Summarised inspection findings

St Marnock's Primary School

Glasgow City Council

24 January 2023

Key contextual information

St Marnock's PS is a denominational school situated in Pollok in Glasgow. The school roll is 220 pupils across are seven classes. Half of the pupils live in Scottish Multiple Index of Deprivation (SMID) deciles 1 and 2 and almost all of the remainder live in deciles 3 to 8.

The headteacher took up post in October 2019 and the depute headteacher took up post in January 2020. Currently, there are four principal teachers. There has been a particularly high turnover of teaching staff in the last few years. There has also been significant COVID-19 related absence during this time.

During the week of the inspection, opportunities for children to engage with digital technology were hampered due to connectivity challenges.

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, staff have created a calm, purposeful ethos based on Gospel values. Children enjoy positive relationships, are respectful, well-mannered and keen to please staff. They are eager to learn and almost all engage well with their learning. They proudly welcome visitors to their school, and most can articulate their school values of love, faith, hope and responsibility. Children do not understand their rights according to the UNCRC Rights of the Child.

■ The senior leadership team and staff seek out opportunities to work with partners including the local college and Active Schools to enrich children's experiences. Consequently, children benefit from and talk positively about learning experiences within the local area and beyond, for example, school outings to the Riverside Museum, Science Centre, and The Titanic Museum in Belfast.

■ Senior leaders and staff have created bright, attractive and well-organised learning environments in school. Staff use space around the school creatively to provide additional working areas. They should now make better use of the school's outdoor spaces to promote outdoor learning. Senior leaders should ensure that there is a clear and well-informed rationale for all focused group work that takes place out-with the class. This should be agreed in consultation with children, staff and parents.

■ Staff give clear explanations and instructions and share the purpose of learning and ways in which children can be successful. Staff do this in a particularly effective way to support younger children. In a few classes, children and teachers work together to create learning targets. Staff should support all children to have a greater understanding of their own specific targets to enable them to reflect on their progress. They should also ensure greater consistency in the use of effective differentiation. This will help them to provide appropriate levels of support and

challenge within learning. In a few classes the pace of learning can be too slow. Staff should increase the pace of learning and ensure children have the right level of challenge. Children respond well to opportunities they have to work in pairs and groups. They are now ready to have a greater role in leading their own learning. Children would also benefit from having greater opportunities to influence what and how they are learning.

- Overall, the quality of teaching across the school is good. Almost all children participate enthusiastically in tasks. Most teachers use questioning skilfully to engage whole classes and groups. Staff plan rich and enjoyable learning experiences which result in highly motivated learners. They make positive use of real-life and relevant contexts for learning. This is a particularly strong when teaching numeracy and mathematics. As a result, children report that they especially enjoy their learning in this area of the curriculum.

- Children are beginning to make effective use of digital technology to support their learning. For example, younger children use programmable toys as part of a maths lesson and older children use digital technologies to create music to convey emotions in response to a picture.

- In a few classes, staff are introducing play-based learning approaches to support learning across the curriculum. This is at an early stage of development. To support this further, staff should engage with national guidance, Realising the Ambition: Being Me, to develop the quality of experiences, spaces and interactions.

- Staff use experiences and outcomes to support plan learning over a range of timescales. They plan learning using experiences and outcomes across all subjects. Staff use a range of progressive pathways to deliver the curriculum. They should review approaches to ensure progression in learning is clear for all children, across stages and levels.

- In the best examples, staff use verbal and written feedback well to support children in their learning. Children have opportunities to self and peer assess their work in literacy and numeracy. Staff should review how they can increase, and be more consistent in, the use of formative assessment strategies to support children to make the best possible progress.

- Prior to the pandemic, staff worked well with neighbouring schools to moderate children's progress within literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders should now plan strategically to increase moderation activity by re-establishing engagement with other schools. This will enable teachers to learn with and from each other, develop collaborative approaches and support the ongoing improvement priorities of the school.

- Senior leaders have created a detailed overview of what should be assessed and when. They lead the delivery of a wide range of standardised assessments throughout the school year and at key milestones. Teaching staff use a range of assessment approaches, including termly contexts for assessment, to evaluate children's learning across the curriculum. Senior leaders should consider how manageable and proportionate assessment processes are and how effectively they use the data is gathered. It would be helpful for teachers to have greater ownership of assessment processes and the use of data.

- Senior leaders and teachers discuss children's attainment and progress in literacy and numeracy during termly tracking meetings. They are beginning to check children's progress in learning by analysing the wide range of assessment data. Senior leaders should ensure there is a continued analysis and a greater understanding of the data linked to the attainment gap experienced by children whose progress is impacted by poverty. They should support staff to have a greater awareness of the attainment gap in their own classes. Senior leaders should

work with staff to evaluate the impact of the wide range of targeted interventions to help plan appropriate next steps.

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 in literacy and numeracy
■ Overall, children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory and the majority of children are making satisfactory progress from previous levels of attainment. A minority of children are making good progress. The majority of children with additional support needs are making satisfactory progress.

Attainment in literacy and English
■ Data provided by the school indicates that at the end of session 2022, most children had achieved in appropriate curriculum for excellence (CfE) levels in reading and talking and listening. The majority of children achieved appropriate CfE levels in writing.

■ Overall, the majority of children across the school are making satisfactory progress in literacy and English.

Listening and talking
■ At early level, children listen well to each other and familiar adults during learning activities, such as 'fast phonics.' They enjoy talking to visitors about their learning. At first level, the majority of children take turns appropriately during class discussions and when working with a partner. Children at second level can describe a few of the features required when presenting to their peers. They would benefit from more opportunities to develop their confidence in making presentations. Most children across the school contribute enthusiastically and are keen to answer questions in class. At times, a few children working at second level need support to take turns and build on the ideas of others during discussions.

Reading
■ At the early level, children are developing their knowledge of initial sounds. A few children can read some common words. They use magnetic letters well to construct familiar words. At first level, the majority of children are using their knowledge of words to decode unfamiliar words. Children at first and second levels identify their favourite authors and give explanations to justify their choice. At the end of first level, the majority of children read with appropriate expression to demonstrate understanding. They read with increasing fluency and confidence. Children benefit from a wider range of core reading materials. A few children working towards the end of second level are not confident reading aloud in front of their peers. Staff should provide more regular opportunities for children to read aloud in class.

Writing
■ At early level, children are learning to form letters correctly and copy words. By the end of first level, children write for different purposes and confidently identify features of a few

genres, such as instructional and persuasive writing. As children approach the end of second level, they use paragraphs within extended pieces of writing. The majority of children use their knowledge of spelling patterns and strategies to spell most words correctly. They use a range of punctuation in their writing. A few children working towards the end of second level demonstrate a particular aptitude for creating poems. For example, about the city of Glasgow. Across the school, children are responding well to the new approaches to teaching writing. It will be important for staff to be alert to the length of time taken at the planning stages before children are then able to create their own writing.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics
■ Data provided by the school indicates that at the end of June 2022, most children at early level, and the majority of children at first and second level, had achieved expected Curriculum for Excellence levels of attainment in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure
■ Children who have achieved early level understand conservation of number and can count accurately within 20. They can confidently add, subtract and share amounts to solve numerical problems with accuracy. They need support to link time to daily events and to identify coins. Children who have achieved first level can solve two step money problems involving addition and subtraction. They can estimate volume and successfully round to the nearest ten or hundred. Children are less confident when converting units of length and using multiplication and division facts to calculate answers. Children who are on track to achieve second level have a good understanding of place value and can convert fractions into percentages. They can calculate change and profit when solving money problems and use 24-hour notation with accuracy. They need support to multiply whole numbers by two-digit numbers and to solve problems involving time, speed and distance.

Shape, position and movement
■ At early level, the majority of children can recognise common two-dimensional shapes in the environment and can name common three-dimensional objects. Children who have achieved first level can draw a shape with a line of symmetry and recognise a right angle. They can name the properties of a range of three-dimensional objects. Children working towards the end of second level can create the net of a given shape and use subject specific vocabulary when describing three dimensional objects. They are less confident when discussing the link between the radius and diameter of a circle.

Information handling
■ Children who have achieved early level can interpret data about items on a price list. They can suggest ways in which data is used in other real-life situations. Children at first level can identify different ways of collecting and sharing data, such as using surveys or tally marks. They can interpret a pictograph and answer questions about the information presented. Children who are on track to achieve second level can create and answer questions about a set of data and display it in different formats, such as tables and block graphs. They need support to determine which questions cannot be answered through analysis of the information provided.

Attainment over time
■ Teachers are developing their use of National Benchmarks to support their professional judgements about children's achievement of a level. The headteacher has initiated new processes to gather detailed literacy and numeracy attainment information for individual children across the school. This is based on a wide range of diagnostic, summative and standardised assessments. The approach is at an early stage of development. Senior leaders cannot fully evidence the attainment of cohorts and specific groups over time. There

is a need to reduce the bureaucracy of whole schools approaches to tracking progress and to build staff capacity in assessment and analysis of attainment. Teachers are not yet assessing children's progress in other areas of the curriculum.

Overall quality of learner's achievements

- Children participate in a range of clubs and committees, such as the STEM team and the Pupil Council. This is helping them to grow in confidence and develop leadership skills. However, children are not yet able to articulate the skills they are developing as part of these groups. Staff should now develop further opportunities for pupil participation and encourage younger children to be actively involved in leadership groups. Staff have started to track participation in clubs and groups. They should now develop approaches to identifying and addressing gaps in engagement and track the skills that children are developing in this context.

- Staff celebrate children's successes through weekly assemblies, displays and social media. The school has achieved a number of accredited awards, such as the Eco-Schools Green Flag and the Gold School Sport award. Children are proud of their wider achievements and can speak about the attributes they are developing. They are building their citizenship skills through their involvement in charity fundraising and community initiatives. Children participate in local and national trips linked to curricular areas such as science and social studies. They also contribute to nation-wide themed events, such as Maths Week and European Day of Languages. These experiences are supporting children to be motivated to learn and identify links with real-life contexts.

Equity

- Staff have a robust understanding of the socio-economic context of the school. They support families in a range of practical ways, such as providing school uniforms and taking steps to reduce the cost of the school day.

- The headteacher uses several resources, including Pupil Equity Funding, to finance a wide range of universal and group interventions. These interventions target attainment and achievement in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Senior leaders should now ensure that all of these interventions are carefully planned in collaboration with staff and have clearly identified outcomes. Senior leaders should ensure all interventions are delivered consistently. It is also important that they evaluate systematically the impact of interventions on learners. This will help staff to evidence the extent to which they are contributing to improved outcomes for children.

- Teachers would benefit from having a more streamlined tracking system which would enable them to evidence attainment trends in their own class and across the school. Senior leaders should carefully analyse attainment data with staff to identify the attainment gap at St. Marnock's and support staff to ensure that children who are most impacted by poverty are making accelerated progress.

Other relevant evidence

- Since taking up post in 2019, the senior leadership team have led a significant number of developments within the school. These include introducing new approaches to learning and teaching and raising attainment. There are indications that the new developments are having a positive impact on children's learning experiences and progress. However, there is a need for senior leaders to allow staff time to embed new approaches consistently across the school. Staff would also benefit from having opportunities to work as a team to evaluate the impact of new approaches. In doing so, it will also be important for staff to identify and share ideas with each other in a planned way.

- Senior leaders have taken the lead in driving school improvement. They should now provide greater opportunities for staff to lead improvements within their school. This will support staff's own professional learning and provide them with a more valued role in school improvement. There is also a need for senior leaders to review how the changes to timetables, staff responsibilities and daily routines are communicated to staff. In doing so, it will also be important to consult with staff and evaluate whether such significant and regular changes are necessary.

- A few classes do not yet have consistently dedicated class teachers. This is due to teachers being allocated to different areas of responsibility during the session. It will be important for senior leaders to review these approaches and the subsequent impact on children, staff and parents.

- Senior leaders need to implement more effective approaches to self evaluation including how all stakeholders are involved. This will help to ensure improvement priorities are well informed and the pace of change is appropriate.

- There is a need for senior leaders to improve how they keep parents fully informed about the work of the school. A high number of parents report that they do not always receive timely and helpful communication from the school. Senior leaders should take steps to improve the ways they communicate the work of the school with parents and carers.

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.