

# Summarised inspection findings

**Redhall School**

The City of Edinburgh Council

12 November 2019

## Key contextual information

Redhall School is a special school for primary aged children with severe and complex additional support needs in the City of Edinburgh. The school roll is 71, across nine classes. The acting headteacher has been in post for just over a year.

### 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

- Across the school, there is a clear focus on developing children's communication skills. This results in children being able to make choices and communicate information about their learning. Children use picture exchange systems well and staff are making good use of children's skills in this area to support their participation in literacy and numeracy. Work to improve children's communication is extending through the use of home school diaries. As a result, many parents are more able to support their child's learning at home.
- Digital technology is used to play videos and display pictures used by teachers. A few children use tablets for games and as aids for communication. Interactive boards are used to support children to communicate their feelings and to share their news. The school needs to develop further the use of digital technology to enhance learning activities and improve communication.
- In most classes, the environment promotes children's development in literacy and numeracy. In most classes, well organised resources enable children to play games, develop pre-writing skills and interact with books. Children enjoy opportunities to develop their skills through play and inquiry. The school should build on this good practice and promote children's learning through relevant and accessible resources being available in all classes.
- In almost all classes, most children engage well in learning activities. Children engage better when there is high quality one to one support from staff and when the activity is relevant to their needs and interests. Almost all children respond well to individual tasks that are planned to meet their specific needs. A minority of children find it difficult to participate in whole class activities and often disengage with their learning when asked to do so. Learning experiences need to be more challenging for a few children. Staff need to examine levels of engagement within each class across a range of different activities. This will provide valuable information to help teaching staff plan learning activities, which are more relevant to each individual child and improve engagement. In a few classes, effective approaches are used to help children understand the purpose of their learning and this practice should be shared across the school.
- Children's learning is enhanced through the context of play and movement, specific to their individual needs. Play programmes enable most children to make good progress in areas such as turn taking and developing their imagination. Movement programmes allow children to develop well their fine and gross motor skills and improve their sensory processing and integration.

- In most classes, teaching approaches meet the needs of children well. Teachers and support staff work together effectively to support children in one to one tasks and group activities. In a minority of classes, the range of children's needs and deployment of staff results in children not being sufficiently supported at all times. This diminishes children's ability to participate in activities as fully as possible or to achieve success. The school should review classroom organisation and deployment of staff to ensure the needs of all children are being met at all times.
- All children have opportunities to learn outdoors. This environment provides natural resources for children to play, communicate and manage risks. As a result of these opportunities, children are applying their learning from the classroom and becoming more confident. The school should continue with its plans to develop language and communication through outdoor learning.
- The school's approach to planning for children's learning is a strength in the school. Teachers use the school's curriculum map to plan on a termly basis. They plan learning activities which ensure children learn across all areas of the curriculum and in a range of real life contexts. Planned learning is differentiated effectively according to the individual needs of each child. Termly plans are used to assess, monitor and track each child's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. These are reviewed, and adapted, regularly as children grow and develop. Children's progress is assessed well against a range of social interactions and levels of support. This helps teachers to have a broad understanding of each child's individual progress. Evidence gathered from assessments is used to inform planning for learning in the following term. The school has developed its own milestones to support assessment and tracking. Children's progress is assessed against these milestones and the significant aspects for learning. Evidence from assessments is used well to report children's progress to parents.
- Teachers are developing a shared understanding of standards through regular professional dialogue and the introduction of moderation activities. They should continue to build on this practice to increase their confidence in making sound professional judgements about children's progress. Teachers should continue with their plans to engage more fully with the national benchmarks and milestones to help assess children's progress.
- Staff have recently reviewed, and improved, planning for children's individualised targets. Parents and, where appropriate children, are now more fully involved in identifying targets which are relevant to them either at home or school. These are reviewed on a monthly basis and offer additional information which supports teachers to robustly track and monitor how well children are progressing in their learning. Children's wider achievements are recorded and recognised well through the school's 'WOW' awards and accreditation schemes. These are tracked and monitored to support teachers to identify how well children are developing their skills in a wider range of contexts. Staff should continue to develop the school's approaches to tracking and monitoring to provide improved information on how well children are progressing over time.

## 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

- Overall, most children are making good progress in literacy and communication, and in numeracy.
- The school's effective approaches to assess children's progress ensure teachers know every child's and their family's unique needs well. They use this assessment information to plan relevant learning and to provide appropriate interventions and support. Staff gather a range of data regarding children's progress at regular times throughout the year. In addition to observations of learning, staff have regular learning conversations with children and their parents to measure success and the achievement of short term targets. Historically, almost all children achieve their individualised literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing targets. Staff have reviewed the school's approaches to individualised education targets. This review has highlighted that targets required to be more meaningfully individualised for each child. As a result targets, now captured in learning conversations, provide more aspirational levels of challenge. The most recent data gathered shows that most children have achieved their targets set for session 2018/19. This decrease in attainment reflects teachers' increased aspirations of what children can achieve and is in line with the school's expectations.

### Literacy and English

- Overall attainment in literacy and communication is good. Most children are making good progress, particularly in their communication. A few children could be making better progress.

### Reading

- Most children are developing reading skills relevant to their learning needs and abilities. They recognise symbols and pictures within their timetables and select symbols appropriately to make choices. Most children can read their name and common words. A few children are reading books and can answer factual questions about the text. A minority of children can sequence events to make a story.

### Writing

- A minority of children can write their name and overwrite common words. They form letters with varying degrees of support from an adult. A few children can write short sentences and stories. Most children use symbols well to make sentences. They use a range of symbols to communicate. A few make sentences in a range of contexts such as meal times, choosing times and to express their views.

### Talking, listening and communication

- Almost all children respond appropriately to adults. They listen for and understand instructions. A minority of children show a good awareness of others and initiate interactions with their

peers. Almost all children respond well to learning through music. They recognise familiar tunes and can follow activities through songs. The effective use of pictures and symbols is resulting in most children developing good communication skills. Most children use symbols well to access learning conversations with staff.

### **Numeracy and mathematics**

- Most children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Most perform strongest in number, money and measure. The school's focus on the development of numeracy and mathematics skills ensures that children can apply their learning in real life contexts. Teachers plan learning which supports children to learn in a range of real life contexts.

### **Number, money and measurement**

- Children working in the early stages are developing their confidence in recognising number names and numerals and can use a number line to sequence numbers up to ten. They are beginning to understand that money can be used in shops, and a few can recognise coins up to 10 pence. They role play using money in the school shop. A few children can recognise colours particularly the colours of the rainbow. In the middle stages, most children are able to recognise the date, day of the week and months through daily routines. A few are learning about seasons. A few children can use an analogue clock. They are able to recognise o'clock and half past the hour. Most older children are able to use a range of strategies to solve addition calculations up to at least three digit whole numbers. Almost all children require concrete objects to support them in these activities. In cooking, most children can weigh ingredients using digital scales. They use a microwave clock to understand how long it takes to cook a muffin.

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

- In the early stages, most children can use the language of position, identifying fast and slow in music and up and down in songs. Most older children can identify 2D shapes and a few 3D objects. During outdoor learning, most children can use maps to locate easily recognisable buildings and follow simple coordinates in a 'treasure hunt'.

### **Information handling**

- In the early stages, most children can use their knowledge of colour, shape, size and other properties to match and sort items. They can display information in simple charts of farm animals. Most older children can use information from charts to draw conclusions about most and more.

### **Attainment over time**

- The school is not yet able to provide sufficiently robust data evidencing children's progress over time across the curriculum. The school's new approach to tracking and monitoring produces helpful information. This is not yet embedded well enough in the school to show progressive data to measure progress over time. Historically, targets have been restricted to literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Therefore, children's progress in other areas of the curriculum has not been tracked or monitored in a systematic way. The school should continue to use their newly developed approaches to tracking and monitoring. This will help teachers to gather more meaningful information on children's progress over time.
- According to the school's own data, a few children achieved early level listening and talking, reading, writing and numeracy in session 2017/18. In session 2018/19 the number of children achieving early level listening and talking, writing and numeracy increased slightly. The number of children achieving early level reading remained the same as in session 2017/18.

- Although teachers know children well, they need to continue to build their confidence in making professional judgements about children's progress. Increased moderation activities and use of benchmarks and milestones will aid this process.
- The school should continue with its plans to engage with Edinburgh City Council's tool for tracking and monitoring children's progress to ensure data gathered by the school accurately measures children's attainment over time.
- Attendance is good given the complexity of needs of the children. The school, with the support of the local authority need to ensure all children receive their full entitlement to education. There have been no exclusions over the last two years.

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

- Children are making good progress in achieving success across a wider range of personal achievements. The school provides a range of useful opportunities for achievement which is shared and celebrated in a variety of ways, including star of the week certificates and monthly WOW awards. Achievements are celebrated in assemblies, through newsletters to parents and the annual celebration event.
- Children enjoy outdoor learning, including in another special school campus. Learning outdoors provides children with opportunities to develop their understanding of the natural world. Almost all children are learning important life skills through community visits to supermarkets and trips to cafes and libraries. Children play boccia, judo and tennis through the Active Schools initiative which is helping them understand how to keep fit and healthy. Partnerships with the Royal Park Rangers is impacting positively on a few children's wellbeing, resilience and confidence. The school has links with the wider community which enable children to take part in community events such as Imagine Children's Festival and the Barrowland's Ballet. A few children join their peers in Longstone Primary School for friendship Tuesday. This supports them to enjoy shared learning and social activities together.
- Children raise money for charities and bring in food for the Harvest Festival, which they donate to the local food bank. This is helping to develop children's confidence, personal and social skills and their understanding of citizenship. Pupil council meetings provide a few children with good opportunities to develop their sense of responsibility.
- Achievements, including activities outwith the school, are accredited where possible. Most older children achieve Junior Award Scheme Scotland awards and Scottish Archaeology Heritage Hero Awards. The school tracks children's achievements effectively to ensure no child is at risk of missing out on.

### **Equity for all learners**

- The school ensures equity of opportunity for all children. All members of staff know children and their families well. The headteacher and staff are proactive in ensuring children participate in all aspects of school life.
- An additional learning and behaviour support teacher, provided through the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF), works to support identified children to address any barriers to their learning. Recently purchased resources to meet children's sensory needs are at the early stages of improving children's abilities to better understand their emotions. Play boxes enable children to explore touch. Early indications are that, as a result of these interventions, a few children are more able to recognise and self-regulate their behaviour when experiencing difficulties. Their attendance has improved and they are more able to engage in their learning. The school should continue

to ensure that interventions are targeted, planned and implemented, and lead to improved outcomes for targeted children.



### 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion – wellbeing

- The acting headteacher is developing a culture of openness and approachability across the school. Parents report they feel highly respected by the headteacher and all staff. Staff are approachable and listen well to parents when they share concerns they may have regarding their child's progress. This supports the strong sense of community that exists across the school. Children learn in an environment where they are valued and cared for.
- Teachers have undertaken significant work in developing children's rights across the school. Children on the pupil council can describe what a few of their rights mean to them. Teachers model behaviour which protects children's rights. The school's focus on developing children's literacy and communication skills ensures most children are able to express their opinion and desires. The school, supported by the education authority, should ensure children on part-time timetables receive their full entitlement to an education.
- Staff understand the wellbeing indicators well. They feature as a part of the school's processes for reviewing children's progress. The wellbeing indicators support teachers well to identify where children are experiencing barriers to learning and set appropriate targets for children to achieve. The school should continue to develop the language of the wellbeing indicators more fully across the school. It would be helpful to link the wellbeing indicators to the work the school has already done in developing children's rights.

## 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.