

Summarised inspection findings

St Bride's Primary School

South Lanarkshire Council

23 April 2019

Key contextual information

St Bride's Primary and Nursery class is a Roman Catholic establishment located in Bothwell, South Lanarkshire. The local area is a mixture of social and privately owned housing which is continuing to grow. The school has 239 children and 10 classrooms. The nursery class caters for 50/50 children.

The school Free Meal Entitlement in 2017/18 is 9.2%

The school building was opened in 2005 and includes a Reading Lounge and a newly established Nurture room, as well as a large gym and a separate dining area.

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

- A key feature of the school is the strong Catholic ethos and the very positive relationships amongst children, staff and parents. They are very proud of their school and speak enthusiastically of its many strengths. Staff and parents are very loyal to the community of St Bride's and speak with passion about the opportunities available to the children and of their involvement with the school. The strong supportive links with the Parish underpin the life and work of the school.
- The headteacher and her senior management team have high expectations for all children. They work closely with staff and have collated many types of data to support their aim of excellence for all. There are a number of initiatives across classes and some of these are making a difference to raising attainment. There is scope to continue to evaluate classroom practice and to ensure that all staff have a shared understanding of high quality learning and teaching. Staff should continue to focus on the varying individual needs across the school to ensure equity for all.
- Children across all stages are fully involved in the life of the school and its community through the many opportunities for faith development and for fundraising and community activities. During the 'World of Work' week for example, community members link with classes to support their understanding of skills for life and work. There is scope to further develop children's understanding of the skills they are learning across the curriculum and the purpose of their learning. This will help children to understand where they are in their learning and what their next steps are.
- Children's engagement in their learning is varied across classes. In almost all classes they work well in groups and with their peers. Most lessons are well planned and teachers work hard to create engaging lessons although, at times, these are overly teacher-directed and lack flexibility. Children would benefit from greater levels of challenge in the tasks and activities which they undertake. The pace of lessons is sometimes too slow and children can lose interest. This is an important area for development across all stages.

- Children who access the nurture facility are very well supported. The positive and creative approach used by staff is helping them to engage better with learning. The use of the available outdoor space to engage and motivate young children is a positive feature of this facility. Members of support staff are well deployed to support aspects of literacy and there is evidence of success and improvement for children. These aspects of good practice, where staff are responsive to the needs of children, could be more widely practised across all classes.
- All staff know children as individuals particularly well. Teachers and support staff work well together with senior staff to drive forward school improvement and to ensure positive outcomes for children. Teachers use a variety of styles to engage children and a majority of these are positive in supporting good learning. In a few lessons, planning needs to be more responsive to children's learning preferences. Children are very well behaved and are compliant even when they are not sufficiently engaged.
- Teachers use a variety of approaches to support learning. Children who have additional support needs are well known by staff who put appropriate interventions in place for them. The headteacher is aware that extracting children from the class, for support or challenge, should only be done in exceptional circumstances. The school values of 'Valued, Included and Praised' (VIP), are clearly evidenced in all interactions in classes. Teachers have detailed information about children's progress but could now move towards being more dynamic and creative, allowing children more freedom to devise their own learning ideas. Most children have the potential to be strong leaders and would benefit from greater opportunities to lead their own learning.
- Children are aware of the school improvement plan although they would like to be more involved in shaping the direction of school. There is scope to develop pupil voice more fully in order to meaningfully engage all children in school decision making and planning.
- Teachers use an appropriate range of assessments to monitor children's progress and plan next steps for individuals and groups. This does not yet fully include a holistic approach to assessing children's application of learning in new and unfamiliar contexts. A whole-school quality assurance calendar outlines when specific standardised assessments are carried out. Staff meet termly with senior leaders to discuss the progress of all children. This provides opportunity to discuss the range of assessment evidence and plan any required interventions to ensure all children are making the best possible progress. There is scope to improve the individual feedback given to children to ensure they know what they need to do to improve. This feedback should be based on skills learned and this would enable children to see progression in learning.
- Children and parents in the pre-inspection questionnaires commented about the need for better and more regular homework. Currently, they feel that there is inconsistency of homework across the stages. Some discussion around the purpose of homework with parents would also be helpful in making sure it is supporting progression in learning.
- Across the school year, teachers are beginning to engage in moderation activities. Staff should continue to develop their understanding of the National Benchmarks and how they inform children's progress across Curriculum for Excellence levels. Staff are aware of the need to develop these approaches across all other areas of the curriculum. Teachers should continue to work with colleagues across the local schools learning community to moderate their understanding of standards and expectations. This will ensure that assessment of children's learning and progress is increasingly reliable and robust.
- Approaches to planning the curriculum are consistent across all stages. Teachers use a variety of 'bundles' of experiences and outcomes to ensure breadth of learning across literacy and

numeracy. This is not yet available for health and wellbeing. Teachers are beginning to discuss expectations of children's skills development across the stages. It will be important to develop a shared skills progression framework, covering all curricular areas to ensure appropriate pace and challenge for all children. Learners are becoming more involved in the planning process particularly within topic work. Teachers should continue to involve children more fully in planning and evaluating their own learning across all areas of the curriculum.

- The school gathers a range of assessment information to track and monitor pupil progress. Senior leaders and teaching staff meet on a termly basis to identify children requiring additional support. All staff should now systematically evaluate the effectiveness of these interventions to ensure improved outcomes for all children. Senior leaders use a whole school system to track children's progress in literacy and numeracy and this clearly highlights children's attainment in these areas. Staff should develop this approach further to incorporate all areas of the curriculum, ensuring children are making the best possible 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.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

very 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 mathematics and numeracy and English language and literacy is very good. In numeracy and mathematics, all children achieve early level at P1 and almost all achieve first level by the end of P4. Most children achieve second level by the end of P7. A few children at each stage exceed these levels. In reading, most children achieve early level by the end of P1 and almost all children achieve appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels by the end of P4 and P7. In writing most children achieve appropriate levels by the end of P1, P4 and P7 and almost all children achieve appropriate levels in listening and talking. A few children at each stage exceed the level in all aspects of literacy.
- Staff track children's progress well in literacy and numeracy to ensure that children have maximum opportunity to improve their attainment year on year. Where there is a risk of attainment slipping staff take appropriate and prompt action. There is a clear focus on raising attainment across the school. In moving forward, the school needs to ensure that its strategy to raise attainment supports more consistent progress through Curriculum for Excellence levels across all areas of the curriculum. Children who are exceeding levels should be challenged further and the pace of learning should not be restricted in line with the class pace.

Overall progress in literacy

- Children's attainment in literacy and English language is very good. Most children are making very good progress in reading, writing, listening and talking.

Listening and talking

- Across the school, children listen well and talk with confidence. They are articulate and keen to offer opinions about their learning, the school and their interests. At early level, almost all children can respond to instructions related to their learning and ask questions which demonstrate understanding. At first level most children are demonstrating that they can ask and respond to different types of questions and can identify key ideas within spoken texts. At second level, almost all children are asking and responding to literal, inferential and evaluative questions and considering details behind key ideas. Further regular opportunities to develop debating skills and skills relating to presentations should now be developed.

Reading

- Overall, most children are engaging well with a range of texts across learning as well as selecting texts for personal reading. At early level, most children are developing their word attack skills well following a structured programme. They are developing good fluency in their reading according to their age and stage of development. At first level, almost all children are able to read fluently and share thoughts about structure, characters and setting as well as the main ideas contained within texts. They are using texts well to find key information within different contexts and can use a range of strategies. By second level, almost all children are

able to answer a range of questions about texts including inferential questions. They are able to select relevant information from a range of sources. They can discuss vocabulary used by authors to develop characterisation and settings. Across the school there is scope for children to develop further their higher order thinking skills in reading.

Writing

- Writing across the school is developing well and is systematically tracked. Most children at early level are able to use a range of technical skills, including using capital letters and full stops prior to applying these in independent writing. At first level, most children are applying skills effectively through independent pieces of writing. They are using appropriate vocabulary for specific purposes when creating their own texts across a range of genres. Most children at second level use appropriate vocabulary to convey thoughts and feelings when developing characters and settings. There is evidence of strength where children are writing independently at length across a range of genres in the upper stages. Children are using reading material regularly as a model for their writing. Staff should increase the pace of learning and level of challenge for those children who are progressing confidently through their targets.

Overall progress in numeracy

- Overall, attainment in numeracy and mathematics is very good. Most children are making very good progress.

Number, money and measurement

- Across the school, children are developing their understanding of place value and number processes using a range of strategies. At early level, almost all children can recall and order numbers backwards and forwards from zero to 20. They are developing skills in addition and subtraction and are able to use these in practical situations. Almost all children identify coins to £2 and use coins to pay the exact value for items up to 10p. At first level, almost all children identify the value of each digit in a whole number up to thousands and can round numbers to the nearest ten and 100. Almost all children solve addition and subtraction problems with three digit whole numbers and are developing confidence in solving two step problems. There is scope to develop further a range of strategies to support mental mathematics at first level.
- Almost all children record 12 hour time using am and pm and a few children are able to identify and convert to 24 hour notation. At second level, most children explain the link between a digit, its place and its value for numbers to three decimal places. Most children carry out calculations well using decimals and money involving the four operations. They are able to calculate simple fractions and percentages of a quantity and solve simple algebraic equations with one variable. Most children read and record time in both 12 and 24 hour notation and can convert between the two.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, almost all children recognise and sort common two-dimensional shapes and identify whether an object is larger or smaller. At first level, almost all children know that a right angle is 90 degrees and identify these in their environment. They are beginning to develop confidence in using mathematical language to describe the properties of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. At second level, most children know a range of angles and can use mathematical language such as acute, obtuse, straight and reflex to identify and describe angles within shapes in the environment. They can describe three-dimensional objects and two-dimensional shapes using appropriate technical vocabulary.

Information handling

- At first level, almost all children are beginning to develop their understanding of how to collect, organise and display data. At the second level, most children show an understanding of how to collect, organise and display a range of data accurately in a variety of ways, including through

the use of digital technologies. They are learning to interpret and draw conclusions successfully. They would benefit from developing a greater understanding of the language of probability.

Attainment over time

- The school appropriately tracks children's progress over time. Regular tracking meetings have a focus on individual children's progress over time. Staff use a range of evidence, including teachers' professional judgements of both formative and summative assessments and standardised assessments, to inform children's next steps in learning. The senior leadership team and teachers meet regularly to plan appropriate interventions to ensure, as far as possible, that children can continue to improve. Children who have additional support needs have their progress towards their targets reviewed regularly.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- A wide range of clubs is provided for children by staff and partners, including choir, art, badminton, football, dance, chess and coding. These are well attended and children speak very positively about the benefits of these clubs. The school offers children the opportunity to select and participate in masterclasses. These encourage children to develop a wider range of interests and skills. Some of these activities are led regularly by P7 children. Children value their involvement in the SportsScotland Award and the Pope Francis Award which are supported well by members of the school community. Senior leaders track children's engagement in activities to ensure that all are recognised for their participation. This is an area of strength in the school.
- Wider achievements are celebrated in a variety of ways, including assemblies and certificates, focusing on the 'VIP vision' of the school. Children document successes through their achievement folders and are encouraged by staff to select the 'best of the best'. This showcases high quality work whilst engaging children in dialogue about their progress in learning. The recently introduced 'snapshot' books give children the opportunity to share learning with parents and carers. This practice could be developed further to enable children and families to reflect and record achievements out of school. This will support all involved in the child's life to recognise skills gained from participation in wider achievements and how to apply these across their learning.

Equity for all learners

- All staff have a good understanding of children's barriers to learning. Those children who require additional interventions and support are making good progress overall. The school is monitoring children who have additional support needs and should continue to maintain a focus on achieving equity of success for every child.
- Staff have taken part in professional learning to improve their understanding of factors affecting children's performance and how to mitigate barriers to attainment and achievement. The school currently receives additional resources from the Pupil Equity Fund and they have directed some of this funding to aspects identified through the tracking and monitoring of children's progress. Whilst there is emerging evidence of positive impact the school should continue to ensure that interventions are leading to improved outcomes for identified children.

Other relevant evidence

- Senior leaders are aware that curricular progression plans now need to focus on skill development.
- There is a need to update some of the language and understanding of current policy, in line with national guidelines.

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.