

Summarised inspection findings

Kininmonth Primary School

Aberdeenshire Council

27 June 2023

Key contextual information

Kininmonth Primary School is a non-denominational school situated north of Mintlaw. It is in a rural setting. There are 31 children on the school roll set across two classes. Most children travel to school by school bus. Almost all children attending the school live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles six and seven.

This session there have been a number of staff changes in one of the classes. The headteacher has a two-day teaching commitment within the school.

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

- The headteacher and staff work effectively to foster a positive and inclusive ethos across Kininmonth Primary School. Positive relationships across the whole school community are a key strength of the school. Children present as friendly and happy and are proud of their school. They share freely how much they enjoy attending a small, rural school. This includes knowing all their fellow pupils and staff very well and having access to lots of space to play in their playground. Older children work with and support younger children well in mixed year groups. Across the school, the values, rights of the child and wellbeing indicators are on display. Older children are able to describe what they mean to them. The school values and children's rights could feature more in lessons to support children to increase their understanding of how they link to learning.
- In the majority of lessons children are enthusiastic about their learning. This is most evident in lessons which interest and motivate them, such as, practical science lessons and outdoor learning. Older children enjoy the opportunity to select their own level of difficulty as part of a 'chilli challenge' approach. Staff support children well as part of this to ensure children experience an appropriate level of challenge. In a minority of lessons, staff rely on worksheets which do not engage learners. The pace of learning can also be too slow. Staff should increase the pace of learning to ensure sustained engagement and focus for all learners. Children respond well to the opportunities they have to work in pairs and groups. Younger children would benefit from more opportunities for choice and learning linked to their personal interests.
- In the majority of lessons, staff share the purpose of learning and ways in which children can be successful. Older children play a positive role in identifying indicators of success. This is supporting children to be clear about what they need to do to be successful in their learning. Older children identify their own specific learning targets in literacy and numeracy. This is helping them to have a good understanding of their own strengths and next steps in learning. They discuss and reflect on their targets with staff. Helpfully, children identify the different contexts they could use to address learning targets. This is providing children with

meaningful ways to lead their own learning. Teachers should now extend this helpful practice across the school.

- In the majority of lessons, teachers' instructions are clear. In a few lessons, children require adult direction to support them to complete tasks. Staff should ensure tasks are appropriately matched to the different needs within multi-composite classes.
- Older children can identify the different ways they use digital technology to support their learning. This includes the use of tablets and laptops. Staff are exploring different ways to increase the use of digital technology within classes. Younger children would benefit from more opportunities to use digital technology as part of their learning.
- Older children engage well in learning through play as part of their 'free learning' play sessions. These experiences promote children's creativity skills effectively. Children talk positively about the skills they are developing. Staff should now develop a planned approach to play-based learning at the early stages. They should engage with national guidance, *Realising the Ambition: Being Me*, to develop the quality of experiences, spaces and interactions. This will help to ensure younger children are supported to learn in a developmentally appropriate way.
- In the majority of lessons, staff use oral and written feedback to support children in their learning. This is done most effectively as part of writing lessons. In the majority of lessons, staff use plenary sessions effectively to check children's understanding. In a few lessons, staff make good use of questioning to check children's prior learning at the start of the lessons.
- Staff are increasing the use of outdoors to support learning across the curriculum. Older children developed their understanding of perimeter and area well as they worked outside using sticks to create and measure different shapes.
- Support staff are deployed effectively in classes, providing support for individual and groups of learners. They work well with the support for learning teacher and teaching staff. They undertake professional learning which enables them to provide effective targeted support.
- Staff use different assessment approaches to monitor children's learning during tasks and to check their progress. Most staff gather samples of children's work throughout the year to help inform decisions about children's progress. Staff are developing new approaches to assessment. In doing so, they should ensure there is a stronger focus on assessment as part of the planning process. It is also important that staff continue to engage in moderation activities with colleagues from local schools. This will help to establish a clear understanding of children's progress to inform professional judgements.
- Staff plan learning making use of local authority materials including some progression pathways. They use a three year cross-curricular plan to help ensure breadth across areas of the curriculum. Staff are updating this plan to ensure they set meaningful tasks which take account of children's interests and different abilities.
- Staff meet termly with the headteacher to discuss children's individual progress. They identify which children are on track with their learning and who will need support. The headteacher and staff work well with the support for learning teacher to plan support for children who experience difficulties with their learning. A few children have individualised educational plans which are helping them to make 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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

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

- Overall, children are making satisfactory progress in their learning across literacy and numeracy. The majority of children with additional support needs are making satisfactory progress towards their individual targets in learning.
- The number of children at each stage is very small. Overall statements have been made about children's progress and attainment to ensure individuals are not identified.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, children are making satisfactory progress in literacy. A few children are making good progress in their learning.

Listening and talking

- Younger children enjoy talking to each other and adults. The majority contribute to group discussions. At times they need prompting to take turns and listen respectfully to each other. Older children working at second level are keen to contribute to group and class lessons. They listen respectfully to staff. They build on each other's contributions well. They are gaining confidence in speaking in front of groups as part of showcasing their learning to parents and leading pupil groups. Children would benefit from having a clearer understanding of the listening and talking skills they are developing as part of their learning.

Reading

- Across the school, children enjoy accessing the school library to choose books. Older children are also able to choose group reading books from the graded books in the library.
- Younger children are developing their knowledge of sounds to help decode unfamiliar words. By the end of the first level, the majority of children can read familiar texts with fluency and expression. They are able to answer literal questions about texts. Most can talk about their favourite books. Children at early and first levels need more opportunities to read for pleasure, hear stories and practise their reading. There is a need to review reading tasks to ensure that they engage children more effectively.
- Older children working at second level enjoy reading and can confidently identify their favourite books and authors. They read with fluency and appropriate expression. They can identify the techniques authors use to engage readers. Most children can answer increasingly complex questions about familiar texts.

Writing

- Overall, the majority of children are making satisfactory progress in writing. Across the school, children write for different purposes. Older children have opportunities to apply their writing skill across other areas of the curriculum. At first level children do not always use capital letters or full stops correctly. By the end of second level, most children use paragraphs and punctuation appropriately. Across the school, there is considerable scope to improve children's spelling and presentation. In doing so, it will be important for staff to develop ways to help children become more positive about writing.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, children are making satisfactory progress in numeracy and mathematics. A few children are exceeding the expected level of attainment. A few children are now ready to work on third level experiences and outcomes for aspects of numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure

- At first level, the majority of children count confidently in fives and tens. They can identify different digits in numbers showing a good understanding of place value. They can undertake simple addition and subtraction calculations. They are less confident with division and multiplication sums. Children demonstrate a good understanding of money. By the end of second level, children demonstrate a good understanding of place value. The majority of children, have a good understanding of decimals, fractions and percentages. Older children are able to calculate the perimeter and areas of different shapes. They make sensible estimations of length and weight. Children have a good understanding of money. A few children are now ready to engage with third level experiences and outcomes to ensure they experience greater challenge in their learning.

Shape, position and movement

- Children working at first level are able to identify simple two-dimensional shapes but are less confident identifying three dimensional objects. Older children are able to identify a wide range of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects.

Information handling

- Children at early and first level are developing their understanding of bar graphs. A few needed more adult direction to record information correctly. Older children, with prompting, could identify different ways to share and interpret data. Across the school, children would benefit from having more opportunities to develop their understanding of data handling. This should include the use of digital technology.

Attainment over time

- As recognised by the school, the pandemic has had an impact on progress for different groups of children. Staff have taken positive steps to mitigate the adverse impact of the pandemic. This includes targeted intervention for individuals and groups of learners.
- The school is able to demonstrate the progress children make as they move through the school. The data demonstrates that most children are making progress over time across literacy and numeracy. With increased pace and challenge in their learning and greater consistency in learning and teaching, children are capable of achieving more across their learning.

Overall quality of learner's achievements

- The school has achieved national success through staff's work on developing children's rights. Across the school, children's achievements, both within and outwith the school, are celebrated. Children respond well to the opportunities they have to share their personal achievements at school assemblies. Staff make good use of the school's values to promote children's achievements. Staff track children's achievements. They take steps to ensure that no child is at risk of missing out. They work with partners to offer different activities including music and sports. Across the school, children are learning to play a wide range of musical instruments. Older children benefit greatly from the opportunities they have to lead pupil groups. These include digital and eco groups. This is helping them to develop important life skills. Children have many opportunities to engage with the whole school community as part of school open days and events.

Equity for all learners

- Staff know their children and families very well. They have a good understanding of the social, economic context of the school. They provide sensitive and discrete support to those who may require it. Working closely with the Parent Council, staff are committed to reducing the cost of the school day. Parents are very appreciative of the work of the headteacher and all staff.
- The school is in receipt of small amount of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF), to provide timely support for children who may require it. This includes interventions to support children's health and wellbeing.

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.