

Summarised inspection findings

Strichen School

Aberdeenshire Council

2 September 2025

Key contextual information

Strichen Primary School is a non-denominational school situated in the village of Strichen in Aberdeenshire. At the time of inspection, the school roll was 122 pupils organised over six classes. Strichen nursery is integrated within the school and has a roll of 24 children. The headteacher supports the early years senior practitioner, who has overall responsibility for the nursery. Most children live within Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles 5 and 8. Seventeen per cent of children are registered for free school meals. Around forty per cent of children on the school roll receive additional support with their learning. The headteacher has been in post since 2023.

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 headteacher, together with staff, have a clear vision for improvement. Children, staff and parents were involved recently in reviewing the school's vision and values. The school's vision, which is for everyone to be happy, achieving and supportive, along with the school values are evident across the school. Parents, children and staff feel these are relevant to the current context and reflect their aspirations for the school community. Staff refer to the vision, values and school rules of ready, respectful and safe, throughout daily interactions and in conversations with children. The headteacher recognises and rewards children who display the school's rules and values by presenting them with headteacher awards at assemblies. This is helping children to have a greater understanding of what their rules and values mean in action. Children are proud of their school and articulate the school vision, values and rules well.
- The headteacher, staff and school community identify and agree the school improvement plan (SIP) priorities using a range of self-evaluation data to inform decision making. For example, they use information gathered through discussion groups with children to influence and inform planning for improvement within the school. The current SIP sets out appropriate priorities which reflect local and national initiatives. These include developing more inclusive classrooms and high-quality approaches to children learning through play. There is a need to have clearer outcome statements within the SIP, where progress towards achieving success can be measured more accurately. In addition, the headteacher should streamline approaches to gathering evidence to evaluate progress made against school improvement priorities. This should help provide staff with clearer information about the impact of interventions on outcomes for children's learning.
- The headteacher and staff recognise the importance of monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. They have developed a useful quality assurance calendar. This outlines the activities the headteacher and staff undertake to evaluate the quality of the work of the school. The headteacher samples children's work, visits classes and provides feedback to teachers on the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher should implement a few quality

assurance activities with greater rigour, for example, reviewing the consistency and quality of feedback children receive on their work across the curriculum. This will help promote further effective self-evaluation to support continuous improvement.

- Staff across the school contribute increasingly to positive improvement and change within the school. There is a high level of enthusiasm among staff to take on leadership roles. Staff have researched and presented findings to colleagues on aspects of teaching and learning. This includes approaches to improving writing, developing maths assessments and using concrete resources to help children better understand maths concepts. Pupil support assistants have engaged in professional learning to support children to safely ride their bikes on the road. As planned, the headteacher should continue to support staff to take on leadership opportunities across the school. This should include strengthening the professional review and development process for all staff, including pupil support assistants. This should help to promote increasingly effective engagement in whole-school improvement by identifying opportunities for distributed leadership and increased capacity and sustainability of future improvements.
- Children contribute well to the leadership of change and school improvement through their involvement in leadership groups. They participate in an increasing range of leadership roles including by being a member of the school council or a play leader. This is resulting in positive change in many areas of school life. Children in the buddies group support younger children to engage in a range of fun reading activities. This is helping to promote important leadership skills in the older children, including communication and relationship building. In addition, it helps promote a love of reading for all children involved. Children are proud of the contribution they make to the life of the school. Consequently, most children feel that the school listens to their views and feel the school takes their views into account when making changes. Staff should now take forward their plans to strengthen further the voice of learners. This should help children understand better that they are making an authentic contribution to school improvement and continue to develop them as effective contributors and responsible citizens.
- Parents influence improvement and change successfully within the school. Staff review and act on the feedback from parents' surveys. The Parent Council engage well in discussions about school improvement priorities through headteacher updates. They help shape decision making positively within the school. For example, parents worked effectively in collaboration with staff and children to develop the school's positive relationships policy. Parents actively take on a range of leadership roles within the school. They have led the school's gardening club and organised a range of school social activities that promote a strong sense of community. In addition, they engaged in training to enhance and support the school library. As a result, almost all parents feel that the school takes their views into account when making changes and that the school is well led and managed.
- The staff team demonstrate a positive understanding of the social, economic and cultural context of the school. The headteacher consults on Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) investment with staff and parents. As a next step, the headteacher plans to involve children in this consultation. This will further influence decision making and help ensure that appropriate interventions are in place to support children's learning and wellbeing.

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

- All staff work together effectively to create a calm, welcoming and nurturing environment. Staff know children and families very well and are responsive to the needs of all. Across the school, almost all children understand and uphold the school values. These values underpin the daily life and work of the school. Staff demonstrate a commitment to children's rights, which is evidenced through the school ethos and classroom charters. Staff use helpful strategies and approaches for a few children who require additional help to access learning and manage relationships. Almost all children are well mannered and interact positively with each other and the adults working with them.
- Children are friendly, polite and welcoming. They are proud of their school and keen to share their learning with adults and peers. Children contribute effectively to the life of the school through engagement with their pupil leadership roles. They are actively involved in making changes which impact positively on school life. For example, children were involved in recent improvements to the outdoor environment. As a result, almost all children feel their views are sought, valued and acted upon.
- Teachers work well with children to ensure that classrooms and other learning spaces are inclusive and support different learning styles and needs. This includes quiet and cosy areas in classrooms, a 'cool down' space and a number of well-organised and resourced areas for small group teaching and learning. Children access these spaces as required for short periods of time to support them to regulate their emotions. Teachers and pupil support assistants work well in partnership when support is required to help children re-engage with their learning or regulate their behaviour.
- In most lessons, children engage positively in a range of learning activities such as whole class discussion, group work, learner conversations and independent tasks. Teachers use digital tools well to enhance learning and teaching across the curriculum. For example, they use video clips to help children understand unfamiliar contexts and increase their subject specific vocabulary. Children across the school scan matrix bar codes to access learning and feedback independently. Older children enjoy the challenge of coding programmable robots. They draw upon their numeracy skills to check and improve their coding. Teachers should continue to provide a wide range of digital approaches that develop skills progressively. This will help children to build successfully on what they already know.
- In most lessons, teachers' explanations are clear and concise. They share learning intentions and success criteria. Teachers discuss these with children to they understand what they need to do to be successful. Most teachers plan a variety of different learning activities to engage children. In most lessons, teachers ensure that children experience appropriate pace, challenge and support matched to their learning needs. This is not yet consistent across all

lessons. Teachers would benefit from a shared understanding of the key features of a high-quality lesson. This guidance should help ensure that all children benefit from consistent, high-quality learning and teaching across the school.

- Most teachers provide helpful verbal feedback to children about their effort and engagement in learning. Teachers have worked together to develop effective approaches to provide helpful written feedback in children's writing. This is not yet consistent across all curricular areas. In all lessons, teachers use questioning effectively to check for understanding and consolidate children's learning. Teachers should continue to embed a consistent approach to using questions which extend children's thinking. This should help promote further, critical thinking and deepen children's understanding of knowledge and concepts.
- Staff make positive use of the school's outdoor spaces and the recently refreshed secret garden. Children develop skills such as observation and problem solving in the investigation station area of the garden. Children demonstrate a high level of engagement, curiosity and enjoyment in outdoor learning. During plenary sessions in outdoor education, children reflect on the meta-skills they are developing and record their play journeys in floor books. The headteacher and teachers should continue to develop approaches to ensure outdoor learning is consistently well planned and progressive. This should support children to apply skills for learning, life and work in a range of contexts.
- Staff in P1 have worked well together and engaged with national guidance to embed approaches to play pedagogy over recent years. They have created a stimulating and attractive classroom environment which supports children effectively to explore and investigate. Children demonstrate independence and confidence in their learning. They develop well their literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge through participation in developmentally appropriate and motivating play experiences. Staff ensure there is a balance of adult-directed and child-led play opportunities. Staff across the school are beginning to include play-based learning linked to meta skills. Children's learning and skills development are recorded in observations. Staff should now track these skills to ensure that they are developed progressively. This will help prepare children for a rapidly changing world and empower them to become confident and adaptable learners.
- The headteacher and staff have created an appropriate assessment framework. This provides useful information and guidance to promote a consistent approach to assessment across the school. All teachers use a variety of formative and summative assessments effectively to measure progress and identify any gaps in learning. Pre and post assessment in numeracy and mathematics help teachers create groups which are responsive to the needs of children. Teachers should now apply this effective practice to other areas of the curriculum. Staff need to ensure that assessment information informs planning more fully. This should help them to provide appropriate challenge in children's learning more consistently.
- Teachers engage with colleagues across the school cluster in a range of moderation activities. They have moderated children's writing. The headteacher and staff should use the moderation cycle to consider wider aspects of learning and teaching. This should strengthen teachers' understanding of national standards and further support them in making decisions on learners' progress.
- Teachers use school progression planners to inform plans for literacy and numeracy. These support staff to track learning and children's progress in literacy and numeracy. The headteacher and staff have rightly identified the need to further develop progression planners across other curricular areas. This will help teachers provide greater consistency across the school in planning for high quality learning and teaching.

- The headteacher meets with staff regularly to track and monitor children's progress in literacy and numeracy. Together, they use the data gathered with increasing effectiveness to identify those children with gaps in their learning. Staff plan a range of effective interventions to help close any gaps and support children to make greater progress. The headteacher and staff should now consider how to track progress in learning across all curricular areas.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Staff use progressive frameworks well to plan children's learning in literacy and numeracy. They use Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) experiences and outcomes to plan learning across other curricular areas. The staff should now develop further progression pathways for all curricular areas. This should ensure that all children build successfully on prior learning.
- All children benefit from two hours of high-quality physical education (PE) each week, delivered by a specialist PE teacher. The teacher makes effective use of available outdoor spaces to support the development of physical skills. In addition, children have access to a broad range of sporting activities through well-attended after-school clubs. These are delivered by teaching staff and community partners. This is encouraging children to be active and engaged in physical activity.
- Children benefit from access to a range of books in the recently refreshed school library and classroom libraries. A local librarian has provided valuable support in enhancing the library space and in delivering training to staff, pupils and parent volunteers. Children borrow books regularly to read and enjoy. In addition, children engage with the wider community through regular visits to the local library. This is helping children to foster a love of reading.
- Children learn French from P1-P7 and German in P5-P7. Mandarin lessons have been introduced this year supported by a native speaking teaching assistant from P2-P7. Doric is an important part of the local culture and is taught and celebrated in all classes. Children take part in an annual Doric poetry recital competition, as part of a wider celebration of Robert Burns. They also take part in the Buchan Heritage Doric Festival where they have achieved notable success in writing and Doric recital.
- Staff engage very well with community partners to develop children's understanding of developing the young workforce. Children visit local businesses and learn about career opportunities in the local area. Staff have welcomed a range of partners to the school to increase children's understanding of different careers. For example, a police officer, an author and civil engineer have shared the rewards and challenges of their work life. This is enhancing the curriculum, challenging gender stereotypes and providing children with opportunities to develop skills for learning, life, and work.
- Children experience well-planned and supportive transitions at key points in their learning journey, including from nursery to P1 and from P7 to secondary school. Early years staff and the P1 teacher have developed a strong and effective transition programme. This includes the use of Be All You Can Bear (BUC) as a familiar figure in transition activities. BUC Bear visits the nursery alongside the P1 teacher and distributes transition packs fortnightly during term four. Primary 7 to secondary school transition is very well established. Children take part in helpful visits to, and activities in, the secondary school. A very effective and well-planned extended transition programme supports a few children experiencing barriers to their learning to feel safe, settled and ready for the next step in their learning journey.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Almost all parents feel comfortable approaching the school with questions and suggestions. They appreciate the informative newsletters and updates shared on a digital platform about the life and work of the school. They feel their child is making good progress and receives the support needed to achieve success. Parents attend a range of helpful events that promote parental engagement. Consequently, almost all parents feel well informed about their child's learning and that the school is well led and managed.
- The Parent Council is very supportive and are actively involved in the life of the school. All parents are invited to attend Parent Council meetings online or in person and the agenda is shared in advance. Parents are involved in sharing their views and inform decision making. For example, parents have helped shape the school's positive relationships policy and informed decisions around school improvement priorities. The Parent Council provide significant financial assistance to the school. They consult with children and staff on how best to invest funds. They have recently provided resources to enhance outdoor learning and digital technology. They also help reduce the cost of the school day by offsetting the cost of school trips, parties and classroom resources. Almost all parents feel that they are encouraged to be involved in the work of the Parent Council.

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

- Children and staff feel valued and respected through the positive nurturing and inclusive ethos across the school. The school vision is for everyone to be happy, achieving and supportive. The vision, along with the school values, are demonstrated by children and staff in almost all interactions. Children value the care and support offered by the school community. Consequently, almost all children feel they have someone in the school they can talk with if they are upset or worried. They also share that the school helps them to understand and respect others. Children are happy and proud of their school.
- All staff undertake appropriate professional learning to better support children who require additional help with their learning or wellbeing. This includes learning around the nurture principles, restorative conversations, trauma informed practice and creating inclusive classrooms. This is helping staff enhance their skills and confidence to identify and address children's needs. Staff have developed spaces and environments within the school to support children's wellbeing. These include, the cool down area, and sensory spaces within classrooms such as 'cosy corners.' These approaches help children to feel safe and supported and provide space and time for them to re-engage positively with their learning. As planned, the headteacher and staff should continue to develop the school and classroom environments to further strengthen the universal support provided for all children's wellbeing and learning. This should enable staff to further reduce potential barriers to participation for children effectively and engage and motivate them more in their learning.
- The headteacher and staff track the wellbeing of individuals and groups of children. Children complete wellbeing questionnaires and staff 'check-in' daily with children. The headteacher recognises the need to increase the frequency of health and wellbeing tracking. This will help staff to better identify and understand trends and patterns over time. Staff use tracking information effectively to plan curriculum activities and provide interventions to support children. These interventions support targeted groups of children to build their capacity to self-regulate and re-engage with learning. Teachers use helpful health and wellbeing resources to provide children with relevant and engaging activities. For example, children learn how to be safe, to be caring, be resilient and how to foster friendships. This is helping children to develop a greater understanding of their overall wellbeing including their mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing.
- Staff and partners have a strong understanding of the importance of wellbeing to a child's attainment, achievement and development. They have worked effectively with children in the school council to plan and lead wellbeing indicator assemblies for all children in the school. Staff and children focus on two wellbeing indicators each term and children reflect regularly on the school aims which are linked to the wellbeing indicators. A range of partners work closely with school staff to promote wellbeing. This includes visits by the police and active school

co-ordinators. School staff supported the introduction of the free 'Fruity Friday' initiative to help promote healthy eating. As a result, children are increasing their awareness of the importance of being safe, healthy and active. As planned, senior leaders should continue to strengthen children's understanding of the wellbeing indicators. This should help children become more aware of the wellbeing indicators and support them to become increasingly confident, independent and resilient.

- Almost all children feel that their school teaches them to lead a healthy lifestyle. All children participate in a wide range of sports, games and physical activities as part of their PE programme which is effectively supported by a specialist PE teacher. This engages and motivates children to lead active lives. Children have many opportunities at school to get regular exercise. A variety of options for exercise are available through after school clubs, including netball and athletics. As a positive next step, school staff and children plan to collaborate in order to organise the school's health week. These approaches are improving children's physical fitness, developing their skills in teamwork and promoting a deeper understanding of wellbeing.
- All staff have a strong understanding of their responsibilities and statutory duties to improve outcomes for children. Through annual mandatory training, all staff are familiar with child protection guidelines, in line with national guidance. They have a clear understanding of their role and are proactive in identifying and addressing any child protection concerns that arise. Clerical staff share child protection guidance with staff and visitors on arrival at the school. The names and photographs of the child protection co-ordinators are prominently displayed in the school. Staff and visitors are confident about their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection.
- The school submitted information relating to compliance with the revised Nutritional Regulations 2020 and key duties as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007. The Health and Nutrition Inspector (HNI) discussed this information with relevant staff and children. In addition, the HNI examined documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole school approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of children through food in school. Several areas for improvement have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.
- Staff, along with the rights respecting school ambassadors, have worked collaboratively to promote children's rights across the school. They have planned and delivered presentations on the rights of the child at assembly. Children across the school have developed class charters. These set out clear expectations to promote a positive, inclusive and respectful learning environment. Children have linked class charters to their rights. They are proud of the national accreditation they achieved for their work on children's rights. As a result, children are increasingly aware of their entitlement to have their rights respected and of the relevance of these rights to their everyday lives. Staff and children should continue to raise awareness of rights across the school, through co-ordinated monthly presentations and activities. This should help all children develop a deeper understanding of their rights and how they impact on their lives and the lives of others, both within and outwith school.
- The headteacher follows local authority and national guidelines for managing and recording incidents of bullying. Staff take allegations of bullying seriously, and take appropriate steps to investigate, record and mitigate these. Senior leaders have recently refreshed and updated the school's anti-bullying policy. This helps staff support both children and parents understanding of what bullying is, how to report it and how to access support. Consequently, almost all children and parents feel that bullying is dealt with effectively, or that they have not experienced bullying. P6 and P7 play leaders have undertaken training to support positive play.

This is helping children engage, interact and play together positively at break times. The play leaders are developing important communication and leadership skills in this role.

- All staff understand the importance of equality and inclusion. The headteacher and staff meet regularly with parents and partners to create robust and clear plans for children who require additional support. For example, children who are adversely impacted by poverty. Children's needs are identified, and appropriate targeted support is planned and put in place. These interventions are helping children make positive progress in their learning and enhance their wellbeing. Children's plans are reviewed regularly and targets updated in line with progress. The headteacher should continue to develop positive working relationships with a wide range of partners. This will further enhance the support that children receive and benefit from.
- Children learn about diversity through classroom lessons and assemblies. For example, children have learned about neurodiversity and disabilities and linked this learning to the rights of the child. This is helping all children to challenge discrimination and recognise that those with disabilities have the right to live with dignity. As a next step, the headteacher and staff should audit the books in the school and classroom libraries. They should ensure children have access to a wide range of diverse texts and continue to develop children's understanding and knowledge of diversity. This should help children and staff promote further, diversity and inclusion across the school.

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

- Overall, children's attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is good. Most children at P1 and P4 achieve expected CfE levels in reading, writing, listening and talking and numeracy. Most children at P7 achieve expected CfE levels in reading and numeracy. The majority of children at P7 achieve expected CfE levels in writing and almost all in listening and talking. A few learners are exceeding national expectations in literacy and numeracy.
- Most children who receive additional support for their learning make good progress against their individual targets for learning.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, most children are making good progress in literacy and English.

Listening and talking

- At early level, almost all children take turns listening and talking in a variety of contexts. They follow simple instructions successfully. Most children respond to questions with enthusiasm and are building their confidence in talking about personal experiences. At first level, most children ask and answer questions thoughtfully. They express an opinion confidently and relate this to the topic being discussed. They are developing their skills in building on the ideas of others in group discussions. At second level, most children express their views articulately and almost all are respectful of others' points of view in discussion. They are developing their confidence in identifying the difference between fact and opinion and provide clear reasons to support this.

Reading

- At early level, most children use context cues to support their understanding of different types of text. They apply these skills in real-life contexts and during play-based activities to read, for example, menus and letters. A few need more opportunities to apply their understanding of phonics to read unfamiliar words. At first level, most children read with increasing fluency. They decode unknown words by locating and pronouncing familiar letter patterns and blends. They are growing in confidence in identifying key information in fiction and non-fiction texts using features such as the contents page and sub-headings. They should strengthen further their ability to answer literal, inferential and evaluative questions about texts. At second level, most children explain their preferences for text types and authors confidently. They read with increasing fluency, understanding and expression, using punctuation and layout to help them. They should further develop their understanding of how an author uses language to engage the reader. Children would benefit from enhanced opportunities to read for a variety of

purposes across the curriculum. This should further improve children's reading skills and impact positively on attainment.

Writing

- At early level, most children form letters correctly and write in simple sentences. They use their knowledge of sounds confidently to spell familiar words accurately. Most children sequence events into the correct order to tell a story. A few children are attempting to write in more detail. At first level, most children spell familiar words correctly. They use their knowledge of grammar and connectives appropriately in their writing. They should continue to develop their skills in using language to engage or persuade the reader. At second level, the majority of children plan their writing effectively using notes. They write across various genres with an understanding of the unique characteristics of each. Staff should ensure children at second level are provided with opportunities to write more regularly and at increasing length to develop their writing skills further.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, most children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, most children recognise and write numbers accurately. They order numbers from 0-30 and add and subtract within 10 confidently. They are developing their knowledge of doubles and halves well. At first level, most children round numbers to 100 successfully. They tell the time accurately using half past, quarter past and quarter to, using analogue and digital 12-hour clocks. They are developing an understanding of equivalent fractions and how to calculate simple fractions of whole numbers. Most children at second level solve simple algebraic equations with one variable. For example, calculating speed using distance and time. They should continue to apply their numeracy and mathematics skills across an increasing range of problem-solving contexts.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, most children sort three-dimensional (3D) objects, according to various simple criteria including straight, round, flat and curved. At first level, most children accurately name and classify a range of 3D objects. They are not yet fully confident in identifying lines of symmetry in pictures and two-dimensional shapes. Most children at second level use mathematical language accurately to classify a range of angles including acute, obtuse and reflex angles. They should continue to develop their skills in using complementary and supplementary angles to calculate missing angles.

Information handling

- At early level, most children contribute successfully to pictorial displays to present basic data sets. At first level, most children extract key information from different types of graphs and talk about ways in which they would gather and organise information. At second level, most children name a variety of ways to present data including using bar graphs, line graphs and pie charts. They interpret a range of information successfully. Across first and second levels, children would benefit from increased use in gathering, organising and displaying data using digital devices.

Attainment over time

- Children's attendance is 94.7% and above the national average. The headteacher monitors children's attendance carefully. Staff support families sensitively where there are barriers to children attending. They follow local authority processes and take effective action where needed to improve attendance. This includes, where appropriate, working with partners. As a

result, children's attendance has been consistently high. There are no part-time timetables in place.

- The headteacher and staff use an effective tracking system that enables them to monitor the progress of individual children in literacy and numeracy over time. Data shows accurately that most children maintain their progress as they move through the school. However, there is a dip at first level, particularly in reading. The headteacher and staff have implemented a number of interventions to address this. They have increased children's visits to the library to promote reading for enjoyment and are beginning to implement a new reading scheme. It is too early to measure the impact of these interventions on children's attainment.
- The headteacher and staff rightly identified that raising attainment is a key priority. Staff have taken positive steps to improve attainment in writing to address previous gaps in children's skills. Children now write more regularly across a range of genre. Teachers work with children to identify and agree clear targets for children to achieve within their writing. This is resulting in positive improvements in children's writing skills and writing attainment.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- All children have regular opportunities to share their achievements from in and outwith school. Staff celebrate and recognise these achievements in assemblies, in classes, on a digital platform and through various displays around the school. Staff provide a wide and extensive range of opportunities which support children to achieve success. This is helping children to develop resilience, their musical skills and develop as confident individuals.
- Staff build and promote effective working relationships with a range of partners. Staff and children have developed strong inter-generational working with the local care home, where children sing and present their Christmas nativity to residents. Children from across the school participated in the Buchan Festival where they developed a deep understanding of their heritage and celebrate the use of Doric language. Participation in these events enables children to develop important skills and attributes while contributing positively to their local and wider community.
- Across the school, there is a wide range of opportunities for children to develop their leadership skills and achieve personal success. The librarians help to look after and maintain books and library resources so they can be enjoyed by all. This is helping children understand that their contribution makes a positive difference to the school community and develops them as responsible citizens.
- Staff track children's participation in achievement opportunities both within and outwith the school. They use this information effectively to identify children at risk of missing out. As planned, staff should now track the skills children are developing as a result of these achievements.

Equity for all learners

- All staff have a deep understanding of the socio-economic context of the school and of the challenges faced by children and families. Staff have taken action to reduce the cost of the school day effectively. They have established a preloved uniform bank and initiatives such as Fruity Friday where children have access to free fruit. The headteacher subsidises the cost of trips through effective partnership working with the parent council. This helps ensure family circumstances are not a barrier to children's full participation in the life and work of the school.
- The headteacher has a well-considered plan for the use of PEF. This plan focuses on improving children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Additional

staffing supports interventions for individuals in targeted areas such as reading, writing, emotional regulation and weekly breakfast club. Staff should continue to measure outcomes to evidence the impact of PEF interventions for identified groups of children. This should help ensure that interventions are impacting positively on identified attainment gaps. Parents and staff are consulted on the use of PEF.

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.