

Summarised inspection findings

Crosshouse Primary School

East Ayrshire Council

27 August 2019

Key contextual information

Crosshouse Primary School is a rural school that serves the local community of the villages of Crosshouse, Knockentiber and surrounding farms. Currently there a primary school roll of 176 children, 49 children in the communication centre and 50 children in the nursery. The school will undergo a significant refurbishment and development in the next few years. The headteacher has been in post for around five years. She is supported well by a depute head who leads the work for the communication centre, and by a principal teacher who leads work within the primary school.

1.3 Leadership of change

very good

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's vision, values and aims were decided in consultation with all stakeholders. These values of happiness, kindness, teamwork, respect and honesty are demonstrated well daily and take account of the unique context of the school. Staff are passionate about leading a village community with a strong culture of success for every child. They are rightly proud of the very inclusive ethos which is notable across classes. Staff respond quickly and well to supporting children, sometimes with very significant additional support needs, providing them with a personalised curriculum pathway where they can all succeed.
- Leadership is a strength of the school, with the headteacher, depute head teacher and principal teacher, providing very strong, supportive direction through a very approachable management style. They model strong teamwork very well. This is characterised by regular consultation together, and with staff and learners in an open-door culture. The headteacher is very well respected by learners, parents, children and the local community. In her five years leading the school, she has led important strategic improvements for the school including the development of the communication centre. The headteacher agrees that further work is needed now to provide more robust quality assurance in the early years and childcare setting. A new depute head with overall responsibility for the early years setting will commence in post shortly.
- Staff participate in strong collegiate planning to improve learning and teaching. There are very well-planned opportunities in the school calendar to provide collegiate staff meetings, twilight courses and cluster work, all of which support the systems and processes to support school improvement. In the Education Scotland pre-inspection questionnaires, almost all staff comment that the school is led well and almost all parents comment that they are satisfied with the school. Children take on a variety of leadership roles including, raising funds for a variety of charities, running the eco group, leading the rights respecting school's committee and participating well in school assemblies, all of which is building their self-esteem and confidence. Children's leadership should continue be developed across all stages enabling every child to be a leader. The Parent Council is small but effective. The chairperson and parents work closely with the school and are active in discussing school progress including the

use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) funding. In addition they complete useful fundraising activities which support the improvement of resources for school events and improve transport provision enabling more learners to experience learning activities beyond school.

- The headteacher protects time to enable staff, through the working time agreement, to complete a wide range of self-evaluation activities. Each month staff consider higher order questions linked to How Good is Our School 4? (HGIOS4?). This reflection is helping teachers to focus on improving processes to improve attainment. This year's school improvement plan (SIP) has clearly defined priorities which focus appropriately on actions to improve attainment through for example, improving children's vocabulary to support literacy attainment, revision of restorative approaches and the use of a Pupil Attitude to Self and School (PASS) survey. Impact from previous improvement plans is demonstrated in the improving resources now available, including digital resources and information available to support well children with dyslexia. These developments are enabling children to demonstrate more independence in their learning. Children are beginning to be involved in school improvement and self-evaluation through the use of peer evaluative work in class, conversations with staff and through the use of focus groups. The next steps are for children to express their views more formally on areas such as their success in wider achievement.
- Senior leaders continue to develop their strategic monitoring and tracking systems to support ongoing improvement in attainment and achievement. Staff moderate attainment standards in writing twice a year, but recognise the school will benefit from increasing this to three times a year. Senior leaders agree there now needs to be further work done to ensure that monitoring approaches across the school evaluate the pace of learning acquisition regularly, thus ensuring that children work continuously at the correct level.
- Senior leaders are developing a wide range of important community partnerships including, working with the cluster active schools coordinator, close links with the local community council, and valuable partnerships with local business, all of which support learning linked to the world of work. A few partners are planning and evaluating the impact of their work alongside teachers. Staff understand that the next steps are to put more formal plans in place to ensure that all partner activities are linked well to experiences and outcomes within Curriculum for Excellence and the SIP. The headteacher recognises that more work is needed to develop children's understanding of the world of work. This includes developing the use of the Career Education Standard, for example, in the context of the positive developments in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) curriculum.
- Senior leaders are developing profiling through the use of progress folders which demonstrate examples of pupil's attainment as they progress through school. Reporting systems continue to be developed offering helpful guidance to parents. Staff continue to develop the use of digital technologies across the school. The school is now registered to achieve a digital school's award and is working well to develop its use of coding and a 3D printer. The school benefits from online digital resources which learners use beyond the school day as part of individualised homework tasks.
- The very open consultative culture in the school, led by senior leaders, encourages all staff to demonstrate growing confidence to initiate and lead change. Teachers have taken on a wide range of leadership roles. These include the development of tracking systems, the improvement of teaching and learning pedagogy, and the further development of play-based learning across all infant classes. These important developments support well the school's capacity for continuous improvement. Staff are committed to improving their own professional learning and practice. Teaching staff have gained valuable experience from visiting other education establishments to enhance their teaching approaches especially in the development of numeracy. A few staff are using their professional learning to further their education

qualifications. Staff use e-learning well to improve their pedagogy. Staff will benefit from the acquisition of research enquiry skills linked to learning and teaching.

- The school has set out clear plans for the use of the pupil equity funding (PEF) for 2018-2019, which address key issues for children who face socio-economic disadvantage. These include acquiring additional teaching staff who support learners with additional needs. Impact from this work is still to be measured this session. Impact from the PEF for 2017-2018, includes better co-ordination of pupil support and the use of additional teaching time for selected learners. There are already signs that selected learners are now achieving their targets.

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

- There are positive and nurturing relationships across the whole school. The values of 'respect, kindness, honesty, happiness and teamwork,' support a safe environment for children to learn. A high value is placed on building positive relationships between staff and pupils, and these are always highly supportive. Staff are continuing to develop children's rights through the Rights Respecting Schools programme and have recently started to work towards the bronze award. The majority of classes have developed class charters which support the school values and set the highly inclusive standards of achievement to which everyone aspires. Overall, children work well with each other and behave well in class and in the outdoor environment. All staff are trained using the relationship framework and restorative approaches. This impacts positively on peer relationships and shared play activities.
- The majority of children enjoy their lessons and respond positively to planned and organised learning experiences. In the majority of classes the learning is matched appropriately to the needs of the learner. Most teachers provide clear instructions and tasks are explained clearly. There are examples of very strong learning and teaching and all staff should now work to provide consistently high quality learning and teaching across the school. In a few classes, pace and challenge should now be increased and a more considered use of differentiation applied to the benefit all children.
- The quality of teaching observed across the school is good overall. Most teachers share the purpose of the learning with the children and discuss how they can measure the success of a particular lesson. Children speak with confidence about the tasks they have to complete, and in a majority of cases relate their learning to an appropriate real-life context. The majority of children speak confidently about the skills they are learning in school and can relate these to real life contexts in a few instances. In the early stages, playful pedagogy approaches are being developed and this is impacting positively on the involvement and engagement of children. In most classes, teachers question children well and are developing higher-order thinking skills through their interaction. There is scope for children to be more actively engaged in the progression of the skills they are developing and for increased opportunity to lead both their own learning and that of others. Children across the school would benefit from more regular and consistent opportunities to lead learning and develop their independent learning ability. Staff should continue also to further develop learning opportunities and activities through real-life experiences, including those which support learning in skills for learning, life and work.
- Across the school, children are making use of digital technology. The interactive whiteboard is used throughout the school to present information and allow children access to a variety of digital learning approaches. Tablet devices enhance and support learning. The headteacher and staff recognise a need to develop further the consistent use of digital technology throughout the school. A revised digital technology strategy would support this continuing

development. There is scope for children to develop further their digital learning skills through new digital strategy leadership opportunities.

- Teaching staff are supported by local authority curriculum pathways. They are beginning to make use of National Benchmarks to support their professional judgement on Curriculum for Excellence levels of attainment. A variety of assessments, including Scottish National Standardised Assessments, are used to support professional judgements when measuring children's progress. The school gathers and collates a range of data to support progression and coherence in the curriculum. The headteacher recognises the need to prioritise and share data more strategically to inform both universal support and next steps for children who require targeted support.
- Staff already engage in moderation activities with each other and have contact with colleagues in other schools. They discuss and share standards and expectations on assessment and achievement. They collaborate to assess children's work and develop a better understanding of the professional judgement of a level. Staff are enthusiastic about developing their moderation activities further through working with colleagues in the locality and beyond.
- There are opportunities for children to take on roles of responsibility across the school as part of their learning. These include the Dyslexia Friendly School (DFS) steering group, eco-group, pupil council, and being a house captain. Children also have the opportunity to enhance outdoor learning experiences through an annual residential trip to Dumfries House.
- Support staff contribute positively to the learning experiences of the children. Senior leaders have deployed effectively, the school's complement of support staff and additional support staff, accessed through PEF. This is benefiting children who need additional support with their learning. Support staff are well regarded by all staff for their level of enthusiasm and the nurturing and positive support they offer to children.
- The headteacher has recognised the need to review and refresh strategic school planning. A refreshed planning format can have a positive impact on learners by ensuring greater consistency of approach across all classes. Staff should continue to develop the planning of learning and assessment in line with the National Benchmarks. This revised format should take account of the latest guidance and best national practice in planning.
- Across the school, learning and assessment strategies support children's learning. Staff should now develop children's approaches to self-assessment further. They should develop further children's participation in lesson planning and in discussing what success will look like. Increased awareness of success criteria and clear expectations can support children's input into setting targets in their own learning.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- The school community continues to develop creative learning pathways to widen the curriculum for all learners. To date, literacy and numeracy, health and wellbeing, religious and moral education (RME), science, social studies and the expressive arts are developing well. Staff are continuing to develop learning pathways in French and, are offering Spanish as part of their modern languages curriculum. All staff recognise the need to continue to develop pathways to cover all areas of the curriculum. The curriculum is designed to be inclusive and embeds Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) principles very well.
- Staff are beginning to place a greater focus on planning for teaching, learning and assessment which incorporates the National Benchmarks. They bundle a variety of experiences and outcomes, linking them together well to provide interdisciplinary learning (IDL) opportunities. Staff and learners enjoy interesting and absorbing curriculum activities. These include the local town trail and the Titanic project, which incorporates learners benefitting from an educational visit to the Titanic museum in Belfast. Further work is required to link all topic approaches to the skills for learning, life and work. Staff need to have further conversations on what aspects of learning and teaching are best taught within discrete subject areas. Consideration should be given to the development of progressive skills in music and art and design, and what skills can be developed well through interdisciplinary learning. In addition, learning from partnership work should be embedded and evaluated within the curriculum, and not seen as additional projects to support the school. Senior leaders agree they also need to develop enterprise skills further.
- Pathways for literacy are developing well. These include the use of a wide variety of literacy resources including active literacy resources. Pathways for numeracy, including the development of strong number talk work, are also developing well. Digital literacy is improving although staff recognise the need to develop this further.
- There has been a strong focus on the development of health and wellbeing. Children have opportunities to engage in a variety of active sports experiences out with the school day. Outdoor learning is developing well and staff plan to continue to develop the John Muir and 'Heritage Hero' work next session. A wide variety of well-planned activities are used across the school to provide progressive coursework in health and wellbeing.
- An effective transition programme is in place across the school. This is supported well through the use of a detailed transition calendar. Children, parents and staff work together well to make sure all children are very comfortable at each transition point including annual class transitions.
- Early level learning in P1 is being delivered through an active play curriculum. It is important that senior leaders evaluate this work carefully at the end of this session to measure successes achieved and consider identified areas to be developed further.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- The headteacher is building strong and positive relationships with parents. Parents are aware of the inclusive nature of the school and its commitment to supporting all children, parents and families. The headteacher operates an open door policy to accommodate parents, and the majority of parents appreciate that the school takes their views into account.
- Across the school, staff continue to develop positive relationships and partnerships with parents. A range of initiatives and opportunities encourage parents to become more involved in their child's learning. Staff should continue to develop these initiatives.
- The Parent Council supports the school well and is positive in its approach to supporting the work of the school. The current focus on fundraising should now be developed and extended further to enable parents to play a bigger part in whole-school planning and improvement. This should include, for example, the consideration of school budget proposals and PEF initiatives. The Parent Council should continue its work to widen parent representation across the school, including parents of children in the early childhood centre and communication centre. The headteacher is also working actively to increase parental involvement.
- Overall, parents are very positive about the work of the school. Staff should continue to develop ways to engage parents further in the children's learning through, for example, the development of family learning.

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

very good

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

- Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion is central to the very caring ethos of Crosshouse Primary School. Children are aware of the wellbeing indicators are these reflected in the school's vision and embedded in the day to day work of the school. All staff work together very effectively as a team to ensure that children achieve the best possible health and wellbeing outcomes. Any concerns are dealt with immediately, with senior leaders supporting children to express their concerns through the use of for example a 'sofa chat' or use of the 'wellbeing web'. Two nurture clubs provide a few learners with additional support when needed. This is enhancing the already calm atmosphere for learning. In addition, classroom assistants spend time interacting well with learners helping them to express their feelings and build their confidence.
- All staff create a welcoming and caring environment with a clear focus on the dignity of every learner. Staff use restorative approaches to manage children's emotions on the few occasions this is needed, and behaviour in most classes is good with no exclusions in the last five years. Relationships between children and staff are very positive and, as a result almost all children feel safe and have someone to talk to if they have a concern. Staff are very good at recognising when children need additional support. All staff follow the East Ayrshire respectful relationships policy. The school's eco work is effective and eco group encourages all children to take responsibility for their actions, for example, to tidy the school environment and consider their use of plastic. A few children are taking the lead in setting up a school group that celebrates diversity and recognises the protected characteristics in accordance with current national guidance.
- Almost all children feel that the school teaches them to lead a healthy lifestyle and children are able to talk about how to keep themselves safe. All staff use the local authority planner to ensure that Health and Wellbeing is taught progressively. Older children can talk with confidence about on-line safety. Staff recognise they need to do more work to help children understand the value of understanding different food groups. Children are encouraged to cycle or walk to school. All children in the primary school receive the government guidelines of two hours quality Physical Education per week. They have opportunities to take part in physical activities beyond the classroom, including competitive learning within the cluster. The majority of children take part in one or more after-school clubs such as football for boys and girls, multi-sports and gymnastics. Children also improve their fitness through completing regularly a 'walk a mile' activity.
- Outdoor learning to support improving health and wellbeing has been a positive focus for the school over the last year, and this is valued by children and their parents. This includes learning through work in the local village, and through active learning on a local town trail. There are a variety of playground spaces to support all learners to enjoy playing and learning outdoors. Teachers are using well a mix of assessment strategies to assess health and

wellbeing including, the use of wellbeing indicators, the use of Pupil Attitude to Self and School (PASS) surveys, classroom conversations with teachers, and through encouraging children to develop an understanding of their rights. Staff agree they need to continue to develop ways to ensure that all children are more familiar with the language of the wellbeing indicators to support them further to express their feelings. The school's strong nurturing approaches ensure that all children have someone to speak to, including teachers, classroom assistants and pupil buddies when they have a concern or a worry. Senior leaders follow clear anti-bullying approaches as per the local council systems and will continue to promote strong anti-bullying education through, for example, their regular assemblies. There are no bullying incidents logged this session.

- Children at risk of underachieving are tracked closely by teachers to plan continuous and appropriate support. The school uses its four stage intervention system well to provide more focussed support for those who require it. The local authority support team work well with class teachers to ensure that the needs of all learners are met. Staff know their families very well. They track children with additional needs carefully, using diagnostic testing to ensure they are then offered tailored support to improve their life chances. Support assistants also provide strong support for all learners and are well respected by staff and parents.
- Health and wellbeing partners offer useful training for children to help them to improve their health and wellbeing skills and improve children's confidence. Young carers are supported through sharing their experiences at assemblies and receive additional support from a local group which supports them well. Children can attend and contribute to part of support plan review meetings to discuss their progress. As a result, children who face challenges and those with additional support needs, are very well supported and make positive progress. Child plans are well documented with a clear chronology for ease of usage. Pastoral transitions are well planned to support learners to move comfortably from stage to stage. Positive use is made of Raiki and Tai Chi, which are led by staff to promote pupil and staff wellbeing.
- Senior managers have a good understanding of statutory duties. Staff complete mandatory online courses and there are high expectations, for example, in ensuring attendance is strong and that equality and diversity are promoted well.
- The pupil council meet regularly to improve areas of the school. They provide pupil feedback for staff and learners and provide creative ideas to improve learning, including the improved provision of indoor games. The pupil council lead strong eco work and have succeeded in achieving four green flags. Children place a positive focus on keeping the local community tidy.
- The school's Religious and Moral Education (RME) curriculum has been written in-house and includes progressive opportunities for children to develop their ideas and views on a variety of religions. Senior leaders should evaluate whether assessment processes in RME are robust. Children received valuable opportunities to experience religious observance through partnership with a local minister who supports the school well.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

good

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- In 2018, by the end of P1 most children achieved early level in listening and talking, a majority achieved in reading and writing and most achieved in numeracy. By the end of P4 most children achieved first level in listening and talking, most achieved appropriate levels in reading and a majority achieved in writing. Most children achieved first level in numeracy. By the end of P7 almost all children achieved second level in listening and talking, almost all achieved second level in reading, a majority achieved in writing and most achieved second level numeracy.
- The school's predicted data for 2019 using Curriculum for Excellence levels, shows a few children at each level are predicted to achieve beyond expected levels. However, the overall predicted attainment results at all levels suggest an overall drop in literacy and numeracy attainment this session. The headteacher is confident that as a result of continuing developments in the use of moderation, the school's attainment figures are becoming more accurate and reliable than in previous years. This in part may explain the drop in recorded attainment predictions for this session. Classroom observations, evidence in jotters and discussions with children during the course of the inspection support teachers' current professional judgements.
- Teachers use Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA) data as part of their suite of assessment materials to assess children's skills in literacy and numeracy. In addition, they use a wide variety of diagnostic tests. Staff also use local authority toolkits which are supporting consistency in numeracy especially around transition to secondary.

Literacy

- Overall, most children are making good progress in English language and literacy. To improve reading and writing further, senior leaders recognise they need now to ensure there is consistency in the provision of clear prompts for learners to demonstrate exactly the skills that need to be achieved at each level. In addition, senior managers will now put in place further rigorous checks across P4 and P7 to ensure that every learner can maximise the development of their reading and writing skills.

Listening and talking

- Staff use clear listening and talking rubrics to help learners know the skills they need to develop in listening and talking. At the early stages, children demonstrate they can listen well to each other. They are enthusiastic learners, who can follow instructions and offer personal opinions. Children demonstrate their developing skills through for example sharing their comments in a simple talking presentation. Using first level guidelines, children interact well with each other and with adults. In group situations, most children are keen to contribute their ideas. They are a high quality audience who listen carefully, recounting their own experiences

and sharing their ideas with confidence. First level learners are formally assessed through discussing their topic work, and from sharing their own research ideas. At second level, children can offer persuasive arguments and justify their reasoning very well about a range of researched topics. Most children listen politely to each other and perform well during committee meetings or through sharing their achievements at assemblies.

Reading

- At early level, most children recognise common words and read and discuss characters within simple texts, including from the whiteboard. They are enthusiastic when explaining their reading content. Children are making good progress in developing their awareness and knowledge of phonics. At first level, most children can read aloud familiar pieces of texts. They are beginning to demonstrate their use of expression. They read, discuss and understand texts including Scottish poetry. At second level, children can offer a personal response to a text and choose, sort and analyse information. They can identify and explain the difference between fact and opinion. Children use texts within a creative range of purposes, and are able to discuss the main ideas of texts and the writer's use of language to convey meaning. There is scope to challenge all learners further through greater engagement in critical, analytical and evaluative activities. Clear prompts are required to ensure that all learners recognise the skills they need to develop, to achieve successfully the level at which they are working.

Writing

- At the early stages, most children can use common words to create simple sentences. They understand the use of capital letters and full stops to support the quality of their writing. By the end of first level, a majority of children are able to write well for a variety of different purposes and audiences. This includes the use of imaginative writing, diary entries and letter writing. Children enjoy using their writing skills across the curriculum, for example, writing a science report. They are learning to use more extended vocabulary, connectives, openers and proper sentences. At second level, children write regularly within a variety of creative purposes including writing a film script, letter writing and writing a significant recount of events. They understand how to up level their writing using advanced vocabulary to provide more interest for the reader. The headteacher recognises the need to place more rigour to develop the skills in writing activities to improve further writing skills especially for learners at P4 and P7. Clear prompts are needed for every writing activity to support children to understand the skills they are developing within the level they are working. Further rigour is needed to ensure that there are clear assessment processes in place to enable all learners to acquire the necessary skills.

Numeracy

Overall progress in numeracy

- Overall, attainment in numeracy and maths is good.

Number money and measure

- In the early stages, active learning approaches support children to build their confidence in understanding place value. The majority of children are developing an understanding of number through a variety of approaches including developing mental agility. Children in the early stages engage well using play based approaches to numeracy. Children at early level work well in pairs and groups measuring materials in the classroom. At first level, children are engaging in physical activities reinforcing number bonds, and work outdoors appropriately with partners. Children are motivated by these approaches. The pace and challenge within these approaches should now be developed further and monitored closely for impact on attainment. At second level, children are being encouraged to apply mental maths strategies to calculations involving different number processes. They can articulate a range of strategies on how to partition numbers. The presentation of children's written work is variable across the school. A consistent approach and an understanding of agreed standards of presentation would support numeracy development across the school.

Shape, position and movement

- Across the school, the majority of children recognise 2D shapes and 3D objects appropriate to their stage. A few can discuss the properties of these shapes and objects. A few children are hesitant and lack confidence in identifying some of these properties. At first and second level, the majority of children can identify and describe acute, obtuse and straight line angles. At second level, children can find due north on a compass. They can use this information to create an accurate compass rose and then create their own maps. They can then find and mark out designated locations in the school's outdoor area. Children support and enhance their mapping skills by using their tablet devices to record and photograph their work.

Information handling

- The majority of children at early and first level can gather, collect and organise information. Tally marks, simple block graphs and pictorial representations are used by the majority of children to record and present information. By the second level, the majority of children can interpret and understand the information and data being presented in pictorial form. Children should now develop further the quality of presentation of these representations and explore and develop further opportunities for increased use of bar graphs, line graphs and pie charts. There is scope for increased use of digital technology to support and enhance information handling across the school.

Attainment over time

- Over the last three years, there have been improvements in Curriculum for Excellence attainment at early level. This is not yet reflected in the data provided for P4 and P7 where staff were at the early stages of recognising Curriculum for Excellence levels with accuracy. As a result, the school's attainment results at P4 and P7 show a decline in this year's predictions. Staff are confident that their moderation standards are now becoming more robust. In discussion with senior leaders, staff are developing their current range of assessment information to provide a more systematic overview of the progress of individuals and cohorts over time. Senior leaders recognise the need to now use data more strategically to make robust predictions about the progress of individuals and groups of children over time.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Children are developing a broad range of skills that support them to achieve in sport, culture and in the acquisition of citizenship skills. There are a range of sports clubs on offer through the cluster active schools coordinator and by school staff. These clubs are helping children to develop important skills such as teamwork and improve their aerobic fitness levels. Children are developing their citizenship skills through raising funds for a number of charities including singing to support a local special needs facility. Children develop their performance skills and gain confidence from opportunities to sing and perform using a variety of instruments. They use these skills in the annual school show, the school nativity and the school pantomime. Staff work well to ensure vulnerable children are offered relevant opportunities to participate in practical performance activities which improve their social and communication skills. Staff now need to put in place a better analytical and evaluative overview of achievement, including recording relevant skills. This will enable staff to identify and consider more fully the needs of those at risk of missing out. In addition, there is a need for children to engage in learning conversations that enable them to discuss the skills gained from these opportunities.

Equity for all learners

- The school knows the children in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1 and 2 who are facing barriers in learning and staff put well considered interventions in place to help bring support them to achieve equity. They recognise that in supporting learners to achieve well there needs to retain their high standards of attendance and low exclusion rate. Staff address the challenge of improving equity with great care, including providing additional tailored support for selected learners. Senior leaders and staff are using Pupil Equity Funding well to put in place extra

staffing to support designated learners to improve their attainment in literacy and numeracy. The headteacher has monitored and evaluated the impact of Pupil Equity Funding on individual learners and their attainment shows improvement.

Choice of QI: 2.6 Transitions

- Arrangements to support learners and their families
- Collaborative planning and delivery
- Continuity and progression in learning

- The school has established an effective transition programme for children at all stages of their learning. Effective arrangements are in place to support children at appropriate points of entry to school and at all transition stages across the school. Children's needs are taken account of during these planned transitions, and children who require additional support and enhanced programmes are identified and enabled to access a new stage in their learning.
- Children are supported well through a planned programme of events to prepare for entry and provide the best possible start to nursery. The headteacher, along with nursery staff host an enrolment opportunity for prospective children and their parents. This informs and supports the nursery transition experience for children. The headteacher has recognised the opportunity to introduce home visits to support entry to nursery provision. She intends to add this to the support process for new families. Opportunities to meet with staff and support the nursery class experience are built into the session calendar to assist parents and learners access the curriculum. Parents have further opportunities to attend nursery events and presentations in the course of the session.
- A number of 'familiarisation' initiatives, including information events, curriculum workshops, a P6 buddy system and a shared dining experience for parents and carers supports the entry of children to primary 1.
- As children progress through each stage of their learning at primary school, they are supported by a 'moving day' experience and teachers are allocated time to develop a shared understanding of progress in children's learning. This is done through consultation and the sharing of relevant information. As children progress to secondary school, they are supported well by strong links with the local secondary school. A full programme of opportunities over a period of five non-consecutive days, each with a different focus, help prepare children for a positive move to secondary education. Staff from both Crosshouse Primary School and Grange Academy work well together to create effective opportunities for pupil visits, teacher visits, guidance staff involvement and passing on important information which assist transition at this stage.

Quality of provision of Special Unit

Context

- The Communication Centre in Crosshouse Primary School was established in 1998 to meet the needs of children with communication needs living in East Ayrshire. Children are allocated a place in the centre following an Additional Support for Learning Community Assessment Team meeting. At the time of the inspection there were 49 children with additional support needs ranging from P1 to P7 split between eight classes. Each class is staffed by a teacher and classroom assistant and additional staff has been provided as part of PEF funding. The provision within the centre is overseen by a deputy head. Children join primary children for parts of the week for lessons in music, numeracy, PE and topic, and at play time and lunchtime according to their individual needs.

Leadership of change

- The headteacher and her deputy are highly visible within centre. They have built positive, trusting relationships with children, their parents and with staff. Almost all children attend the centre full-time and this enables them to access their full entitlement to education. The deputy head and staff are clear that the centre will continue to provide a strong focus on developing children's language and communication skills and skills for learning, life and work in the community, where appropriate. The management team has a clear vision for the centre and should continue to develop a shared understanding of this across the school community. Inclusive approaches are central to meeting these aims with almost all children spending some time in mainstream classes and in areas of the school. .
- All staff are involved in self-evaluation. Staff take on important leadership roles in taking forward ideas. They recognise, as a priority, the importance of planning for individuals and in developing teaching approaches to meet the needs of children. Together with the management team, staff maintain a strategic overview of the tracking of individual children's progress in literacy and English, numeracy and mathematics and health and wellbeing. This is impacting positively on children's progress. The school should now consider tracking all Curriculum for Excellence curriculum areas.
- Children contribute to the centre through their roles in classes as line, register and fruit monitors. Through their membership of the eco-committee they are gaining an understanding of how their contribution can make a difference to the environment. There is scope to further develop these opportunities.

Learning, teaching and assessment

- The very motivated staff team in the centre are committed to supporting children in the learning process. They know the children's needs very well and plan activities and tasks to match the needs of almost all children. Classroom Assistants (CAs) work very well with children to develop their confidence and resilience in order to prepare them for learning. Overall, when motivated to learn and appropriately supported, almost all children and young people engage in lessons for almost all of the time.
- In almost all lessons, teaching is good and in a few lessons it is better than good. Teachers use a range of strategies to engage learners. The variety of activities and tasks are well matched to the needs of learners in almost all lessons. Inspectors agree with the school that the pace and challenge in learning could be increased for some children. In the best lessons observed, teachers used quality questioning to help children think more deeply about their learning. In all lessons observed, almost all children are motivated and stayed on task. Teachers plan rich learning experiences for children. They use digital technology well to support learning through the use of interactive whiteboards, computer microscopes, tablets and

other electronic technology such as programmable devices. Teachers interact very well with children and are very supportive of those who are having difficulty completing tasks. Teachers give helpful comments to support children's progress in their learning. Staff are enthusiastic practitioners, keen to learn all they can about the needs of individuals and the barriers to learning which children are experiencing. Teachers develop their own practice through regular peer discussions. Attendance at training is shared internally amongst colleagues.

- Most children know their classroom targets and understand how the skills they are learning prepare them for life outside of school. Learner conversations with teachers help children to identify what they like about their learning. Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) identify long and short term targets. Staff track children's progress in achieving ILP targets and use this information to inform strategic planning. The management team meet with staff to talk about children's progress and their barriers to learning. This is having a positive impact on children's progress.
- The school needs to review children's entitlements to Physical Education. Children have very good opportunities for outdoor learning in the community and in the school Hive.
- The centre uses a number of assessments and observations to support teachers' professional judgements. Teachers moderate children's work with their mainstream colleagues and with colleagues in their cluster schools. This is helping teachers to moderate practice and understand standards. This is leading to greater consistency across the centre.

Learning pathways

- The centre's rationale for the curriculum is appropriately linked to the views of parents and their children and to the school's vision and values. There is scope for the centre to review its rationale to ensure that it reflects the school's place in the local community.
- The centre is beginning to use East Ayrshire's progressive learning pathways in conjunction with the primary school. These helpful tools are enabling teachers to plan more effectively to meet the learning needs of all children. The centre should continue to embed the use of these pathways.

Transitions

- Transitions into the school are very well planned. Staff visit the previous placement to gather information about the child and their family, and any plans are shared. Information about the school is provided to the child and their parents in accessible formats and they are invited to visit the school to meet staff. This provides reassurance and helps new pupils settle quickly into the centre. Enhanced transitions to high school are planned very well in advance so that children are prepared for the change. Social stories for children are used to help them settle well into school. For example, as they move between activities during the school day, transfer class and then as they leave the centre and join their preferred high school.

Parents as partners

- Parents and carers speak very highly of the positive difference attending the centre has made to their children's lives. They feel that the school keeps them well informed about what is happening on a day to day basis and are confident that the school is able to support the wellbeing and learning potential of their children. Staff communicate in a variety of ways with parents, using electronic home school dairies, face to face meetings to discuss progress, telephone calls and through more formal routes such as review meetings.

Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

- The very caring ethos of the centre places children and young people at the heart of everything it does. Very positive relationships are evident between staff and children and between children

and their peers. These are a very effective feature of the service. Most children show an appropriate level of support and respect for one another. The use of personalised structured play and an appropriately planned soft start to the day provide staff with opportunities to interact with children to develop social skills.

- The centre provides an environment where children are treated with dignity and respect. All staff demonstrate a commitment to children's wellbeing and development and this is improving outcomes for children. Staff have built effective relationships with parents and, as a result, know children and their families very well. Pastoral care needs are managed sensitively. Individualised transition programmes have enabled children new to the centre to settle in quickly. During the inspection period, almost all children accessing the centre were observed to be calm and engaged.
- Opportunities for individualised inclusion into mainstream classes enables children access to timetabled learning with their peers and most children access lunch and play time alongside their peers. There is scope to develop these inclusion opportunities further, appropriate to children's needs. Children in the upper stages benefit from joining their peers on a residential experience. This is extending children's skills for life.

Raising attainment and achievement

- From the school's attainment data, almost all children are making good progress from their prior learning in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics, and a few children are exceeding this. The school has identified a need to improve writing across the centre.

Literacy and English

- At the early stages, children are learning letter sounds. Children are able to form letters well and are beginning to write short sentences and phrases which convey meaning. They can describe characters in a book and answer literal questions. Children are beginning to be able to retell a story, in some cases supported with pictures, and can predict what will come next. In the middle stages, children are using punctuation such as full stops in their writing. They know to start a sentence with a capital letter. They are beginning to write their names independently, and in some cases this includes their surnames. Children are beginning to use ambitious and interesting words in their writing, this is supported by a weekly class focus on an unusual word. Children are beginning to write for a variety of purposes, such as thank you letters, instructions and imaginative stories. By the upper stages, children are beginning to skim and scan texts. They are researching facts to write a factual account of a character in history. They make presentations to the class and at assemblies. Children can read and answer questions in sentences.

Numeracy and mathematics

- At the early stages, children are learning the days of the week, date, season and the weather. They can recognise the number of objects in a group and are beginning to estimate. Children can recall the sequence of numbers to 10 and count backwards and forwards. They are beginning to add and subtract, in both number and money. Children are developing an interest in patterns and can copy and create these. They enjoy identifying 2D shapes in everyday life. and are beginning to understand instructions, such as forward, backwards and left and right. Children use simple data to create pictorial displays. In the middle stages they can count in tens and are beginning to use their times tables in simple calculations. They know house numbers can be displayed as odd and even numbers. Children use tally marks to count in fives and use surveys to collect and display data. By the upper stages, they know how many days there are in a year (and leap year) and a week. They can add, subtract, multiply and divide numbers to a hundred. Children use coordinates to find a route on a map or to create an emoji. They have developed an understanding of fractions and lines of symmetry. They can use bus and train timetables using a digital clock.

- Children's achievements are recognised and displayed. Almost all children in the upper stages have achieved first level of the John Muir Award as a result of their involvement in environmental education activities. Some children are able to access lunchtime clubs and activities. Opportunities to participate in activities should continue to be developed and participation tracked systematically. The school should continue to provide a range of opportunities for children to achieve.

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.