

Summarised inspection findings

Corstorphine Primary School

The City of Edinburgh Council

01 May 2018

Key contextual information

At the time of the inspection, there were 556 children attending Corstorphine Primary School, split across 20 classes.

The school has experienced significant change within the senior leadership team over the past two years. During this time an acting headteacher has been in place and a depute headteacher appointed. A new permanent headteacher took up post the week prior to inspection. As a result, and to support the inspection process, both the acting headteacher and the new headteacher were present throughout the inspection week.

The school has experienced major building work in recent years. This has included an extension to the original school building and the erection of a new nursery building within the school playground. Construction of a new play area within the playground has also been recently completed.

1.3 Leadership of change

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 vision and values have been in place for many years and are evident in various aspects of the life of the school. In particular, the values underpin almost all relationships between children and children and staff. These relationships are caring and respectful. Senior leaders recognise that there is scope for the vision and values to be reviewed, to ensure they represent current views fully. The new headteacher looks forward to leading this review with all children, staff, parents and partners. A next step for the school would be to continue its work in relation to, 'What makes Corstorphine's curriculum unique?'. Factors identified in this work, related to the social, economic and cultural context of the school, should be used to inform the 'new' vision and values. Staff and teachers have a good understanding of the school's context.
- The school has a comprehensive standards, quality and improvement plan (SQIP). This shows evidence of considerable self-evaluation by staff and identifies key areas for school improvement, linked to national and local authority priorities. The plan seeks to support improvements in raising attainment for all and closing the poverty-related attainment gap. It identifies targets linked to improving children's employability skills. Whilst the plan gives detailed information about tasks to be completed in almost all areas, a greater focus should be given now to outlining outcomes for children consistently and defining long-term and short-term targets. This would help all staff, particularly the new senior leadership team, to monitor the impact of work on an ongoing basis.

- Commendably, the school involves all teaching and support staff in a range of Corstorphine Responsible Accountable Consulted and Informed (CRACI) groups. These enable staff to work together to lead aspects of school improvement. Staff are enthusiastic about, and committed to, the work of these groups. Moving forward, it will be important for senior leaders to continue to work closely with these groups. They should maintain a clear overview of CRACI planning to ensure that all plans align with the strategic direction of the school and take account of changing demands appropriately. Developments should be prioritised and managed carefully to encourage their sustainability and provide a consistent and measured pace of change for staff.
- The school has produced a more streamlined and focused self-evaluation calendar recently. This has been designed to help all staff, children and parents understand when particular activities will be taking place in the school, such as 'pupil profiling', 'meet the teacher' and 'senior leadership team drop-ins'. These activities are helping the school to reflect regularly on its work and be more responsive in planning targeted improvement work. The school could make better use of its evidence from self-evaluation activities to identify the impact of change and inform ongoing improvements. This includes data linked to the monitoring and tracking of children's progress.
- A number of 'One Planet' groups also play a significant role in the school. These involve all children working together with staff, parents and partners to lead and undertake a wide range of developments. All children are given the opportunity to select which group they would like to take part in. The school also provides opportunities for children to take part in a pupil council, undertake school captain responsibilities, and participate in buddying. Children speak positively about their work in these areas and value the skills they are developing.
- Almost all staff speak positively about the opportunities they are given to lead aspects of work in the school. There is a strong climate of professional learning, with many teachers undertaking small tests of change willingly and engaging in practitioner enquiry. Teachers should continue to evaluate their work in this area to ensure they maintain a strong focus on improving experiences and outcomes for children. Senior leaders make good use of collegiate time by providing high-quality input for staff and enabling staff to work together regularly to share their practice.
- The leadership of the school is in a period of transition. However, the acting headteacher, new headteacher and existing members of the senior leadership team are working well together to ensure that all children, staff, parents and partners are being supported effectively. The acting headteacher has provided strong leadership during her time in post and, with her colleagues, has developed an ethos in the school, which seeks to empower all children, staff, parents and partners.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

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 positive learning environment across the school. Almost all children are eager and active participants in their learning and most are engaged in their learning. Most children are aware of children's rights and the majority of children can talk about these in a confident manner. Most children interact well during lessons and are motivated to learn. Most children are developing the skills and attributes of the four capacities and can articulate these well.
- Almost all children are given the opportunity to follow their own interests through the use of the class 'I wonder' questions and by creating their own individual question within this. Children are enjoying this approach. It is encouraging their interest within social studies topics and supporting them to personalise their learning. Most children are aware of the link between what they are learning at school and its relevance to the world of work.
- In a few lessons, children are using digital technology to take pictures as evidence of their learning. In most lessons, class teachers are using interactive whiteboards to display learning intentions and success criteria. More use of digital technology could be used across the school to enhance learning.
- Most children understand the purpose of their learning. Across the school the learning can be too teacher-led. As a result, only a few children have regular opportunities to lead the learning within their classrooms. The senior leadership team recognises the need for children to be given more opportunities to lead the learning.
- In a few lessons observed, learning and teaching was of a very high standard. This best practice now needs to be shared more widely to ensure consistency in children's experiences in all classes across the school. The school is aware of the need to increase staff's understanding of the pedagogy behind Assessment is for Learning and apply this within all lessons. The consistent use of high quality feedback to learners should continue to be developed.
- Teachers set targets for children in literacy and numeracy, and use these targets in assessment of progress. These are recorded in individual profiles which children can access with ease in the classroom. All children have one to one conversations with their teacher during the year. The school is now ready to review the purpose and scope of profiling across the school.
- The school uses a range of formative and summative assessments to contribute to discussions on children's progress. Teachers are not yet fully using the information from assessments to inform classroom practice and support appropriate differentiation. The majority of children

would respond well to increased challenge within the classroom. Staff need to develop further their understanding and application of strategies to raise attainment for all.

- Staff are continuing to develop their understanding of effective assessment and moderation through training within the school and with their cluster schools. The staff now need to apply their learning, and ensure there are regular opportunities to implement effective moderation practices across all levels. The school is benefitting from having a quality assurance and moderation support officer (QAMSO) as part of the school staff. The planned engagement with moderation will improve the validity and reliability of the assessment data on progress and teachers' professional judgements over time.
- The staff and senior leadership team have identified correctly the need to review forward planning of learning, teaching and assessment across the school. The school has discussed the changes with the inspection team to support and streamline the planning of learning, teaching and assessment. Integrating assessment into the planning process will support improvement in differentiation, pace and challenge within classrooms.
- The school has a system in place to track children's progress in literacy and numeracy. The school should now develop this system further, alongside information from high quality assessment, to monitor and track the progress of all children. This should include the monitoring of a range of cohorts of learners. For example, those with additional support needs, or facing barriers to learning as a result of their socio-economic background.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and development pathways

- The school has recently updated its curriculum rationale. Staff are committed to ensuring children experience a broad general education, and develop skills for learning, life and work. Staff have taken time to reflect on the unique features of Corstorphine Primary School. This includes strong links with the local community including local businesses. A recent example includes developing approaches to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) through an effective partnership with the Royal Bank of Scotland in a coding club and computational thinking project.
- The school has developed a range of flexible learning pathways. These best support progression in learning in literacy and numeracy. CRACI groups lead developments across a range of curriculum areas. In numeracy and mathematics this has included a focus on improving children's progress and experiences in problem solving. As the work of these groups' progresses, we have asked staff to evaluate the impact of these changes on children's progress and attainment.
- We have identified the need to ensure children experience regular, progression in learning across expressive arts, particularly in music and art and design. Children experience learning across a broad range of aspects of health and wellbeing (HWB). The school has focussed on developing a growth mind-set in their learners and most recently on building resilience. It is well placed to reflect on children's experiences across HWB to ensure children experience cohesion and progression in this curriculum area.
- As planned, the school should continue to expand and embed digital literacy across the school at all stages, in all curriculum areas. At present, children's access to digital tools is limited. This has an impact on opportunities to develop skills in digital literacy and in children making choices about their learning approaches.
- Children have an increasing number of opportunities to engage in learning outdoors. This includes using the playground to extend children's learning in numeracy and measurement.
- Children have enjoyed learning more about the world of work in their 'world of work' week. Staff should build on this positive experience to embed the Career Education Standard and develop a progressive skills framework across the curriculum. In doing so, the school will be well placed to develop further links with businesses and partners and continue to promote equality and diversity.
- Corstorphine Primary School is located in a rich international learning environment. Children enjoy learning about the local area. Older children interviewed talked with confidence about the heritage and history around Corstorphine. However, they were less confident talking about Edinburgh and wider life in 21st century Scotland. There is scope for the school to refresh contexts for learning across the school, to improve relevance and take better account of the school's location, setting and wider community. All curricular developments should take account of the school's approach to reducing the poverty-related gap in children's experiences and attainment. The school should take the opportunity to reflect on points raised above to ensure children develop knowledge and skills within a coherent curriculum. This activity should involve children, parents and partners in decision-making and developments.

2.7 Partnerships : Impact on learners – parental engagement

- The school values working with a range of partners and involving them regularly in the life of the school. Partners contribute in many ways, notably in providing targeted support and additional learning opportunities for children. School staff and children also provide support for partners. Specific charities benefit considerably from the school's work. The school is making good use of the expertise and skills of parents. Recently, parents were invited into the school to help children to develop their understanding about the world of work. They have also been encouraged to volunteer in the school.
- The school has worked hard to develop its links with parents. Parents on the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and 'Project Play' support the school through many fundraising activities which they undertake. Parents on the Parent Council engage with the school through ongoing consultation and communication linked to school improvement activities. They also seek the views of the wider body of parents on aspects of provision, such as school travel, and lead associated developments. The Parent Council should continue to take steps to encourage the engagement of a wider group of parents.
- Parents across the school value the school's efforts to work with them to improve experiences and outcomes for their children. Most parents say they receive helpful, regular feedback about how their child is learning and developing, and the school gives them advice on how to support their child's learning at home. The majority of parents say the school takes their views into account when making changes. A few parents say they would appreciate receiving more feedback from the school on how it acts on their views.
- The school has provided workshops for parents on specific themes, such as stages of early arithmetic learning (SEAL), reading, and 1 + 2 languages. It has also organised 'Meet the Teacher' events to support parents. These meetings have been evaluated positively.

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 **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

- The school has established an environment which promotes and supports the wellbeing of children, staff and families. All staff are clear about their responsibilities and roles in relation to the wellbeing of all children. The school ensures that all staff, including pupil support assistants, have suitable opportunities for professional learning to build their confidence and skills.
- The staff have a good understanding of the wellbeing indicators and the children complete a wellbeing web three times per year. The children feel confident that if they report a low score teachers will follow up on this with them. The school should now begin to have a strategic overview of the results of the wellbeing webs and use this information to further support children in their health and wellbeing. There are 'bubble boxes' in classrooms where children can request to speak to teachers either as a class or individually about anything that is worrying them. Most children are still developing their confidence when discussing nutrition and diet.
- The school carries out an annual audit of health and wellbeing and has implemented a resilience training programme as a result of its findings. The school has identified how it can scrutinise the information within this audit more deeply. For example, by looking at how different cohorts of children are reporting their health and wellbeing and using this information to inform the effectiveness of the approaches being taken. The school now needs to evaluate the impact of the resilience programme on all learners.
- Supported by a number of partners, there are a range of extra-curricular activities taking place. The school is aware of the need to develop their tracking systems to include more information on children's activities and achievements within and out with the school.
- From the range of inspection activities undertaken, the majority of children feel safe at school and say that the school helps them to feel safe. Most children say that they have someone to speak to if they are worried or upset. The majority of children feel that the school helps them to lead a healthy lifestyle. Most children think that they have a lot of opportunities to take regular exercise.
- Transitions between the nursery and the school, and between the school and the high school, are well considered. The information from the profiles is used positively to inform class groupings and provide information for guidance staff and class teachers. For the transition from primary to secondary there is a programme of events including a maths fun day. The residential trip for P7 children enhances the transition for most children by providing further opportunities to meet with other children from feeder primary schools. Children who require extra support at the time of transition benefit from an enhanced transition programme which starts in P6.

- Consideration could be given to the revision of the restorative behaviour practices followed by the school. A few children do not understand restorative practices and believe that some children are being treated differently than others. A revamp and consolidation of the many rules for children could be considered by the new headteacher.
- As a result of regular training and guidance, staff understand and comply with statutory requirements and codes of practice.
- All staff have an understanding of the social and cultural context of the school community. As a result of their involvement in Edinburgh's 1:5 equity training, staff understand the importance of ensuring inclusion and equality for all learners. This has resulted in the school reviewing aspects of its provision. For example, funded places in after-school clubs is enabling more children to participate. The cost implication for families is also considered when planning school activities. The development of computer provision within the school library for family use is underway.
- Weekly 'Gather Rounds' are used regularly to value and celebrate diversity. These include opportunities to focus on a specific world religion or cultural event. All children are included, engaged and involved. For example, each child is a member of a 'One Planet' group. Group responsibilities include themes such as global citizenship, Rights Respecting Schools and charity work. During 'world of work' week, activities supported by parent volunteers increase all children's awareness of a range of career opportunities and address the importance of gender equality.
- Strategies are in place to support children who are facing barriers to learning. To ensure children make appropriate progress, more robust tracking systems should be developed.

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
- equality for all learners

- The overall quality of attainment at Corstorphine Primary School is good. Most children make good progress from their prior levels of attainment in both literacy and English language and numeracy and mathematics.
- Teacher professional judgement, recorded in May 2017, showed that most children at P1, P4 and P7 achieved appropriate levels for numeracy and mathematics, reading, writing and listening and talking. Teachers used current assessment information to predict attainment for session 2017/18. We agree that most children are on track to achieve appropriate levels, and a few exceed these levels in numeracy and reading. The school recognises that attainment in writing is slightly lower than in the other key areas.
- Staff make use of a range of assessments, including standardised assessments, to make judgements about how well children are progressing. The school recognises the need to strengthen their approaches to tracking and measure the effectiveness of interventions to ensure continuous progress for all learners across all curriculum areas. We have asked the school to ensure effective systems are in place to promote equity of success and achievement.

Attainment in literacy and English:

- Across the school, children are making good progress in reading and writing and very good progress in listening and talking.
- **Listening and talking:** At early level, almost all children listen attentively and respond thoughtfully, building on their prior learning and understanding. They have a strong understanding of descriptive vocabulary, which they use very well to express their thoughts and ideas. They engage respectfully with others in class discussion, using volume and pace appropriately during interesting and appropriate conversations. Almost all children at first level engage respectfully with others in class discussion. They are articulate and express themselves very well and respect the views of others in collaborative and whole class learning. At second level, most children contribute ideas, information and opinions during discussions well. They can build on the opinions and ideas of others by asking and answering questions appropriately.
- **Reading:** At the early stages, almost all children use their knowledge well to attempt to decode unfamiliar words. They use contextual clues to support them in reading familiar books. Almost all can choose a favourite book and can describe the cover and title and most can identify the author and illustrator. Most children can hear sounds and blend letters to make words and use this knowledge to read familiar and tricky words in context. At first level, almost

all children can explain preferences for familiar texts, choosing these for enjoyment. Almost all can read aloud simple texts with expression and most with understanding. Most children can identify the key information in fiction and non-fiction texts. They are beginning to develop a good understanding of different genres and talk confidently about their reading choices and choice of authors. At second level, most children can read independently. A few expressed the need for more challenging texts. Most children apply a range of reading strategies well to read and understand texts such as skimming and scanning. They can summarise stories and predict what might happen next.

- **Writing:** At all stages children write for a variety of purposes in imaginary and real life contexts. They have opportunities to write for a range of audiences. Expectations about the standard of presentation of written work across the school are inconsistent and should be developed further. In the early stages, most children are beginning to form lower case letters legibly and invent their own characters in stories. Most are able to recount stories and write simple imaginative stories. At first level, most children write independently, punctuating most sentences accurately most of the time. Most children can use appropriate style and format to convey information in letters, posters and leaflets, applying key features of a chosen genre. Most children can plan and organise ideas, making notes to help their planning in a logical order. At second level, most children write sentences in a grammatically correct way. They use relevant and interesting vocabulary for specific purposes. Most make appropriate choices about layout to engage the reader according to the genre. The majority are writing at length, using notes to support them in their thinking. Most children use writing to persuade and explore ideas or express an opinion. They write effectively about interesting characters, expressing feeling and thoughts.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics:

- Across the school, children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. We have asked staff to continue to offer children meaningful and relevant opportunities to demonstrate and apply their learning in a range of real life settings and outdoors. The refreshed learning contexts will enhance opportunities for children to apply skills in unfamiliar settings.
- **Number, money and measurement:** At the early stages, children enjoy a range of play activities which challenge them in their counting skills. Children can identify a range of coins and use them in shopping activities. Within first level, children at P3 are gaining confidence counting in 2s, 3s and 4s. A few can identify strategies to solve addition and subtraction problems up to three digit whole numbers. By P4, children can use simple fractions, such as fifths and tenths, to describe patterns. In measure, at the early stages children can use jugs and bowls to measure and decide which is the largest. They can use a range of non-standard units to estimate and measure their pirate ships in the playground. At the upper stages, children are developing skills in understanding perimeter and area. They can record measurements in millimetres and centimetres with accuracy. By P7, children can use their knowledge of measurement to design a garden.
- **Shape, position and movement:** Younger children can identify a range of two-dimensional shapes in activities and in observation around the classroom. At the first level, children can create symmetrical pictures with one line of symmetry. In P3, children enjoy creating and describing rules for patterns. At second level, children at P5 can investigate three-dimensional objects in the playground and can use their learning to support construction activities in the

classroom. By P7, children can identify and measure a range of angles accurately. They have confidence plotting coordinates to draw a range of two-dimensional shapes. They know the properties of a circle.

Information handling:

- Across the school, children's understanding of information handling is good. Children working towards the first level in P4 are able to construct a bar graph of their transport to school. Children working towards the second level are confident in using a range of graphs such as pie charts to illustrate the diverse range of languages spoken in school to create graphs and pie charts.
- Overall children at Corstorphine have a wide range of opportunities for wider achievement. This includes a number of extra-curricular clubs, such as running club, fencing, chess, knitting, dance and drama. Individual achievements are celebrated at weekly 'Gather Rounds' and older children complete The Junior Award Scheme for Schools (JASS) awards in recognition of their achievements. The school also has links with a number of charities and children are involved in fund raising and other activities, such as singing at the Scottish Parliament to raise awareness about homelessness. This helps to raise their awareness of the wider community and as global citizens. All children in the school are involved in one of the 'One Planet' groups, which develops their confidence and allows them to exercise responsibility in school and in the local community. For example, the playground maintenance group manage and maintain a new outdoor play area, including undertaking daily health and safety checks. The children in the group also produced a film about how to play safely on the equipment, which was shared with all classes. The school should now audit children's participation in the opportunities provided and develop a system for tracking and monitoring children's wider achievement. They should also help children to recognise the skills they are developing as a result of participating in wider achievement opportunities and how this links with the world of work.

Setting choice of QI : 2.4: Personalised support

- Universal support
- Targeted support
- Removal of barriers to learning

- Positive relationships and high standards of behaviour are evident throughout the school. The majority of children feel that they are treated fairly and with respect. The active involvement of children in school leadership activities, such as involvement in 'One Planet' groups, is helping promote and develop a shared understanding of children's rights. The school's 'Respect Charter' is prominently displayed throughout the building. Having revised the 'Promoting positive behaviour policy' in 2016, the school has identified the need to continue to monitor and review its application.
- Teachers have a good understanding of the needs of the children in their class. Children have opportunities to discuss their learning on a one to one basis with their class teacher during the year. Termly meetings between teachers at each year group stage promote review and discussion of the progress and the support needs of individuals and groups of children. Regular meetings between class teachers and the support for learning teachers enable the monitoring of children's progress. In pre-inspection questionnaires, most children indicate that they know who to ask when they need help with their work.
- An annual review of additional support needs is undertaken at the start of each session. Termly discussions between class teachers and senior leaders support the identification and review of the range of support provision. This includes reviewing the involvement of partner agencies. By streamlining these processes the school will be better placed to evaluate the impact of targeted and universal support on outcomes for children.
- All children have an individual learning profile, containing learning targets. Set and reviewed termly, these targets include a few which are set by the children themselves. The use of more generic targets for literacy and numeracy is not meeting the specific needs of individuals. The school should develop further their approaches to target setting to ensure that they are the result of robust assessment of children's progress. Targets need to be personalised to each child and support meaningful progress in children's learning.
- In the majority of observed lessons, insufficient pace and challenge was provided. There is considerable scope to increase the level of expectation of children across the school. To ensure that all children achieve the best outcomes, further development of differentiation should be undertaken.
- The contribution made by pupil support assistants to class lessons, group activities, and the provision of individual support, is highly valued by teachers. As a result of training, pupil support assistants feel well equipped to provide a range of learning activities effectively.
- The school has identified children facing barriers to learning, including those with additional support needs and those experiencing disadvantage as a result of their socio-economic circumstances. A staged intervention process is used and staff make effective use of the expertise and support provided by the local authority and a range of health partners. This helps to ensure that support is appropriate, proportionate and timely. Parents and partners are actively involved in child planning meetings.

- Effective partnership working is ensuring the delivery of a range of personalised support for individual children and training opportunities for all staff. The very recent appointment of a family worker, funded with Pupil Equity Funding, will support the school's plans to extend the range of supports available to children and families.

Explanation of terms of quality

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quality 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.