

# Summarised inspection findings

**Teanassie Primary School and Nursery Class**

The Highland Council

22 August 2023

## Key contextual information

Teanassie Primary School is a non-denominational primary school that serves a wide rural area including Kilmorack in the Highlands. The school's provision comprises of three primary classes. In March 2023 the primary school roll was 52 pupils. Children attending the school live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles four to eight. There is a nursery class for children from three to school age which is located in the school grounds and has a roll of eight children.

The acting headteacher has been in post since January 2023. She is also the acting headteacher of the two other schools in the tri-cluster which are not part of this inspection summary. The acting headteacher had been in post since November 2022 as principal teacher with class contact three days a week at one of the other schools in the tri-cluster. In this role she also has management responsibility for the tri-cluster school nurseries. The acting headteacher is supported at Teanassie Primary School by a principal teacher who has class contact 3 days a week. In recent years, the school has faced challenges in the recruitment and retention of headteachers and teaching staff.

### 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

- Over the past 6 years there have been significant changes in leadership and staffing at Teanassie Primary School. These changes have had an impact on improving outcomes for learners across the school.
- Since starting in post, in January 2023, the acting headteacher has established quickly positive and supportive relationships with children, staff and parents. She is supported well by the principal teacher and school staff. Staff have worked hard to support each other and ensure continuity for children during a long period of significant change.
- Across the school staff know children and families very well. Senior leaders and staff place a strong emphasis on developing caring, supportive and respectful relationships. All staff value children and families feel welcome in the school. Staff interactions with children are nurturing and child centred. The school motto, 'Dream, believe, achieve together' is evident in the positive relationships across the school community.
- In 2019 staff worked alongside children and parents to create the school's vision, values and aims. The school's values of happy, respectful, hardworking and inclusive are displayed across the school and celebrated through Team Teanassie Time. Children are very proud of their school and talk about how the school values align with children's rights.
- Senior leaders have developed an annual quality assurance calendar to check the quality of the school's work across the year. Due to the changes in leadership and staffing, quality assurance arrangements were not undertaken as regularly as planned. The acting

headteacher is committed to carrying out activities to identify the quality of the school's work more regularly. Staff meet together to discuss the outcomes of self-evaluation activities. They reflect on and review their practice to help identify next steps for improvement. They use this information to shape the school improvement plan (SIP). Senior leaders share the plan with the parent council. However, the current SIP does not reflect accurately school improvement priorities. The acting headteacher should now ensure that self-evaluation activity is more focused on learning, teaching and assessment. This will ensure teachers set appropriate tasks and activities that meet the needs of all learners.

- The school benefits from an active Parent Council who are keen to support the school. Senior leaders seek parental feedback to support their evaluation of the work of the school for example, parental feedback from a survey influenced the new homework policy. Senior leaders should continue to develop approaches to involve all stakeholders more effectively in the self-evaluation process including developing a new curriculum rationale.
- Staff talk enthusiastically about professional learning opportunities. Through undertaking professional development sessions and peer observations staff have the opportunity to reflect on their practice and highlight areas for development. School leaders should now ensure all professional learning activity focuses clearly on priorities for improvement. Staff need to develop a shared understanding of what they need to do to plan for and deliver high-quality learning, teaching and assessment that improves outcomes for all children, including those with barriers to learning.
- Senior leaders encourage teachers to take on leadership roles. The principal teacher has a managing responsibility for the school when the headteacher is not present. She leads the development of Rights Respecting Schools well across the three associated schools. Most teachers lead a class committee group. They are beginning to participate in working groups that are linked to school priorities including raising attainment in writing and an associated school group approach to moderation of numeracy standards. Staff should now build on this by taking on leadership roles which are linked directly to improving the quality of learning, teaching and assessment to ensure that all children receive the appropriate level of support and challenge through high quality learning experiences.
- Most parents feel staff know their children well as individuals and help them to develop as confident learners. They feel that the school is well led and managed but have concerns regarding the changes in leadership and staffing over the last 6 years.
- All children make decisions at a school level through pupil leadership groups. These include class committees for eco, health and children's rights. Children describe how these leadership opportunities help them to contribute to the life of the school. They develop action plans and gather opinions and feedback from pupils in other classes. Children have further leadership opportunities through organising fundraising events and lunch clubs and acting as P1 buddies. Staff should now support children to recognise the skills for learning, life and work they are developing through these leadership opportunities. Children could now become involved more in identifying areas for improvement through engaging with 'How Good Is OUR School?'.
- Senior leaders review children's progress with staff regularly across the year. There is a local authority electronic tracking overview in place. Information on the attainment overview is not yet reliable as teachers' professional judgements are not secure. Senior leaders and staff use these meetings to plan interventions for children who require additional support with their learning. At present the documentation provided for these children does not show clearly how well they are making progress towards achieving their targets. The acting headteacher

and staff need to set clearer targets focussed on children's progress and attainment in learning across the curriculum. This would allow staff to monitor and evaluate all interventions more effectively to ensure change has a positive impact on children's outcomes.

- The acting headteacher understands the adversity and challenges faced by families because of the pandemic and cost of living crisis. There is a need to use this knowledge, supported by analysis of data, to identify effectively gaps in children's attainment. This will support strategic planning and provide a clearer focus on raising attainment across the school. There is a need to demonstrate clearly the impact of interventions and how this closes any gaps in children's attainment. The acting headteacher needs to ensure PEF is used to raise attainment. In recent months, planned interventions have not been implemented as staff time has been used for other priorities.

## 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

weak

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

- Teanassie Primary School provides a warm and welcoming environment for children, staff, parents and visitors. Children enjoy positive and respectful relationships with staff and each other. Children's rights feature in the everyday life of the school. At all stages, staff talk with children about rights and link United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child articles to learning across the curriculum. Staff refer to the school values throughout the school day.
- Overall, the quality of learning, teaching and assessment is too variable. Planned learning does not meet the needs and interests of all children. Across the school approaches to assessment are not consistent and do not provide robust information about children's attainment and progress. As a result, children are not making sufficient progress in their learning
- Across the school, the pace of learning does not match the needs of learners. In a few lessons, when children work at appropriately challenging tasks, they engage well in their learning and are motivated to complete tasks. This is evident particularly in the upper stages where most children work well together in pairs and groups. Across the school most lessons are directed at a whole class. Staff should now work together to develop approaches to provide improved differentiation in learning and teaching. This will ensure activities and tasks are more accurately match to the needs and interests of individual children, including those with barriers to learning.
- Across the school too many lessons are teacher led. Children would now benefit from more opportunities to develop independent learning skills and lead their own learning. In all classes staff should ensure that time for learning is maximised for all children.
- All children access digital tools to support and enhance learning. They can choose to carry out their writing tasks using a digital tablet. Children at Teanassie are proud of their school. Most talk articulately about school life, their learning and responsibilities, their care for each other and the environment. Children enjoy learning outdoors. They are particularly proud of the school grounds 'The Breathing Space' which offers a rich canvas for outdoor learning. Children at the middle stages worked together to choose an appropriate location for rain gauges. Younger children are beginning to develop confidence using the area to practise measurement skills. Staff should continue to use outdoors effectively to support and enhance learning. A few children need more adult support to stay on task whilst learning outdoors.
- In most lessons, teachers, provide clear instructions about the tasks children have to complete. In a few cases teachers share the purpose of learning, and how to be successful. This is not consistent across the school. Staff should work together to develop further skills in the effective use of questioning to extend and challenge children's thinking. Teachers and support staff use praise well in lessons, this supports children's motivation. Approaches to marking children's

work, and in providing quality written feedback are not applied consistently by all staff. As a next step, they should ensure that all feedback focuses on children's strengths and outlines what children need to do to improve.

- Staff use a range of assessment approaches across the school year. This includes standardised assessments. Assessment is not integral to the planning of learning and teaching. In addition, approaches to assessment are not consistent, regular or of sufficient quality across the school. As a result, assessment evidence is not reliable and there is no clear record of children's learning or progress across the curriculum. Staff should take prompt action to develop whole school approaches to assessment that provide robust information about children's progress and inform next steps for learning and teaching. Senior leaders should ensure school approaches are applied consistently by all staff and that assessment is monitored and tracked closely. Staff should use National Benchmarks more to support raising expectations of children's attainment and achievements.
- Across the school individual staff have developed a range of approaches to plan learning and teaching for their own classes. School leaders should now work with the staff team to develop and agree clear long-term and medium-term planning across the curriculum. This is essential, to support progression in learning and ensure all children experience all areas of the curriculum. Staff should ensure these approaches are manageable and accessible to all staff.
- A number of small libraries exist across the school building. School staff should consider the benefits of gathering the books in one location to develop a high-quality library. All children would benefit from having access to books they could take home to read for pleasure to develop further their reading skills

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- The school team has begun to use The Highland Council curriculum learning pathways and programmes to support them in planning children's learning. Children's learning should be planned more carefully to ensure learning activities more accurately match the needs and interests of all children across the breadth of the curriculum.
- Children have regular opportunities to learn across literacy and English language, numeracy and mathematics, health and wellbeing and science. Children take part in learning simple French vocabulary. They enjoy art activities, often linked to other curriculum areas including mathematics. Children in the upper stages are developing skills and knowledge in music, supported by an external partner. Children at early and first level would benefit from regular, well-planned opportunities to take part in quality music experiences. Across the school, staff should ensure all children experience relevant learning across the social studies experiences and outcomes. Children need to experience regular progression in Religious and Moral Education.
- Teanassie is part of a tri-school cluster. Over the years, the teams have worked together to agree a three-year curriculum cycle. Staff need to update this work. Staff recognise the need to refresh the curriculum to ensure all children have the opportunity to learn more about the local area, Scotland and the wider world in relevant and meaningful situations. They should work with children, parents and partners to develop a curriculum rationale that reflects the needs and interests of children at Teanassie.
- Staff across the school are committed to offering children two hours quality physical education (PE) each week. This is particularly challenging, as the school has no designated indoor PE facility. Children enjoy using the outdoor areas for PE, sport and physical activity. Staff use the small assembly room for dance activity. Children also attend swimming lessons in Inverness.

## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Parents and carers are very supportive of the school. They feel their children are happy and settled despite changes in staffing in recent years. They feel staff are approachable and helpful and know their children well. They commend the staff for maintaining the smooth running of the school during challenging circumstances.
- The Parent Council supports the school through a range of fundraising activities. They have recently purchased reading books to increase children's attainment especially at the early level. A few parents have helped deliver the Developing the Young Workforce curriculum through class visits to talk about their careers. The Parent Council is now keen to be more involved in supporting wider school improvement.
- The school has developed a range of partnerships to support learning in a few areas of the curriculum. Active Schools leaders work with teachers to co-ordinate rugby sessions led by the Highland Rugby Football Club. These sessions led to a rugby festival attended by children from across the area. The sessions are effective in building the older children's confidence and teamworking skills. Children make sure that everyone feels included and supported to do their best for Team Teanassie.



## 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

- Teanassie Primary School has a warm and inclusive ethos where everybody is welcome and child wellbeing is a priority for all. Staff provide a safe and nurturing environment where all children feel valued and included. Respectful relationships, based on children's rights and school values are evident across the school.
- Most children are aware of the wellbeing indicators and use these regularly to self-assess their health and wellbeing. Staff and parents use these assessments to support children's wellbeing. Children talk confidently about what it means to be active, healthy and safe and the difference this will make to their lives beyond school.
- Children feel safe in school and know they have adults they can talk to if they have concerns or if they need help. They recognise how they support each other through the buddy scheme. Staff and partners meet the social and emotional wellbeing needs of children well. All teachers have adopted a programme to improve children's mental health. This programme supports children to reflect on their wellbeing and support the wellbeing of others.
- Children experience a health and wellbeing curriculum which includes focus days supported by outside agencies. They are developing good skills and understanding in mental health, positive relationships, the importance of physical exercise and healthy eating, as a result. Staff have begun to track children's progress in aspects of health and wellbeing. They should develop this to ensure the planned curriculum enables children to build skills in all areas.
- Staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities and statutory duties related to wellbeing, equality and inclusion. The school's approaches to child protection and safeguarding are embedded firmly in legislation and national guidance. Senior leaders should now refer to legislation and national guidance to ensure that they are meeting the additional support needs of all children.
- Staff use a range of targeted interventions aimed at securing progress and improving attainment for children who have additional support needs. Appropriate individualised educational plans and child's plans are in place, as a result. Parents and children at Teanassie are involved fully in the child-planning processes. Children share their views and take an active part in deciding their targets and actions. Senior leaders and staff now need to ensure that targets are more detailed and have a greater focus on learning across the curriculum. Teachers should ensure that targets are short-term, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound, to be able to measure children's progress more clearly. This will support children's understanding of their targets and what they need to do to achieve them.
- Strong partnership working between school staff and other agencies is resulting in positive outcomes for children's wellbeing. Staff work well with other agencies, such as allied health

professionals and counselling services, to support children's wellbeing. This helps staff to meet the needs of children and families.

- Staff and children are supported well by partners from the local community and beyond. Staff and partners promote an ethos and culture of inclusion and strong relationships across the school and community. They achieve this through working together on initiatives such as 'Mikeysline' and Resilient Kids. Children are increasing their resilience and confidence, as a result.
- Children are aware of their rights. They know staff value their views and respect them. Children feel included and engaged in the life of the school. Staff give them opportunities to have their voices heard. This includes involvement in school committees and opportunities to support younger children. Children can discuss the impact that their participation for example, children choose which charity they will fundraise for each year. Staff help children recognise and celebrate diversity through lessons and school assemblies. Children across the school have a good understanding of equality. The school has received accreditation in this area, which is helping children, recognise and value individual similarities and differences. Staff identify one article from the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child to focus on each month. This is helping children learn and understand about their rights and the rights of others. Children created class charters which encourage everyone to be kind and inclusive. Children feel their school represents, includes, and values everyone for who they are.
- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to compliance with the Nutritional Regulations and key duties as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007(the Act). The Health and Nutrition Inspector discussed this information with relevant staff and children. In addition, inspectors examined the effectiveness of whole school approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of children through food in school. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the catering service.

## 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

weak

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

- Children at Teanassie Primary School are not making sufficient progress across literacy and English language and numeracy and mathematics. While most children are making satisfactory progress in listening and talking, the majority of children could achieve more in reading, writing, numeracy and mathematics. Children who need additional help with their work are not making sufficient progress in learning.
- As this is a small rural school with three multi-stage composite classes, only general statements about progress have been used to ensure children's anonymity. The overall quality of children's attainment in literacy and English language and numeracy and mathematics is weak. Children are not developing their skills and knowledge across the curriculum well enough, consequently their progress is limited.
- Staff need to raise their expectations of what children can achieve, increase the pace of learning and ensure more children achieve appropriate standards.

### Attainment in literacy and English

#### Listening and talking

- Across the school most children are confident and articulate, arrive at school with well-developed vocabulary and a range of interests and life experiences. They enjoy talking about themselves and their lives outside school. Children at early and first level enjoy listening to different texts. Older children are developing debating skills. Across the school the majority of children listen well in class and listen to the views and contributions of others. At all stages, a few children need further support to take turns, and listen to the ideas of others.

#### Reading

The majority of children are on target to achieve national standards by the end of this school year. Across the school more children could achieve more. At early level, supported by the teacher, children use pictures and familiar words to help them read aloud. Children who are on track to achieve first level enjoy core readers and can attempt to read new sections. They need support to improve fluency and expression in reading. Children working within second level can talk of their love of reading and discuss favourite genres and authors. Older children now need more challenge in engaging closely with quality text and in understanding techniques used by writers to influence the reader. Across the school all children now need to engage in a wider range of high quality, challenging texts to support them to develop further their reading skills.

#### Writing

- Staff identify correctly the need to improve children's writing across the school. Around half of children are on track to meet national standards by the end of this school year. At all stages the quality of children's writing is too variable. Children at early level are beginning to develop

skills in writing. A few can write sentences using sounds to spell simple words. As children move through the school, they use simple punctuation in their tasks. Older children show motivation in imaginative writing, and a few can write well at length. Across the school, children should apply appropriate standards of writing when engaged in writing across the curriculum. Staff should support children to improve presentation and handwriting and ensure they have regular opportunities to write for a range of purposes and audiences.

### **Numeracy and mathematics**

- Overall, children's attainment in numeracy and mathematics is weak. At all levels children should make better progress.

### **Number, money and measure**

- At early level, most children recognise and use numbers to 10 in their learning. Staff should now support them to work with larger numbers and develop their early numeracy skills at a faster pace. A few children use comparative language in measurement and are beginning to explore this through play. At first level the majority of children identify three-digit numbers and calculate doubles using place value strategies. They are less confident in rounding whole numbers to the nearest 10 and 100. The majority can tell the time using digital and analogue clocks. Across first level children would benefit from more practice in multiplication and division and further opportunities to develop their mental agility number skills. At second level the majority of children work well with number and number processes up to one million. They use decimals, percentages and fractions and have an understanding of basic algebra. Children are not confident in long multiplication and long division. Across all levels, children do not yet apply their numeracy and mathematics skills in more challenging and real-life contexts.

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

- At early level children explore shape through construction and loose parts play. The majority of children at first level name simple shapes and their properties. Children now need to develop knowledge of angles. At second level most children use a range of digital programmes to explore shape confidently. They can describe and calculate missing angles. They now need to gain experience in applying skills in problem solving situations.

### **Information handling**

- Across the school, children have limited experience of information handling. At early level children are beginning to display data in different ways for example to record the month of their birthday. Children at first level gather data to analyse how well each class is engaging with the healthy eating initiative. At second level children collect and analyse data through leadership activities for example, surveys to collect children's ideas and opinions. Children should now use these real-life experiences to explore a wider range of data handling tools.

### **Attainment over time**

- Data available currently is not robust and does not always accurately reflect children's progress. The acting headteacher and her team need to continue to develop approaches to gathering data on children's progress, which reliably illustrates how well children are attaining over time.

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

- Children attending Teanassie participate in a range of activities in and beyond school that support them to enjoy success and be proud of their achievements. Children have opportunities for wider achievements, through which they contribute to the life of the school and the wider community. This includes developing leadership skills through Rights Respecting School, Eco and Health committees. Staff provide regular opportunities for children to take part in sporting events including cross country running. This supports children to work

as a team and understand success in competitive events. Staff encourage children and parents to share children's achievements out of school. Staff celebrate children's success at regular assemblies and through the 'Hall of Fame' display. They use a digital platform to share information with parents. Children record their achievements on their individual profile. Staff should work with children to help them understand the skills they are developing through their achievements. Staff should continue to track and monitor achievements to ensure no child is at risk of missing out.

### **Equity for all learners**

- The school receives a small amount of PEF funding which is used for staffing to support learners in literacy and numeracy in class. Staff do not yet track the progress and attainment of children supported through PEF. They now need to demonstrate how they are measuring the impact of these interventions. This would allow them to demonstrate if there is an attainment gap caused by children's socio-economic circumstances and how it is being closed. There is a need to review the activities delivered through PEF funding to ensure they have a clear focus on raising attainment for targeted children.
  
- Parents are very supportive of school life. Fundraising activities support the purchase of resources and access to excursions and events. As everyone continues to cope with the cost of living crisis, staff should review features of the cost of the school day to ensure families do not face undue pressure to support learning activities and school life.

## 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.