# Summarised inspection findings

**Warout Primary and Community School**

Fife Council

23 April 2024

# Key contextual information

Warout Primary School has a roll of 195 children. It serves the Auchmuty area of Glenrothes in Fife. There have been a number of recent changes in staffing. These include the appointment of an acting headteacher at the beginning of school session 2023-24, following the secondment of the substantive headteacher. Several teachers were appointed to the school at the beginning of the session. At present, six teachers are on temporary contracts. Almost all children who were attending the school in September 2022 lived in data zones 1, 2 and 3 of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). The school also hosts a Pupil Support unit, but this is managed by the local authority.

| 1.3 Leadership of change | weak |
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| This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are: <br><br> ■ developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community <br> ■ strategic planning for continuous improvement <br> ■ implementing improvement and change | |

■ The school's vision, values and aims were developed through consultation with parents, carers, and children in 2019. The staff team demonstrates a shared understanding of the school values, 'Ready, Respectful, Safe.' Together, they ensure that these aims underpin the ethos and life of the school. Senior leaders have rightly identified that children are unable to articulate their understanding of the school vision and aims. They should take prompt action to address this. The school's vision to have children develop their life skills to grow into 'respectful members of the community' is not sufficiently aspirational. The house captains and vice captains, along P7 have begun to consult with other classes about this.

■ There is very limited evidence of progress towards achieving several of the school aims. For example, children have very limited opportunities for outdoor learning. As a priority, senior leaders should engage children, parents, carers, and staff in reviewing the vision, values and aims to ensure they are more ambitious and aspirational. These should demonstrate staff's commitment to achieving the highest possible standards and underpin continuous improvement. Senior leaders should ensure clear measures are in place to monitor progress to achieving the highest possible standards.

■ Almost all staff have a good understanding of the social, economic, and cultural context of the school community. As a result, staff are very aware of the challenges children and their families face. Staff use this knowledge appropriately to inform their planning. For example, they use the Nurture Hub to provide personalised interventions to support the start of the school day. There is significant potential for staff to use a broader range of data to strengthen their understanding of the school's context further. This should inform their leadership of change more directly.

■ The acting headteacher has quickly established positive relationships across the school community since taking up post in August 2023. Building on this positive start, he should now provide strong strategic leadership with a clear focus on raising attainment. Senior leaders empower staff to initiate change and take responsibility for aspects of school improvement, such as digital literacy and strategies to promote compassion for others and self-confidence.

However, the high number of temporary staff impacts negatively on the sustainability and leadership of improvement initiatives.

- School improvement priorities since the COVID-19 pandemic have focused on improving learning and teaching and building children's resilience. Senior leaders have engaged with children and parents to inform the development of these improvement priorities. Staff engage in a range of self-evaluation activities. However, these require greater rigour to ensure that staff have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The lack of reliable data is also impacting negatively on the ability of senior leaders to accurately measure the impact of change on improving outcomes for children. As a result, the overall pace of change is too slow, and expectations need to increase. Senior leaders need to address these issues as a matter of priority.

- Senior leaders have implemented a comprehensive quality assurance calendar to monitor the consistency and quality of learning and teaching. This includes senior leaders sampling children's work, reviewing planning, carrying out classroom observations and monitoring attendance. The acting headteacher needs to ensure increased rigour and consistency when implementing quality assurance activities to ensure they lead to improvement.

- Senior leaders should do all they can to support the development and operation of a Parent Council. This will provide the school and its community with a valuable resource. It can act as a bridge to the wider parent forum and provide support and challenge for the school. As the Parent Council becomes better established, it will be important for the senior leaders to help it recognise its role as wider than, and different from, a fundraising group. For example, by involving them in determining how Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) is spent.

- Senior leaders use PEF to enhance staffing to raise children's attainment. This additional staffing provides appropriate support for nursery to P1 transition, targeted support for writing, nurture support and the creation of two small P7 classes. Senior leaders have not yet identified their attainment gap. They need to do so as a matter of priority, ensuring appropriate engagement with parents, children, and staff. By improving strategic planning, senior leaders will be better able to measure the effectiveness of initiatives designed to close it.

- A minority of children currently have opportunities to undertake leadership roles within the school. For example, as house and vice captains, playground leaders and Eco Committee members. In addition, a significant minority of children feel that their views are not listened to or considered. Staff should now extend further opportunities for all children to extend their leadership skills and to contribute their views to inform school improvement.

| 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment | weak |
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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 enjoy positive relationships with all staff who know the children and their families very well. Staff have worked collaboratively to improve learning environments, identifying 'What Makes a Good Classroom'. The majority of children engage appropriately in their learning. However, in most classes, there is persistent low-level disruption. This impedes the creation of a calm, purposeful learning environment. Staff should raise their expectations of children's acceptable behaviours within the classroom to increase the pace of learning for all. Staff collaborate with partners to support children to develop their awareness of children's rights.

- Staff have an agreed policy in place to promote greater consistency in the quality of learning and teaching across the school. In almost all lessons, staff use a shared four-part lesson model. This supports children to make meaningful links with prior learning and develops their ability to talk about themselves as learners. In almost all classes, teachers share the purpose of learning and give clear explanations and instructions. In a few classes, children participate in creating the success criteria and use this effectively to self or peer assess learning and identify next steps. Senior leaders have identified rightly the need to improve the effectiveness of the four-part lesson model consistently across all classes.

- In a few classes, teachers use questioning effectively to check children's understanding of learning. Teachers should now develop their use of effective questioning to support children's learning and skills development. They should develop further the quality of written feedback to ensure that this supports children to understand what they need to do to improve their learning. In a minority of classes, children set personal learning targets. Teachers should now support children to reflect more accurately on their learning to identify more meaningful targets.

- In most classes, teachers make effective use of digital learning to enhance learning and teaching. They also provide digital devices to enable children who require additional support to access their learning. Children engage with digital devices independently and demonstrate increased motivation in learning when doing so.

- In most classes, children would benefit from increased opportunities for personalisation and choice to enhance their ownership of learning and their motivation to learn. In a minority of classes, the pace of learning is too slow and can result in children disengaging from their tasks. Teachers should ensure that all children in their class experience appropriate pace and challenge in their learning. Senior leaders and teachers should now consider how they identify and support children who require this additional challenge.

- Staff are at an early stage of implementing play-based learning at P1. They should continue to develop a shared understanding of high-quality play through engagement with national practice guidance and professional learning. This will help them develop the learning environment further, including outdoors to ensure it supports effective learning and teaching in

P1. Staff should improve the quality of their interactions with children to ensure that learning is motivating and meaningful during play opportunities.

- Teachers use a range of assessment approaches including formative, summative and standardised assessments to inform tracking dialogues about children's progress. However, teachers are not yet using these consistently and effectively across the school. Senior leaders have rightly identified the need to develop a whole school assessment framework aligned to the school quality assurance cycle. This should support staff to develop appropriate use of diagnostic assessments at classroom level to inform planning for children's next steps in learning.

- In most cases, children with additional support needs work in their mainstream class. Children who attend the Nurture Hub have their levels of engagement assessed there on a regular basis. Specialist staff now need to develop their skills in using diagnostic assessments. This should help them meet the needs of children requiring significant additional support more effectively.

- Staff are at the early stages of engagement in moderation. As planned in the current school improvement plan, teachers should engage in moderation with cluster establishments to develop a shared understanding of standards. This will instil greater confidence and accuracy in teachers' professional judgement of achievement of a level and will support staff to develop their understanding of national expectations. The professional dialogue arising from quality assurance activities should have a stronger focus on raising attainment.

- Teachers plan learning experiences over different timescales across all curricular areas using the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). However, teachers' planning for assessment is not yet integral to planning for learning and teaching. They should also seek children's views to ensure they have a voice in planning for their learning.

- Senior leaders and teachers use a range of assessment data to discuss children's attainment and progress in literacy and numeracy during termly tracking meetings. Current systems and processes used to collate data do not enable staff to analyse trends. Teachers cannot use them to identify gaps in learning and plan for effective interventions to raise attainment. Senior leaders should now consider how to collate this data to enable analysis of trends in data for individuals and cohorts of children over time. This deeper analysis of data will support all staff to understand the attainment gap experienced by children whose progress is impacted by poverty.

- Senior leaders should work with staff to evaluate the impact of targeted interventions more robustly for children who are not on track in their learning. This will enable them to take prompt action to ensure all children make good progress from their previous learning. Senior leaders should ensure further that identified actions for staff to improve children's learning are followed up to measure children's success and inform their next steps. This will enable more detailed self-evaluation of the impact of professional learning on outcomes for children.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Teachers use Fife Progression Pathways for Literacy and Numeracy to plan progressive learning experiences for children, building on prior knowledge and skills. Teachers use bundles of CfE experience and outcomes for all other curriculum areas. As planned, staff should implement local authority pathways for other areas as they are developed.

- Staff have well-planned early and second level transition programmes for children moving into P1 and onto secondary school. These have been developed in partnership with Ladybird Nursery and Auchmuty High School. They support children effectively as they progress to the next stage of their education. Staff carefully consider the needs of individual children, and they support well identified children through bespoke transition planning.

- Children receive their entitlement to Religious and Moral Education (RME) and Religious Observance. They take part in observance through discrete learning that links different areas of the curriculum. The school chaplain supports the delivery of the RME curriculum well, for example through exploring parables with children and linking the learning from these to the children's real-life experiences.

- All children learn German as part of the 1+2 languages policy. As planned, staff should introduce a third language at P7.

- All children receive their entitlement to two hours of high-quality physical education per week.

- Staff collaborate effectively with partners to enrich the curriculum. For example, the P4-7 Story Leaders Project and the P7 Youth Auchmuty Transition Project. These projects strengthen children's knowledge of their local community and develop their skills for learning, life, and work.

- Teachers plan learning experiences for children which link different areas of the curriculum. These experiences enable children to make links between learning and skills across curricular areas. Teachers should now ensure that there is a clear framework for skills progression over time in these learning experiences.

- Outdoor learning is not yet a regular and progressive experience for all learners. Teachers should ensure that children experience regular outdoor learning experiences, including as part of their entitlement to learning for sustainability.

## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

■ Senior leaders prioritise building positive relationships with children and their families. They recognise the impact of supporting family wellbeing on children's readiness to learn in school. Parents appreciate staff being present in the playground before and after school each day. This provides them with an informal opportunity to speak to them if they have any concerns regarding their child. Parents value the school's ongoing communication and feel part of their child's learning journey through regular information about their child's learning experiences via an online platform.

■ Parents value the shared start and finish times each week in P1 which enables their child to talk to them about their learning in the classroom. Parents would welcome more regular opportunities to visit the school and learn with their children.

## 2.1 Safeguarding

■ 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.

| 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion | satisfactory |
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This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- ■ wellbeing
- ■ fulfilment of statutory duties
- ■ inclusion and equality

■ Teachers are aware of the range of wellbeing needs of children. They find out about children's needs through information which is available in a secure online area and through discussion with other staff. Support assistants are clear that one of their most important roles is to ensure that new staff are aware of the needs of children in their classes. They also advise staff about the best way to meet these needs. Support staff update each other about changes in need and daily issues. Overall, school staff work well together to support and meet children's wellbeing needs.

■ The school values are Ready, Respectful and Safe. However, only a small majority of children report feeling safe and only a minority report feeling respected by other children in the school. Senior managers are aware that they now need to address this issue, revisiting approaches to managing behaviour and bullying. Staff use restorative approaches after disagreements between children to help them to understand the impact of their actions and to resolve the situation. This is effective, but staff should introduce approaches to ensure that children have the appropriate skills to avoid confrontations in the first place.

■ Staff have used The Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) model successfully in the past, but senior leaders are aware that this now needs to be refreshed. For example, children are not as familiar with the wellbeing indicators and their rights as they were previously and the acting headteacher has begun to reintroduce them during assemblies. Staff are beginning to run sessions on rights and responsibilities for older children. This includes an introduction to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Staff should continue to improve children's understanding of their wellbeing and their rights.

■ Children who need a targeted nurturing approach in the school are referred to the Nurture Hub. This is a home-like environment which is safe, attractive, and secure. The staff aim to promote wellbeing and establish positive relationships, supporting the social, emotional, and behavioural needs of children who have been referred by teachers. Staff work well to support the readiness to learn, and academic progress of each child involved. They plan experiences to ensure that they can reintegrate children into their class as soon as possible. Children who attend the Nurture Hub find it a positive experience. Staff now need to develop further whole-school approaches to nurture, building on this effective practice to improve children's wellbeing.

■ Teachers and support staff work well together and develop positive relationships across the school to help children to be ready to learn. Overall, the school's approach to ensuring the wellbeing of all children is helping to develop their readiness to learn. This approach is supporting identified children to engage in their learning positively. The school now needs to engage with families more effectively. Staff need to increase their expectations of children and ensure that they make the best progress possible in their learning.

- School policies follow those at a local and national level appropriately and reflect current legislation. For example, child protection procedures reflect local and national guidance.

- School attendance in 2018-19 was above the local authority average, although it was below the national average. Since then, it has fallen below the local authority average and remained below the national average, although it is currently in line with authority 'stretch aims'. Staff should continue with their plans to engage children in their education more effectively and improve their attendance.

- Almost all children feel supported in class. Most of them enjoy their learning and almost all children know who to turn to if they are finding their work too difficult. Teachers are well aware of children's wellbeing needs and how best to meet them in class. They have been supported in this through targeted professional learning opportunities. The recent turnover of staff has led to the need to revisit training on a regular basis. Senior leaders should ensure staff participate regularly in professional learning to support the inclusion of children in all classes.

- Teachers are at an early stage of planning to meet the learning needs of children requiring additional support. Staff should review and revise the referral process, assessment of need and planning for children with additional support needs as a matter of priority. For example, staff cannot demonstrate the progress of those children who have a child's plan by tracking their achievement of targets over time. This is due to the variable period for review of these plans and the fact that children's targets are not specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timed. Consultation between specialist staff and teachers happens too sporadically. This should feature curriculum development to ensure that learning activities are appropriate for all children. Specialist staff should have a significant role in making provision for all of those who require additional support. For example, teachers need to appropriately challenge more able children in their learning. Overall, senior leaders should regularly monitor the support initiatives in school to ensure that they are having a positive impact on inclusion and on outcomes for children.

- Staff work with a wide range of partners to help meet the needs of children. Many of these partners participate in ensuring appropriate transition for P7 children to the associated secondary school. Others, including speech and language therapy and educational psychology, focus on the development of teachers' skills in meeting needs, building the capacity of school staff. They have found this challenging due to the ongoing turnover of staff. Staff should now engage partners regularly in the review and planning of its work to improve children's attainment and achievement.

- Staff are well aware of the range of needs in the school including care experienced children, those who have English as an additional language and those who require additional support. Whilst staff are aware of these children, they need to ensure they demonstrate that they are improving attainment and achievement for those facing these challenges.

| **3.2 Raising attainment and achievement** | **weak** |
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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**
■ HM Inspectors are not confident in the accuracy of school assessment data relating to attainment of CfE levels. Teachers' moderation of assessment is also at an early stage.

■ Overall, most children make satisfactory progress in their literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics. In June 2023, a majority of children across P1, P4 and P7, attained expected CfE levels in literacy and numeracy. Across the school, most children would benefit from further challenge in their learning.

■ Staff do not have appropriate data to demonstrate progress over time of children with additional support needs. Similarly, staff cannot interrogate available data to demonstrate progress of discrete groups of children. For example, children who have English as a second language or who are care experienced.

**Attainment in literacy and English**
■ Overall, most children make satisfactory progress in literacy and English from prior levels of attainment. Children performed best in listening and talking and found writing most difficult.

**Listening and talking**
■ Children at early level engage enthusiastically in conversation in class. They mostly pay attention to the teacher but would benefit from practice in listening to and following instructions. Children at first level are keen to participate in discussions but can become over-enthusiastic and talk over others. Children at second level listen with some care to their class teacher and follow their instructions. The majority judge appropriately when to make verbal contributions during discussions but rarely build on each other's points. They enjoy making presentations to their peers.

**Reading**
■ Children at early level do not yet recognise all individual letters of the alphabet. They struggle to convert lower case letters into upper case letters. They recognise a few simple words, and a minority are able to sound out letters to read short words. They enjoy listening to stories but are not confident predicting what might happen next. Children at first level are keen readers. However, they have difficulty in describing the types of books they enjoy reading or identifying their favourite authors. The majority of them read unfamiliar texts aloud with fluency, although some stumble over unfamiliar words. They would benefit from opportunities to improve this skill. Children at second level enjoy reading. They are aware of several different genres of books. The majority read unfamiliar text aloud with fluency.

■ Children borrow books from the school library, which is in a central location in the school. There is potential for children to take greater ownership of this area. Staff could do more to

make the library attractive, including refreshing the stock of books. Children report that they can also borrow books from smaller libraries in their own class.

## Writing

■ Most children at early level are forming initial letters and writing occasional words. Some children cannot yet write all initial letters and are at the early stages of writing independently. Children at first level practise their spelling by copying out words and writing related sentences in their jotters. They write imaginative stories and factual reports accurately but would benefit from opportunities to write in a wider range of styles. Their presentation in jotters is often messy. Teachers should make more effective use of the school's jotter policy for written work to support children to write neatly. Children at second level produce extended pieces of imaginative writing and reports. They would benefit from developing further their writing skills in other genres such as poetry, playscripts, letters and persuasive text.

## Numeracy and mathematics

■ Overall, children's progress in numeracy and mathematics is satisfactory.

## Number, money and measure

■ Almost all children at early level count forward to 20 and a few add mentally within numbers to 10. Most children identify the number before and after to 20. Children would now benefit from further practice in counting backwards and subtraction within the 0-10 range. A minority of children require further support to recognise coins to 10p. At first level, almost all children identify place value in 3-digit numbers and can add 2 and 3-digit numbers using exchange. Children are less confident in their subtraction skills and working with money to calculate change from 50p. At second level, children add numbers mentally and explain the process they used to do this. Children are significantly less confident in their understanding and use of equivalent fractions, decimals, and percentages.

## Shape, position, and movement

■ Almost all children at early level name common two-dimensional shapes. A few children name common three-dimensional objects. For example, cube and sphere. At first level almost all children name common two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects, a minority of children identify their properties. At second level, almost all children identify the properties of two-dimensional shapes. A majority of children draw a right angle and name a protractor as the tool used to measure angles. A minority of children explain the properties of obtuse and reflex angles.

## Information handling

■ At early level, almost all children interpret information from a pictorial graph. A first level, the majority of children extract data from bar graphs and tables. A minority of children would benefit from further opportunities to practise this skill. At second level, almost all children extract information from bar and line graphs. A minority of children talk about creating and interpreting pie charts using digital devices.

## Attainment over time

■ The school's data shows a significant drop in children's attainment following the pandemic. This is notable in senior classes, particularly in numeracy. Attainment has not yet returned to its previous level. Staff have been taking steps to address this. For example, they have reintroduced an approach to reading and writing which was previously successful. However, there is significant need to increase the pace of learning.

■ Senior leaders do not yet have reliable approaches to track and monitor children's progress across literacy and numeracy. They are aware that staff need to have a better understanding

of children's attainment over time. Staff have limited access to data which they can use effectively to plan support and interventions to close gaps in learning for individuals, classes, and groups.

## Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Across the school, staff recognise and reward children for displaying one of the CfE four capacities. Staff use the house points system well to recognise children demonstrating one of the school values. Children enjoy being selected to have hot chocolate with the headteacher as their reward for demonstrating these values. Staff should now support children to understand the progress they are making.

- In partnership with Active Schools, staff gathered information about children's achievements outside school. They used this information effectively to identify children at risk of missing out. Almost all children who recorded inactivity in wider achievement activities outside school benefited from additional sport sessions at school. This raised their self-esteem and ensured greater equity of opportunity.

- Staff work in effective partnerships to enable children to access wider achievement activities that develop skills for learning, life, and work. For example, the successful participation of P7 last session in the police garden project resulted in children receiving an accredited award.

- Staff have rightly identified the need to track the skills children develop as a result of participation in wider achievement activities. This will support staff to ensure children are experiencing increasing levels of challenge as they develop and apply skills for life, learning and work.

## Equity for all learners

- Senior leaders and staff are aware of the varying wellbeing needs of children. They work well together to address these in class. There are discrete groups of learners who have similar needs such as those who are care experienced and those who have English as a second language. However, staff are not able to analyse data to check on the progress of these groups. As a result, the school is not yet promoting equity of achievement and success.

- The school is in receipt of a significant PEF allocation. Senior leaders use this for staffing and universal initiatives rather than targeted ones. The targets set each year in the PEF Plan are not specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timed (SMART). As a result, it is challenging for staff to measure the impact of this extra funding in the school. Staff should ensure that they can demonstrate the impact from PEF and show how they are accelerating the closing of the poverty related attainment gap.

# Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

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| 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.