

Summarised inspection findings

Shiskine Primary School

North Ayrshire Council

29 August 2023

Key contextual information

Shiskine Primary School is situated on the Island of Arran within North Ayrshire Council. The headteacher has been in post since 2016. The headteacher is also responsible for Shiskine Nursery Class. She is the headteacher for six schools and five nursery classes on Arran.

At the time of the inspection, the roll of the school was 20 children working across two classes. The staffing compliment is 2.1 full-time equivalent teachers and one pupil support assistant. The headteacher is supported by two depute headteachers who also work across the six schools. Almost all the children in the school live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles 7 and 8. There are no children living in SIMD deciles 1 and 2. The school does not receive any Pupil Equity Funding (PEF).

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 is a very warm and inclusive culture within Shiskine Primary School. Children and all staff demonstrate the school values well with each other. The vision and values reflect the united 'sixness' of the six schools whilst taking good account of the unique nature of Shiskine Primary School. All staff treat children fairly and with respect. They motivate them to be successful in their learning and promote their wellbeing. They provide children with a rights-based education based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- All children are happy and confident learners. Children complete tasks and activities independently and support each other well during group or paired activities. They assume roles responsibly during group tasks such as the 'group planner' or 'discussion director.' Children feel that teachers ask them about what they would like to learn. Teachers are providing children with increasing personalisation and choice during lessons. For example, older children have an element of choice for the context of topic work.
- Staff create calm, inclusive classrooms to support the needs of all children. Children access helpful resources independently such as ear defenders or quiet spaces. This helps children to assume responsibility for their learning. Teachers use the spacious outdoor environment frequently to take children's learning outdoors. This supports children well to learn new skills and apply their learning in different contexts. As planned, staff should continue to develop planning processes for outdoor learning to ensure that children develop their skills in a progressive way.
- The school does not have any children in P1 or P2. Staff have made an early start to developing play pedagogy. As a next step, staff should engage with national guidance and

research to consider the quality of spaces, experiences and interactions to promote effective play pedagogy.

- Teachers use a variety of teaching approaches effectively to suit children's learning styles. They provide children with clear explanations and instructions. They clarify new and unfamiliar vocabulary with children to encourage their curiosity successfully. Almost all teachers use questioning well to check children's understanding and make links to previous learning. In the best examples, teachers use higher order questions to extend children's learning and deepen their understanding.
- Teachers use digital technology well to support children's learning and enhance their experiences. The headteacher has identified that a next step is to develop a digital technologies framework. This should support children to develop their skills in a progressive way.
- The headteacher has successfully developed a positive culture where all staff work collaboratively to improve the quality of learning and teaching. Teachers undertook useful professional learning which is successfully improving their skills in helping children to understand the purpose of learning. As a result, almost all children are clear about what they are learning and why. Teachers support children to create measures of success. As a next step, teachers should support children to co-create measures of success that are set at different levels. This should provide all children with appropriate levels of support and challenge in their learning.
- Staff use effective approaches to raise children's levels of attainment in reading. There is evidence that this work is increasing children's engagement in reading and impacting positively on their reading skills.
- Teachers provide children with helpful oral feedback and they are increasing their use of written feedback. This is helping children to understand their next steps. Teachers should continue to work with each other to develop consistent approaches to written feedback. Children set relevant learning targets three times a year in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. They have a real sense of collaboration with their teachers when setting and reviewing their targets. This is supporting children effectively to understand what they are doing well and their next steps in learning.
- Teachers use a range of assessment approaches to determine children's progress in literacy and numeracy. Children use formative assessment strategies to peer- and self-assess their work. The headteacher introduced a useful assessment calendar to outline the annual timings for summative assessments. Teachers also undertake a variety of assessments for other curricular areas. Senior leaders recognise that teachers now need to plan assessment as an integral part of the planning of teaching and learning. This should support teachers further to gather valid and reliable evidence which demonstrates children's breadth, depth and application of learning within Curriculum for Excellence (CfE).
- Teachers participate in valuable moderation sessions with colleagues from the six schools and one other Arran primary school. This work is supporting teachers well to agree shared standards in writing. As planned, senior leaders should extend moderation activities, using the

National Benchmarks, to other curricular areas. This should help them to develop further their understanding of national standards and gain confidence in their professional judgements.

- Teachers plan children's learning using the experiences and outcomes of CfE over different timescales. They use helpful progressive planning frameworks for aspects of literacy and numeracy which outline the corresponding National Benchmarks. This supports them to plan effectively for children's progression in learning in these areas. Building on this, senior leaders and teachers should develop a progressive planning framework for listening and talking. One of the depute headteachers developed a useful three-year overview for other curricular areas to ensure that children access a broad curriculum. They review this on an ongoing basis to take good account of the changing composition of classes.
- Teachers and senior leaders plan learning for children requiring additional support. Senior leaders should ensure that targets for children with additional support are specific and measurable. This will help them to clearly identify the progress children are making.
- The headteacher meets with teachers three times a year to discuss children's progress and attainment. During these discussions, teachers and senior leaders identify children who are on track and those who require further support. Senior leaders should continue to support teachers to make more effective use of data and robust assessment evidence during these meetings. This will help them to identify the interventions that make the biggest difference for children.

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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

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

- At the time of the inspection, the school roll comprised of children at P3 to P7 with no children in P1 or P2. Due to this, attainment and progress will be expressed in 'overall' statements, rather than for specific year groups or Curriculum for Excellence levels.
- Data for session 2021-2022 shows that overall, most children achieved national expectations for literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics. For session 2022-2023, almost all children are on track to achieve national expectations in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics.
- Children with additional support make good progress towards meeting their planned learning targets. Senior leaders and teachers should continue to ensure that targets for children with additional support needs are specific and measurable. This will enable them to evidence more clearly the progress children make.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, children make good progress in literacy and English.

Listening and talking

- Across the school, children are polite, confident and articulate when communicating with others. They follow instructions well and convey their thoughts and ideas clearly. Younger children create and ask questions to gather information when listening to oral talks. Older children listen to spoken texts carefully and note-take the key points successfully. Across the school children would benefit from further planned opportunities to develop and apply their listening and talking skills in a progressive way.

Reading

- Approaches to develop children's reading are having a positive impact on children's vocabulary and reading skills. Children borrow books from the library which includes a diverse range of fiction and non-fiction reading material. They also enjoy taking home book bags. This is encouraging children to read and to share their enjoyment of reading with their families.
- Children are keen readers across the school. They use their knowledge of spelling and sounds to decode unfamiliar words at an age-appropriate level, reading with fluency and expression. Older children express a preference for different authors and texts. They are developing an interest in poetry and look forward to a forthcoming live poetry reading. Children understand the strategies they use during reading such as visualising or summarising. Children discuss features of non-fiction texts successfully using terms such as contents, index page and

glossary. They would benefit from further opportunities to explore the features of non-fiction texts.

Writing

- Across the school, children require regular reminders to present their writing to the best of their ability and apply their knowledge of spelling rules to their writing. Children successfully use a range of sentence openers to make their texts more interesting using appropriate punctuation. Children use descriptive language to 'create a picture' of characters and settings in an age-appropriate way. They would benefit from regular opportunities to write extended texts.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall children make good progress in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure

- Across the school, children use a range of strategies to complete number calculations although they would benefit from regular revision in this area. Children have a good understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages at an age-appropriate level. Children apply their knowledge of units of length to measure in real-life contexts. They use timers successfully to record units of time during physical education. Children should have more regular opportunities to measure using units of capacity in real-life contexts.

Shape, position and movement

- Children identify familiar two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects and their properties accurately. Children use the language of position and direction to successfully plot the position of objects within a grid. Older children confidently describe the relationship between the radius and diameter within circles.

Information handling

- Across the school, children collate information using tally marks and display data accurately on a bar chart. Older children use digital technology successfully to create pie charts. They make predictions about the likelihood of events happening which is developing their understanding of chance and uncertainty.

Attainment over time

- The school has detailed attainment information dating back a number of years. Fluctuations in the small school role make it hard to demonstrate trends in groups and cohorts over time.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, children's levels of attainment dipped. There is evidence that interventions in reading are impacting positively on children's attainment. Senior leaders and teachers should be clear about the robust evidence they will gather to demonstrate the impact of all other interventions on children's attainment.
- Staff plan transitions for children well as they move from stage to stage or onto S1. This includes well-planned transition processes for children with additional support needs which take effective account of children's barriers to learning. This is supporting children's continuity of learning well.
- Moderation work with schools across Arran is supporting teachers' confidence in making professional judgements about children's attainment and progress, particularly in writing. Teachers should continue to engage with colleagues in moderation activities using the National Benchmarks. This should support their professional judgements across all curricular areas.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Staff provide children with a wide range of interesting experiences which is developing their skills for learning, life and work well. They celebrate children's wider achievements on school displays and on an online digital platform. Parents appreciate seeing regular updates about children's learning and successes in this way. Senior leaders recognise that a next step is to track children's achievements more carefully.
- Children enjoy experiences with other children across Arran such as residential trips. This is developing their social skills well. All children from P5 have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. Children demonstrate their musical skills well when participating in the Arran Music Festival. Older children speak Mandarin and French during daily routines which is developing their linguistic skills.
- Children participate in an accredited outdoor learning award which is developing their understanding of sustainability. They are looking forward to the arrival of the new polytunnel and the chance to grow their own vegetables.
- Children enjoy positions of responsibility throughout the school such as resource leaders or digital leaders. The headteacher identifies that a next step is to increase opportunities for children to undertake leadership roles and participate in school committees. In doing this, teachers should encourage children to recognise the skills they are developing through these roles.

Equity for all learners

- All staff know children and their families well and have effective systems in place to promote equity. For example, school trips and fun days have no charge. Almost all parents feel that staff know their child well as an individual. The Parent Council and parents support the school well through fundraising events. Senior leaders signpost families requiring support to other agencies in a sensitive and discreet way.
- Children participate in a variety of fundraising and charity events. This is helping children to learn about the needs of others. Children contribute effectively to the local community. For example, they support local initiatives such as the 'zero waste café.'
- There is a very inclusive culture across the school. Senior leaders and teachers work closely with parents and partners to meet the needs of children requiring additional support. This ensures that children are included and involved.

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.