

Summarised inspection findings

Lady Alice Primary School and Nursery Class

Inverclyde Council

21 January 2020

Key contextual information

Lady Alice Primary School is situated in Greenock. At the time of inspection, there were 199 children on the roll. The majority of children reside in areas classified as one and two within the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). The education authority, Inverclyde Council, is a 'Challenge Authority'. The school has recently been refurbished.

1.3 Leadership of change

satisfactory

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:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- The school has an established set of values which have been developed in consultation with children and parents. These have been important in supporting the creation of a positive school ethos. The headteacher has a clear vision for school improvement and this is increasingly being shared with others. The headteacher recognises the need to revisit the vision, values and aims, as a means to provide clarity to all stakeholders on the strategic direction for the school.
- All priorities in the school's improvement plan (SIP) have a clear focus on equity and addressing the poverty-related attainment gap. These could be more consistently expressed as measurable outcomes to allow senior leaders to more easily demonstrate impact. Priority tasks detailed in the SIP include planned collaborative working with local primary schools. There is also a clear rationale for use of the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF). Priorities for improvement are identified through self-evaluation and analysis of evidence. Senior leaders recognise that further refinement of quality assurance and its links to strategic planning for improvement is required to ensure greater coherence.
- There has been positive impact of some changes introduced across the school. For example, approaches to learners' engagement and the 'learning powers' have strengthened the climate and ethos of learning at Lady Alice Primary School. In addition, the headteacher has introduced new approaches to planning that include a strong focus on the moderation cycle. Many of the school's current initiatives are yet to reach fruition and therefore, it is too early to assess the impact of these changes. There is a need to accelerate the pace of change in moving forward with important areas of school practice and provision, including the nursery class, such as approaches to learning, teaching and assessment, and the curriculum.
- Staff have a well-developed knowledge of the social, economic and cultural context of the school. This is helping to inform their approaches to equity and their understanding of the needs of children and families. Staff are well motivated to work collaboratively towards school improvement. The headteacher is supporting increased rigour in staff's use of self-evaluation in areas for improvement. Through regular tracking meetings and professional learning to develop teachers' use of data analysis skills, the headteacher is building their capacity to identify areas for potential professional enquiry. Teachers are beginning to engage with action research and leadership opportunities to support identified improvement priorities. This has

included effective partnership work with the Educational Psychology Service. Senior leaders should consider how they can now engage all staff more effectively in leading aspects of school improvement.

- The house system enables all children to engage in aspects of school life and improvement such as positive relationships, the cost of the school day and nurture. Children value these roles and describe how they are developing their confidence and leadership skills. Teachers are increasingly encouraging children to discuss their developing skills in relation to potential future careers. Senior leaders acknowledge the need for a more developed approach to 'Developing the Young Workforce' (DYW) across the school, to ensure that all children receive their entitlements within the 'Careers Education Standard'. Children and parents have the opportunity to participate in consultations in relation to improvement priorities and PEF spending.
- Senior leaders are working with parents to develop effective partnerships to address inequity and support children's learning. These include working with local businesses, community garden groups and churches. This is resulting in children developing their knowledge and skills in relation to community action projects, such as the 'Community Fridge' and local food bank. Community learning and development (CLD) colleagues provide well-considered and targeted support for children and families through the Challenge Authorities Programme. This includes programmes to engage parents more effectively in their child's education and to remove barriers to participation, for example, through the 'Families Connect' and 'STEPS to Excellence' initiatives'. These have been evaluated by staff as successful in improving parental skills and children's confidence.

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

- Most children engage enthusiastically and purposefully in the learning tasks they are given. This is particularly the case when tasks are well matched to children's needs. They listen and talk to each other respectfully and constructively, and work well in paired activities.
- Children have helped to identify the 'learning powers' they can develop to become more successful learners. These are resilience, perseverance, problem-solver, inquisitive, and reflector. They can identify and talk about how well they are developing and applying these skills. This is supporting children to understand the attributes of successful learners and the potential to learn through making mistakes.
- Teachers have a collective focus on providing active learning and most children find their learning activities motivating and enjoyable. Most activities are clearly focused on planned learning and the purpose and outcomes of learning are clear in most classes. In a few classes, lessons are overly teacher-directed and the pace of learning is not sufficiently brisk.
- In most classes, children know what they need to do to be successful and when they have been successful. Teachers often refer to learning outcomes and expectations throughout lessons. In a few classes, children help to identify the criteria they will use to judge success in their learning. There is potential for teachers to build on this good work by sharing practice more regularly across the school.
- Teachers provide clear explanations and instructions. However, in a few cases these can be overly detailed and result in limited opportunities for children to lead their own learning. Similarly, while most teachers make effective use of questions to promote and support higher-order thinking, they should continue to develop their questioning skills to deepen and extend children's learning. Teachers could usefully reflect on how far their approaches to learning and teaching allow children appropriate opportunities to develop the 'learning powers' which have been identified.
- Teachers have a considered and planned approach to implementing learning and teaching strategies to raise attainment for all. For example, they are in the third year of a three-year plan to implement new teaching approaches. This is resulting in children being more aware of their strengths and next steps in learning.
- Teachers use formative and summative assessment effectively, to check children's understanding in the course of lessons and to identify progress in learning. They use a range of standardised assessments to identify and address children's learning needs. Senior leaders should, as planned, support teachers to develop further their use of assessment to ensure that breadth, challenge and application of learning are appropriately captured and recognised. This

should include more regular opportunities for children to peer- and self-assess, in order to develop further their understanding of what they can achieve.

- The headteacher is a Quality Assurance and Moderation Support Officer (QAMSO) and is supporting teachers to participate in a range of local and regional moderation activities. These are building teachers' confidence and professional capacity to make more informed judgements about children's progress in their learning. As planned, the school should proceed to further develop the validity and reliability of teachers' judgements about children's achievement of a level.
- Staff are currently reviewing their approach to planning, in light of national and local advice. Teachers are positive about recent changes to support more effective planning, particularly in relation to planning for assessment. In refining their approach to planning, they should ensure that they develop appropriate opportunities for input by children and other stakeholders. This can help children to better lead, and take responsibility for, their own learning.
- Teachers use an electronic management system to track children's progress termly across and within Curriculum for Excellence levels. The headteacher inputs data, resulting from dialogue with class teachers, about the progress of each child. As a result, the headteacher has a detailed overview of progress in learning across the school. The overview also provides a focus for staff to meet the needs of individual children to ensure they make the best progress possible.
- Senior leaders analyse attainment data to track the performance of identified groups of children, e.g. those living in areas SIMD 1 and 2. Monitoring the progress of these groups, along with detailed discussion in tracking meetings with teachers, helps senior leaders to ensure that all identified children are supported to make progress in their learning. Teachers are beginning to develop their analysis of data to identify gaps in attainment and provide information to help to evaluate the success of interventions to improve learning. Senior leaders should continue with plans to provide professional learning opportunities to support teachers to develop their data analysis skills further.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Teachers use appropriate progression frameworks for all curriculum areas. These derive from Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes and make links to National Benchmarks. Teachers use these well to plan teaching and learning experiences for children. Teachers' use of progression frameworks is having most impact on children's progress in literacy and numeracy, with teachers becoming more confident in making judgements in children's progress in these areas. Senior leaders should review the curriculum to ensure the progression frameworks have increased impact across all areas of curriculum.
- Children receive two hours of high-quality physical education per week, in line with the national recommendation. They also follow a progressive programme for modern languages in line with the '1+2' national strategy.
- Teachers refer to the local authority's 'Employability Skills Framework 3-18' in their forward planning for careers education and the development of children's skills for work. Their practice should now be more fully aligned to the 'Careers Education Standard'. This will provide children with a more continuous and progressive programme relating to 'Developing the Young Workforce'.
- Staff contribute willingly to, and lead new school developments within the curriculum. For example, children at second level have benefited from learning new digital skills following a series of professional learning sessions for teachers. They are also taking part in a funded Sciences, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) pilot project. A useful next step for the school would be to relate professional leadership opportunities, such as these, to the strategic development of the curriculum and learning pathways.
- Senior leaders plan to review the curriculum and to produce a rationale for what children learn at Lady Alice Primary School. This review should include all members of the school community in exploring where teachers and children can make links using local, national and global contexts. The uniqueness of the school's local setting and the school's developing values should be central to the curriculum plan moving forward.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- See Choice QI

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

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

- The school's strategic approach to wellbeing is underpinned by the strong commitment of staff, children, parents and partners, to the shared values of the school community. Staff have a very good understanding of the social, economic and cultural context of the school. This is beginning to inform the whole-school approach to wellbeing. Positive relationships, positive behaviour and nurturing principles are central to this approach. Teachers' work on these two initiatives is having a positive impact on the ethos and culture at Lady Alice Primary School. For example, there has been a reduction in the number of behavioural concerns and there have been no incidents of exclusion for a number of years. Teachers' work on restorative practice is encouraging children to resolve and learn from conflict in a way which maintains positive relationships. Teachers have made positive developments with children in taking forward nurturing principles across the school. There is evidence of the progress a few children have made in their readiness to learn through their attendance at the nurture class.
- The school is in the early stages of developing a shared understanding of wellbeing amongst all children and staff. Early work has been undertaken by teachers, with children across the school self-reflecting on the wellbeing indicators. This has been used to inform the discussions children have with senior leaders. In addition, senior leaders have started to raise the profile of the wellbeing indicators through 'Getting It right for every child' (GIRFEC) assemblies. In time, as these approaches develop, senior leaders will be better placed to demonstrate improved outcomes for children.
- The wellbeing of children is enhanced through the individual support they receive from members of staff. Almost all children feel they have someone who they can talk to if they are worried or have concerns about anything. This results in children at Lady Alice Primary School having a strong sense of belonging.
- A minority of children and parents feel that staff do not deal with bullying effectively. Children know where to go for support when things go wrong and have the confidence to report incidents of bullying. However, they feel that these are not always effectively resolved. As a result, the school needs to evaluate more fully the effectiveness of responses in tackling bullying.
- The school's duties under the Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007, to promote the school meal service and to ensure free access to drinking water throughout the day, are being met. The school needs to ensure provision of items at the school-run tuckshop comply with relevant standards. The nutritional analysis of the planned menu cycle shows that all nutrients standards are being met. Further work is required by staff to ensure that the planned provision reflects actual uptake at lunchtime. Senior leaders recognise that further work is required in supporting children to make healthy food choices.

- Children who require additional support have their needs identified well. The depute head with responsibility for additional support needs is skilled at gathering information and identifying children's needs, with specialist services and staff when required. She has established a comprehensive overview of children requiring an individual support plan. Senior leaders recognise the need to set more measureable targets within these plans. It is also important that staff evaluate support plans more rigorously to ensure that children achieve the targets set for them. In moving forward, there is a need to develop a streamlined approach for monitoring the progress of children who receive targeted support. This is an important area for improvement in the school.
- Senior leaders need to consider if a co-ordinated support plan is required for children that are care experienced, as is their entitlement. Senior leaders provide information on specific groups of children, such as those who are care experienced, to inform the local authority's attainment report. There is potential to build on this good work by providing greater clarity on how children are overtaking personal targets.
- Senior leaders, through their analysis of reported issues, are very responsive to incidents of inequality. They have strong approaches to partnership working, that result in external partners contributing to the health and wellbeing programme. This ensures that children develop an appropriate understanding of equality and diversity. Senior leaders are aware of the need to promote learning about equality and inclusion across the school. They recognise that further professional learning for staff is required to secure a deeper understanding of the legislative framework in relation to this. It will be important to review and develop further the curriculum, to ensure children's learning experiences and staff's practice better reflects the world in which children live.

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

Overall attainment in literacy and numeracy

- The Curriculum for Excellence achievement data provided by the school demonstrates that by June 2019, most children in P1 achieved early level in reading, and in numeracy and mathematics. The majority of children achieved early level in writing and listening and talking. By the end of P4, most children achieved first level in reading, writing and listening and talking. The majority achieved first level in numeracy. By the end of P7, most children achieved second level in reading and in numeracy and mathematics. The majority did so in writing and almost all achieved second level in listening and talking.
- Teachers' professional dialogue regarding achievement of a level is increasing in rigour. All teachers are involved in regular moderation activities within the school. Through her work as a Quality Assurance and Moderation Support Officer at national level, the headteacher has supported teachers well in understanding national expectations. Senior leaders should identify further opportunities for staff to engage in moderation exercises with other establishments, in order to continue to build teachers' confidence in judgements on achieving levels.

Literacy and English

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

Listening and Talking

- Overall, children are making good progress in listening and talking. Across the school, almost all children listen attentively and follow instructions. They do this with a high level of courtesy and respect for each other. Children at all stages are developing the ability to articulate their thinking at an appropriate level for their age and stage. At first and second levels, children can talk confidently about what makes successful listening and talking and are developing skills that support them in working with each other. At all stages, children use 'pair and share' strategies to support their discussions. Older children work well together with younger peers to share ideas and opinions within the 'house group' system. The school should now continue to develop children's listening and talking skills with a focus on moving from working in pairs, to working more independently in small groups. More opportunities should be planned for all children by the end of P7 to have regular opportunities to plan and deliver talks and presentations.

Reading

- Overall, most children are making good progress in reading. At the early level, children are using a variety of strategies and making good progress to decode words. They enjoy exploring texts and locating key words. They are supported well by a structured programme for the progression of children's phonic skills across early level and into first level. At first level, children are becoming fluent in reading favourite novels and can explain their preferences, with

reasons, for particular authors. They know how to locate information in non-fiction texts using contents and index. By P7, most children are confident and fluent readers, who read with understanding and expression. They are able to discuss key skills of skimming and scanning and how they use these within texts. They can identify favourite authors and give supporting reasons for their book of choice. They know their class texts well and can talk confidently about these, giving examples of the author's craft in relation to setting, character development and audience awareness. Across the school, children demonstrate an interest in books and talk positively about their experiences within their well-stocked school fiction library. A more detailed indication of reading levels required for certain books would help them make appropriate choices. The school's partnership with the local library is encouraging children to make use of the facility, out of school hours.

Writing

- Overall, most children are making good progress in writing. A structured programme is in place which supports children in developing their skills in a clear, progressive way.
- Children at early level are developing confidence to write purposefully with an appropriate level of independence. They know and can demonstrate the importance of accurate sentence structure. By the end of first level, most children can create a range of short and extended texts using appropriate punctuation. They can give examples of how to make a sentence more interesting through creative use of adjectives and verbs. Most children at second level use appropriate style and format to convey information effectively. By P7, children are producing high-quality extended pieces of writing across a variety of genres. A few children are exceeding national expectations. Teachers provide children with relevant contexts for writing. For example, recent work on persuasive writing was linked well to current technology issues affecting children and young people. Across all stages, children are developing their knowledge of technical aspects of writing and their understanding of associated grammatical terms and their application. Across the school, children's development of writing skills is helped through feedback and comments from teachers, and through self and peer assessment. Staff should ensure there is consistently high quality presentation of children's written work. They should work to ensure better progression in learning across all stages. Senior leaders should monitor the impact of current interventions to ensure any gaps in attainment continue to be addressed.

Numeracy

- Overall, children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, Money and Measurement

- Across the school, children are developing their understanding of place value and number processes well. Children have a good knowledge and understanding of number, money and measurement. As children progress through the school, most are able to carry out key number operations accurately. Increasingly, children across the school are beginning to talk about using a range of strategies to carry out tasks mentally. The school should continue with efforts to develop children's skills in justifying their choice of strategy.

Shape, Position and Movement

- Children's knowledge and understanding of shape, position and movement is variable across the school. Although they recognise 2D shapes and 3D objects, they are less proficient in describing their properties. At second level, children are very confident in describing and classifying a range of angles. At the second level, more work is needed on developing children's understanding of the properties of circles.

Information Handling

- There is a need for teachers to develop children's skills in analysing, interpreting and drawing conclusions from a variety of data. As children progress through the levels, they need to develop more effectively the skills of presenting and analysing information from a wider range of graphs and spreadsheets.

Attainment over time

- Attainment in literacy and numeracy has fluctuated over time. Attainment at the middle stages of the school shows declining trends. However, by the end of P7, attainment over time is more positive. Senior leaders are confident that some of the variances over the past four years can be attributed to strengthening teachers' professional judgements and more robust moderation of standards. They are addressing other factors, such as the socio-economic related gap in attainment over time, through planned interventions.
- Senior leaders and staff are aware that achievement data highlights variances in attainment for groups of learners, in areas of literacy and numeracy, in relation to socio-economic factors. Accordingly, the school's PEF spending on interventions and whole-school developments for 2019-20 are targeted to improve attainment in literacy.

Overall quality of learner's achievement

- Children achieve well across a range of contexts. All children participate in pupil leadership groups focusing on various aspects of the life of the school. As a result, they are growing in confidence and developing valuable skills as they embrace these leadership opportunities. A few children have achieved nationally accredited Dynamic Youth awards and all children in P7 achieved a Personal Development Award. Such successes are celebrated by staff and children at assemblies. The school is tracking children's participation in out-of-class activities to ensure that no child misses out. The school should extend their approaches to recording children's achievements to include tracking the skills and attributes that children acquire across the totality of their learning, in and out of school.

Equity for all learners

- The headteacher and staff know children and their families very well. The school has had a recent strong focus on providing equity for all learners. Barriers to learning are targeted through use of the PEF to provide additional support and guidance for teachers, particularly in literacy. By analysing data and using teachers' observations and judgements, senior leaders, with staff, have identified individuals and groups of children who would benefit from targeted interventions. This includes well-judged interventions to support parental engagement in children's learning, supported by partner agencies such as community learning and development (CLD) and Barnardos. There is emerging evidence that such interventions are having a positive impact on children's learning experiences. Going forward, senior leaders and staff are aware of the need to gather robust evidence on interventions, to measure the success on improving attainment and outcomes for children.

Choice of QI: Partnerships

- The development and promotion of partnerships
- Collaborative learning and improvement
- Impact on learners

- The school is proactive in developing partnerships with locally based organisations, with the aim of promoting health and wellbeing and increasing family engagement in children's learning. Scottish Attainment Challenge funding has been used well to develop some of these partnerships. Partners highlight the school's positive approach to collaborative working to meet the emotional, social and pastoral needs of children.
- There are well-established links with CLD. For example, the 'Family Connect' programme involves CLD and school staff working together to deliver workshops on parenting skills and family cooking. Very positive feedback from parents attending the workshops with their children indicate that such programmes are having a positive impact on parents' support of children's learning. To enhance transition between nursery and P1, a next step is to introduce aspects of the 'Family Connect' programme to nursery families. A CLD worker supports children's learning about substance misuse, based on the latest information available, at transition to secondary school. Children and families requiring emotional and wellbeing support benefit from a productive partnership with Barnardos through, for example, the 'Connect Group'. Both CLD and Barnardos staff provide opportunities for children to gain accreditation for citizenship and wider achievement through SQA Personal Achievement modules and the 'Dynamic Youth Award'.
- The school's chaplain provides valuable pastoral support and works with the school to contribute to assemblies that promote the school's values. Facilitated by the Chaplain, children are learning about and contributing actively to a local foodbank initiative. Through regular visits and joint working, the school's community liaison police officer is developing positive relationships with children across the school.
- Active Schools staff support the promotion of an active lifestyle for children across the school. Various activities including golf, tennis and basketball are linked to opportunities for children to then take a longer-lasting interest in sports participation. In particular, a link with the local athletics club has resulted in children from the school taking up the sport and achieving success at various levels. Data from the Active Schools service shows a considerable increase in children from Lady Alice Primary School participating in sport.
- Partnerships with parents have been strengthened in recent years. Staff undertake a variety of activities, including inviting parents to classrooms during open afternoons to view their children's learning. These activities are helping parents to build positive relationships with staff and enable them to support their child to learn.
- The school recognises the need to further develop existing partnerships and to develop new links with local businesses and organisations to support their planned curriculum review. This should be done in a strategic way that will provide children with planned experiences in STEM and DYW, and provide a framework for local links within interdisciplinary learning.
- A few partners are involved in transition projects as children move from nursery to primary and from primary to secondary school. For example, the Inverclyde Communications Outreach Service supports families to ensure that children's needs are supported as they move into P1. S1 pupils from Inverclyde Academy mentor children in P7 as part of the comprehensive secondary induction programme.

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.