

Summarised inspection findings

Mountfleurie Primary School

Fife Council

29 January 2019

Key contextual information

Mountfleurie Primary school opened to pupils in 1957. The present early years department was added in 1974. The school catchment area is broad and varied. Houses continue to be built in a development next to the school. There are 316 children in 13 mainstream classes.

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 has been a number of staffing changes in the school over the last year and the relatively new headteacher and her deputies, have begun to establish new procedures to move the school forward. In order to further develop the staff team, the headteacher has correctly identified the importance of building positive collaborative relationships. She has taken time to invest in collegiate activities and relationship building with staff at all levels. Almost all of the staff are positive about the changes and are ready to move forward.
- In a few classes, learners are engaged and are empowered to lead and drive their learning. These lessons are purposeful and stimulating and they challenge children appropriately. There would be merit in sharing this good practice, perhaps through the recently formed Teacher Learning Community (TLC) groups in order to ensure a similar experience for all learners. The quality of teaching and learning is too variable across the school.
- There are a few examples of the creative use of digital technologies in classes. There is scope for teachers to make more effective use of digital activities to access a range of relevant resources and present information in ways that capture children's interest. This includes enabling children to use digital tools to build their skills.
- Staff use the environment of the school well to support children's understanding of language through a wide range of pictures and symbols. This supports all children including those with Additional Support Needs (ASN) to develop their communication skills.
- In almost half of classes, learning is passive and teacher led. Tasks are directed to the whole class and many children disengage from the lesson. The lack of motivating activities leads to boredom and ultimately to low level disruption. Learning intentions and success criteria are used in most classes but the quality is variable. Senior staff are aware that there needs to be a greater focus on ensuring high quality experiences for all children in order to raise attainment. They should now move with pace to establish, with staff, a shared understanding of high quality teaching and learning. These agreed approaches should be included in all classes and carefully monitored to ensure positive outcomes for children.

- The school improvement plan is clear and well structured. It correctly highlights a target for improved differentiation across the school, to meet the needs of all learners. It is not yet clear how this target is having an impact within classes. In almost half of classes, the same task is given to all children and this is not enabling children to be either stretched or supported appropriately. Staff have also identified the need to increase the pace of learning as an important next step in most classes. The headteacher and her senior team have built a positive collegiate approach with staff. They should now work together to ensure full implementation of both differentiating all activities and increasing the pace of learning in order to raise attainment.
- Children are now becoming more involved in the life and work of their school. Commendably, a number of leadership opportunities have been established recently although these are at a very early stage of development. Staff should continue to develop this important skill of leadership to empower children and support their confidence and positive achievement. A few children are aware of their rights but this is not yet having an impact on behaviours. An important next step is to embed an understanding of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) across the school. A few staff enrich learning opportunities by offering clubs for children. It would be helpful for the school to track attendance at these clubs to ensure wider participation.
- Teaching staff recently evaluated children’s classroom experiences through reflective professional discussion. They highlighted the possible barriers impacting on high quality classroom experiences. School leaders should now encourage all staff to take forward the outcomes of these discussions and, working with children, put the agreed changes in place in all classrooms. This will support the improvement targets of increasing pace and challenge.
- A minority of teachers have high expectations of children in relation to their behaviour and their work. Not all children have yet learned the important social skills of respect and tolerance for others. The school values of respect and kindness are not consistently reflected in children’s behaviour. Low level indiscipline, often due to lack of stimulating experiences, is having an effect on motivation and attainment in a majority of classes. Most children in the school believe that others in their class only behave well some of the time. Teachers now need to develop a shared understanding of expectations and behaviours and children should be involved in implementing these in all classes.
- Teachers are beginning to develop a whole school approach to assessment. They have recently agreed to use Assessment is for Learning (AifL) approaches to support formative assessment. Teachers are aware that this is only one aspect of supporting children’s ability to know themselves as learners. The feedback given to children about their learning should be more focused and children should be supported to understand how this feedback links to their next steps in learning.
- Teachers plan together and are beginning to discuss expectations of children’s skills across the stages. Teacher planning should be linked closely with assessment and moderation. There is scope for teachers to involve children more fully in planning and evaluating their learning. This will increase children’s motivation and engagement.
- Senior leaders can clearly articulate children’s attainment in literacy and numeracy. There is a whole school tracking system which tracks literacy and numeracy. It would now be important to include other areas of the curriculum, and especially health and well-being as a responsibility of all.
- There are regular tracking and monitoring attainment meetings between senior leaders and teachers. These help to monitor learner progress and identify targeted interventions. There is

scope to develop teachers' understanding and confidence in the achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels. Senior staff have correctly identified the need to build teachers expertise in the moderation of standards and the use of the national benchmarks in all curricular areas, to further support assessing and tracking pupils progress.

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. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority to be dealt with as a matter of urgency.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

satisfactory

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

- Between 2016 and 2018, attainment in numeracy has decreased at the Early Level and increased at the First and Second Levels. Over the same period, attainment in literacy is variable across all stages.
- While most P4 children are working at or above the expected level in reading, the majority are attaining expected levels in writing by the end of P4. In talking and listening, most children are achieving expected levels at this stage. In numeracy and mathematics, most children are achieving expected levels.
- By the end of P7, most children are achieving expected levels in numeracy and mathematics and in reading, writing, talking and listening. These professional judgements are confirmed by standardised assessments. As moderation activities continue to develop, this will further support teachers to make accurate judgements about progress and make effective use of assessment information.
- Across the school, children are beginning to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in different contexts. There is scope for the school to further develop opportunities to apply these skills in different subjects and contexts.

Attainment over time

- Attainment in numeracy has decreased at early level and increased at first and second level. Attainment is variable in literacy across the stages.
- Notably, since August 2018, senior leaders have put in place more robust approaches to tracking children's progress. The school is now developing a clearer strategic overview of whether children are on track to achieve expected curriculum for excellence levels across all curricular areas and this includes the children who will need additional support.

Literacy

- Overall, attainment in literacy is satisfactory with children making good progress in reading at first and second levels.

Listening and Talking

- At the early level, most children are beginning to demonstrate the ability to take turns when listening and talking for a variety of purposes. Children at P4 enjoy talking about what they are learning and sharing the skills they are working on in their log books. They have good opportunities to share their views on the work of peers and offer suggestions for improvement. However this is not consistent across the school. Children at all stages would benefit from more opportunities to develop listening and talking skills in groups, pairs and in real life and varied contexts to develop their social skills and confidence. These literacy skills can then be applied and assessed in a range of contexts, for example through participation in the leadership groups.

Reading

- Children working towards the early level are at the initial stages of hearing and saying letter blends and sounds made by combining letters. They use pictures to help them understand simple text. By the end of the first level, the majority of children can read aloud short familiar pieces of texts showing understanding. A range of targeted reading interventions and strategies are helping children to read unfamiliar words at all stages. By the end of the second level, the majority of children read and understand texts of increasing complexity and identify key ideas, structures and some of the special features of different genre. Teachers should continue to ensure that children can discuss the range of reading skills needed to analyse texts.

Writing

- At the early level, children are exploring sounds, letters and words and the majority can use what they learn to help them write. At the first level, the majority of children spell most words correctly and use punctuation well. By the second level, the majority of children can create their own stories and poems and write text for different purposes such as letters, instructions and recipes. While there were some good examples of well-presented writing, the school should take steps to encourage children to write neatly. At the second level, the majority of children can write using an appropriate style and format.

Numeracy

- Overall, children, including those requiring additional support, are making satisfactory progress in their learning in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure

- Across the school most children show an enthusiasm for working with numbers and in mathematics. They are developing their skills in the four processes and are beginning to use these skills in different contexts.
- At early level, most children are able to demonstrate their skills of addition within ten. At first level, the majority of children are able to discuss their developing strategies for multiplication and division and at second level children can explain how they use these multiplication and division skills to help solve equivalent fractions. The school should now consider how they can challenge children more in their learning and in applying their skills in different contexts and real life situations. Across the school children enjoy working together to solve problems and

would now benefit from having more frequent, open ended challenges which require them to apply their numeracy and mathematics knowledge from a range of concepts.

- In some classes teachers should also consider supporting children to develop approaches to help them to think and talk about numbers. This will help children to articulate the strategies they are using to arrive at answers, thus empowering them as leaders of their own learning.

Shape, position and movement:

- Across the school children are able to recognise and describe common 2D shapes and 3D objects. At the early level children are able to identify 2D shapes and 3D objects and reinforce this knowledge through games and building tasks. By first level children can identify the properties of 3D objects and use these in design and technology. To increase levels of challenge, this learning should be more closely linked to the curriculum for excellence experiences and outcomes in technology.

Information handling

- Across the school children are given opportunities to develop data handling skills. At early level, children set their own questions to collect information. At first level they develop information handling skills through health and wellbeing, for example gathering information about children's height, to create their own charts. At second level, children produce bar charts using the school's 'walk to school' data. There is scope to improve analysis and use of data, for example, using digital sources.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- The school is increasing opportunities for children to achieve more widely and develop the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence. Children's personal achievements are displayed on the Tree of Achievement and highlighted at assemblies. All children now have opportunities to develop leadership skills through the recently formed children's leadership groups as well as the Golden Table, where good playground behaviour is acknowledged. A few children at P7 have opportunities to achieve Dynamic Youth Awards. Staff are now beginning to track children's involvement in after school and lunchtime clubs including, for example a science and technology group. Children are not yet aware of the skills they are gaining from wider achievements and highlighting these would be an important next step for teachers.

Equity for all learners

- Senior leaders and teachers are aware of children who may face barriers to learning due to socio-economic circumstances. This group of children is closely tracked and targeted interventions are implemented to secure improvements in various aspects of their school life. Plans have been agreed to use the Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) to enhance resources in order to raise attainment. Key staff are providing effective support to particularly vulnerable children and those who experience barriers to learning.
- The school is experiencing some success in closing the attainment gap between the lowest and highest attaining learners. Almost all children following targeted reading intervention programmes have made some progress from their starting points in reading. Evidence from assessment over 2017/2018 shows that children have improved their ability to decode words and are using strategies to recognise sight words. Teachers noted an improvement in reading fluency in some children over the same period.

- Overall there are some areas which are beginning to show positive improvements in raising attainment and achievement. Staff should now continue with plans and move at pace in order to increase attainment for all children.

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.