

# Summarised inspection findings

**Barassie Primary School**

South Ayrshire Council

4 December 2018

## Key contextual information

Barassie Primary School is located in the Barassie area of Troon in South Ayrshire. At the time of the inspection, the roll was 227 arranged into ten classes. The school benefits from modern, bright accommodation. Each classroom has its own garden and direct access to the outdoors. There is a central library/ICT suite, a music and drama room and a large gym.

### 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

- Staff have worked hard to establish a nurturing and supportive ethos based on Rights education. In all classrooms, and throughout the school, posters are displayed which remind children to be Ready, Respectful and Safe in school. Children feel that they are valued as individuals and this encourages them to engage in their learning.
- In most classes, children are keen and eager to learn. Relationships between children and staff are positive. In almost all cases, relationships among children are also positive and most children behave well. To continue to develop high standards of behaviour among all children, the school should revisit, and promote, a Rights education approach. These refreshed approaches should be shared more fully and in consultation with parents.
- Children have good opportunities to work individually, collaboratively in pairs and in small groups. Children are generally enthusiastic about their learning. This is most evident where teachers seek out children's views about what they would like to learn and give them the opportunity to shape their own learning. Children have many opportunities to contribute to the life of the school. For example, the pupil council leads and organises whole school events including Totally Talented, and children in the upper stage classes lead clubs for younger children. Increasingly, children contribute to the decision-making processes school through, for example, the Rights Respecting School and Junior Road Safety Officer pupil voice groups.
- Overall, the quality of teaching is good, and there are examples of very good practice. In almost all classes, teachers provide children with clear explanations and instructions. There is a need to ensure that all children are appropriately challenged throughout their learning. At times approaches to differentiation do not always meet the needs of higher achieving children. A number of teachers demonstrate skilled use of questioning and help to develop children's thinking skills by making thinking visible in their lessons. This practice should be shared and developed more widely to ensure that high quality teaching is consistent in all classes.
- Teachers and children discuss what children are expected to learn and teachers share the purpose of learning with children. As a result, most children are clear about the purpose of their learning. In most classes, children agree the success criteria for their learning with their class

teacher. There is now scope to involve children more actively in identifying, and stating, success criteria in their own words. This will help them to have a better understanding of their learning and help them to take ownership of how to improve. In the majority of lessons, teachers use plenary sessions well to refer back to the learning intentions and success criteria.

- Teachers use a range of oral and written feedback to help children to understand the progress that they are making in their learning and how their work could improve. The quality of feedback to children on how to improve their learning is not consistent across the school. Teachers should continue to work together to agree on consistency on the methods that they use to give feedback to children. This will ensure that all children are clear about the agreed strategies that they will use to achieve their learning targets.
- Teachers use a variety of approaches, including standardised and formative assessment, to assess children's progress in literacy and English, and numeracy and mathematics. There is scope for the school to communicate and share its assessment strategies more effectively with parents to help them understand more easily how their child's learning is progressing.
- Through their participation in ongoing moderation activities in the school, cluster and local authority, teachers are becoming more confident in making judgements about children's progress. They are using National Benchmarks with increased confidence and are becoming better at making professional judgements about when children have achieved a Curriculum for Excellence level. Staff moderate standards in children's learning with each other and with colleagues in the local schools cluster. They are working together to develop assessments that allow for application of learning in new and unfamiliar contexts. The school used the Scottish National Standardised Assessment last school session for the first time. Going forward, teachers now intend to make better use of the detailed formative individual information provided on each child.
- Planning takes good account of Curriculum for Excellence with a focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. The school is making good use of South Ayrshire Council progression pathways to ensure they plan cohesive and progressive learning experiences for children. They should continue to familiarise themselves with the full range of pathways to assist all children consistently to make appropriate progress across all areas of the curriculum.
- Tracking and monitoring meetings are part of the school's well-established planning cycle, and take place regularly between senior leaders and teachers. At these meetings, teachers make good use of the school's data to track children's progress and identify where targeted interventions could be used to support individual children's learning. Interventions are planned appropriately and evaluated regularly. These interventions are helping to meet individual children's needs, as well as the needs of groups of children.
- The school has comprehensive plans for the ongoing use of its Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). Senior and middle leaders, and teachers, are able to demonstrate how PEF-related initiatives are beginning to have a positive impact on children's learning and engagement. There is a need to continue to monitor the effectiveness of 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.

### 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

good

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 are making good progress in literacy and numeracy. The data presented by the school demonstrates most children are achieving appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels in reading, writing, listening and talking, and numeracy at early, first and second levels. Attainment data provided by the school is based on teachers' professional judgements. This is supported by standardised assessments, including the Scottish National Standardised Assessment, moderation activities at school and cluster level and regular professional dialogue with the headteacher. The inspection team observed a wide range of learning episodes, sampled children's work and spoke with groups of children. We are confident that overall, the reported levels of attainment accurately reflects children's progress.

#### Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, attainment in literacy is very good and children are making sound progress from prior levels of attainment.

#### Reading

- Children at early level are using their knowledge of sounds and letters to read words and use picture cues well to support their understanding of new texts. A systematic synthetic phonics programme underpins learning to read until the end of P3. As children progress through school, they use a range of strategies to decode unfamiliar words. Most children engage well with reading. At all stages, they enjoy exploring and reading books for pleasure. At the early level, children enjoy stories and choose books to look at and read to themselves. At the first level, children are learning to use context clues to help them read and understand texts. They offer their ideas about books they have chosen from the library and explain their preferences. Children working within second level read aloud with fluency, understanding and expression, using appropriate pace and tone. They are able to make relevant comments about characters and setting, and are confident in discussing the style and technique of a writer.

#### Listening and talking

- Across the school, children are making progress in developing their skills in listening and talking. Most children listen well to each other in a respectful manner. Children at the early level are learning to listen and respond to others, share their ideas and follow simple instructions. Teachers in early level classes focus on classroom routines and, in this way, help to develop children's listening and talking skills. At the first level, children can take turns and most contribute to classroom discussions. At the second level, children can contribute relevant ideas, information and opinions when engaging with others. They are able to build on the

contributions of others by clarifying points or supporting others opinions or ideas. Children at second level have opportunities to develop their skills in delivering presentations.

## **Writing**

- Across the school, most children are making very good progress in writing. At the early level, children are learning to form letters and are beginning to write and form sentences. At the first level, children can write independently and most use correct spelling and punctuation in their writing. At the first and second levels, children have opportunities to write extended pieces for a variety of purposes. Children working at the second level write using appropriate form and structure. Across first and second level, all children have opportunities to develop the writer's craft as a regular feature of writing lessons and this is developing their ability to write for an audience.

## **Numeracy and mathematics**

- Across the school, most children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Through data analyses the school identified the need to improve further children's reasoning, resilience and understanding of key concepts. Children are benefiting from the introduction of new initiatives to improve their enjoyment, language and confidence in learning mathematics. Children who face barriers in their learning, including those affected by socio-economic challenge, are making good progress from their prior levels of attainment. Overall the pace of learning enables most children to make good progress.

## **Number money and measurement**

- At the early level, children can explain that zero means that there is none of a particular quantity and that this is represented by 0. They can write the numerals from 1 to 10 and can use one to one correspondence to count a given number of objects. They can count on and back in ones to add and subtract. At the first level, children can round whole numbers to the nearest 10 and 100. They can identify the value of each digit in a whole number with three digits and can solve addition and subtraction problems with three digit numbers. They can apply mental agility number skills to calculate the total spent in a shopping example and calculate change. At the second level, children can round numbers to the nearest 1,000 and round money to the nearest pound. They can solve problems using equivalent forms of common fractions, decimal fractions and percentages. They can also calculate the perimeter of 2D shapes in millimetres, centimetres and metres and the area of squares and rectangles in square millimetres, centimetres and metres. Across the school most children's mental agility and word problem skills are appropriate. There is a need, as planned, to continue to develop this further. In doing so, ensure that all children show appropriate levels of rapid recall and can apply strategies to solving problems.

## **Shape, position and movement**

- At the first level, most children can identify a range of 2D shapes and 3D objects. They can use mathematical language to describe the properties of common 2D shapes and 3D objects including side, face, edge, vertex and base. At the second level, children can identify a range of 3D objects and their properties. They could also identify acute, obtuse, straight, right and reflex angles and explain the difference between these.

## **Information handling**

- At the first level, children can gather key information from bar graphs, charts, tables and diagrams. They can select and use the most appropriate way to gather and sort data for a given purpose, for example, classifying and sorting animals. At the second level, children can describe how they would gather information, for example, using tally marks and how they

would display this information in a bar graph, line graph or pie chart. Children should be given more opportunities to use information handling skills across the school.

### **Attainment over time**

- The school has established a series of attainment meetings during the school year to discuss children's progress and to identify appropriate learning interventions for some children. The school uses a range of standardised assessment data diagnostically supported by national benchmarks to identify areas for further investigation and this contributes to teacher professional judgement of progress and achievement. They also use this information to support children with additional support needs or other barriers to learning.
- Staff participate in moderation activities with their cluster schools, which helps to support teachers to make judgements on children's progress and attainment. The progress of groups of children is tracked, for example, those who are care experienced or children who experience socio-economic disadvantage. Appropriate interventions are put in place to help them make progress.
- A new tracking and monitoring tool is being introduced. This will provide a more accurate picture of learner attainment and trends over time. While the data provided shows that children are attaining well, it is not yet sufficient to support any firm conclusions about individual children's progress, trends or patterns over time.

### **Overall quality of children's achievement**

- Children have a wide range of opportunities for achievement in school. This includes a variety of lunchtime and after-school clubs. There are opportunities for children's voice to be heard through their membership of the eco committee and the pupil council and within class. Overall, most children contribute effectively to aspects of school life in various ways, for example, as Junior Road Safety Officers, contributors to school improvement plan progress, and through fundraising and enterprise activities.
- Children's wider achievements are celebrated in school and in class. They are also recognised through competitions and events run by other organisations. The school has developed a tracking system for wider achievement and participation in activities within and outwith the school. This supports key staff to identify children who may otherwise not have appropriate opportunities for wider achievement beyond the classroom. Identified children are signposted, and supported, to attend school and local community events, sports, and activities.

### **Equity for all learners**

- The headteacher and the staff have a clear understanding of the socio-economic background of all children and of the gaps in attainment of these children. They have provided appropriate interventions to address individual children's needs. Staff were consulted to identify appropriate expenditure of PEF to help close the poverty related attainment gap. The staff are making positive progress in removing barriers to learning and ensuring equity for all.
- The headteacher uses the school's PEF in consultation with the staff to introduce interventions, which will help to close the poverty related attainment gap and raise attainment in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Last session the school library was opened to parents to complete home learning tasks with support from the support development worker after school. This improved parental engagement with the school. Also, a principal teacher started to work in the school one day per week to model numeracy lessons using problems and a concrete, visual and abstract approach. This also provides professional learning for

staff. Staff have adopted a growth mindset approach to mathematics and are more aware of the language they use when talking about mathematics. A nurture provision was also introduced which has provided helpful support for the most vulnerable children. Staff are very positive about the impact of these developments on their own practice and on the confidence levels of the children. These areas will continue to be developed further this session and plans are in place to monitor progress and impact of all interventions. There is a need to ensure a clear articulation of the coherence of interventions within whole school quality assurance process to monitoring the effectiveness of learning and teaching.



## Explanation of terms of quality

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quality 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.

Education Scotland  
Denholm House  
Almondvale Business Park  
Almondvale Way  
Livingston EH54 6GA

T +44 (0)131 244 4330  
E enquiries@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk

<https://education.gov.scot/>

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