify their strengths and next steps.

## Equity for all learners

- Staff are mindful of the cost of the school day. A free breakfast club is providing children with a healthy and nurturing start to the day. The Parent Council supports the school's work very well by funding various activities and trips to ensure no child is at risk of missing out. This is ensuring every child is able to engage fully in all aspects of school life and activities whatever their personal circumstances.
- The acting headteacher has prioritised the use of PEF to address gaps in children's learning and to ensure all children have equity of experiences. The acting headteacher consults the Parent Council on the focus of PEF spend. As a result of different interventions and approaches, children supported by PEF are more engaged in their learning, have improved attendance and are making progress in literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders should continue to track the effectiveness of all funded interventions in order to evidence accelerated progress in raising attainment.

## Other relevant evidence

- Children learn French across school. Children from P4 to P7 also learn German.
- All children receive their entitlement to two hours high-quality physical education (PE) each week.
- The school recently achieved a Gold Sports Scotland award and a Scottish Book Trust Core Reading Schools accreditation.



## 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.