

Summarised inspection findings

St Francis Primary School

Glasgow City Council

20 December 2022

Key contextual information

St. Francis' Primary School is a Roman Catholic, co-educational school located in the Gorbals area in the south of Glasgow. The area is traditionally one of historic immigration and remains so. The school roll is 466. Over the last few years the roll has increased and become more ethnically and culturally diverse. 66% of children live within Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles one and 2. 46% are entitled to free school meals. 61% of children have English as an additional language (EAL), with 49 languages being spoken across the school. Staff absences proved challenging during periods of lockdown. The headteacher was appointed in October 2018.

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

- On their appointment the headteacher recognised the need to review and refresh the school's vision, values and aims. The headteacher has been integral to establishing a positive culture underpinned by respect and care. The refreshed vision promotes a strong sense of community and informs strategic planning. The values, which reflect the Catholic ethos of the school, are visible in all daily interactions. As a result, St Francis' Primary School provides a welcoming, nurturing and supportive learning environment, which supports all children and their families well.
- All staff are committed to improving experiences and outcomes for children. Parents and community partners value the senior leaders' caring and respectful approach. Parents and community partners speak highly of the important role the school plays in the local community.
- Senior leaders demonstrate a very good understanding of the socio-economic and cultural context of children and the local community. Senior leaders provided very effective support to families throughout the pandemic. This supported them to build trusting, respectful relationships with those families experiencing greatest challenge. More recently, senior leaders adapted school improvement priorities to ensure Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) projects are responsive to children and their families ongoing needs. Senior leaders should now continue their focus on strategic approaches to accelerate improved outcomes for all children during the period of recovery.
- Senior leaders have a strong rationale for improvement and change for the school. Improvement planning connects well with improving outcomes for children, including those requiring additional support. This is very closely connected to senior leaders' awareness of the context of the school and its community. Improvement planning links closely to Glasgow City Council priorities for raising attainment in literacy, numeracy and improving wellbeing. As a result, the school improvement plan has an important focus on improving approaches to learning and teaching, wellbeing and inclusion. The focus also prioritises improving partnerships, including parents as partners. Senior leaders are well placed to develop

approaches to parental participation in school improvement. This will support further parents' contribution to evaluating the work of the school.

- Senior leaders value children's involvement in school leadership roles. Children are engaged in a range of leadership groups designed to increase their participation in improving the work of the school. House captains are becoming more confident in developing aims and actions for their group. They seek the views of other children to inform aims and actions. Children who participate in the 'Mini Vinnie's' group have worked with school leaders, Parent Council members and the local parish to start a food bank.
- Senior leaders and staff gather a range of data and information. Senior leaders should now analyse this data and information more rigorously to better inform school improvement planning. Analysing data throughout the school year will provide senior leaders with a robust evidence base to ensure changes or interventions are having the desired impact.
- Senior leaders have established appropriate approaches to quality assurance that include observations of learning, professional discussions and other relevant activities. Senior leaders meet regularly with teachers to explore the quality of learning, teaching and assessment, and personalised support in the class. Professional learning for staff, provided by the school and local authority, aligns well with school priorities. Staff have engaged in professional learning to develop a consistent approach to teaching across the school.
- A revised quality assurance calendar supports senior leaders to evidence areas of strength and areas for further improvement across the school. Senior leaders use parental questionnaires well to support self-evaluation and contribute to changes and improvements across the school. For example, a majority of parents recently identified that homework was having an impact on life outside of school. In response, senior leaders, supported by staff, started an after school homework club in October 2022.
- Senior leaders have a clear strategy to raise attainment which is informed by their deep understanding of the local context and needs of the community. Senior leaders collaborate very well with external partners and parents. As a result, partners and parents understand and support the school's approaches to meetings learner's needs and improving attainment. Parent Council members are aware of how senior leaders use the allocated Pupil Equity Fund (PEF). Parent Council representatives agree that funding is used appropriately to target raising attainment in literacy and numeracy and to support wellbeing of children and their families. Moving forward, senior leaders should evidence and evaluate the impact of the resource in closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

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

- The school's gospel values underpin the positive relationships across the school effectively. All staff model these values well. This results in St Francis Primary being a very welcoming school. All children interact well with each other and adults. All staff encourage children to do the best that they can. As a result almost all children are motivated and eager to learn.
- All children talk positively about their learning. They can describe what tasks they are undertaking clearly and concisely. All children are developing their ability to talk about themselves as learners. Children work together well in pairs or in groups.
- In all classes, teachers share the purpose of lessons and provide clear explanations. Most teachers use questioning effectively to check children's understanding of learning. Teachers should now develop consistent approaches to high quality learning and teaching. In particular, they should improve approaches to effective questioning to develop children's higher order thinking skills.
- Teachers should consider how more creative approaches to learning and teaching could provide children with increased opportunities for creativity, personalisation and choice. Teachers should now plan lessons which provide children with increased pace and challenge in their learning. In doing so, they should include a review of the learning environments across early level. This would ensure opportunities for children in P1 to learn through planned, purposeful play.
- Teachers regularly use interactive white boards to enhance learning and teaching. In the upper school, they make very good use of digital devices to engage children meaningfully in their learning in the classroom and at home. Teachers should now develop digital approaches further across the school to ensure all children from P1 to P7 receive a breadth of digital experiences. Digital devices are used well to support children requiring additional support to access their learning.
- Well-resourced quiet zones within each class support the school's nurturing ethos. Children use these zones well when they feel anxious or upset. Children have access to a range of resources to support further exploration and development of outdoor learning across all stages. The use of outdoor areas and resources support most children well to apply their skills in a range of contexts.
- In the majority of lessons, staff observe children's participation well and intervene appropriately to support learning. Teachers use of feedback to help children improve their work and next identify next steps is not yet of a consistently high standard. Teacher's should now develop further the quality of written feedback on children's work to ensure this supports children to understand better what they need to do to improve.

- The school assessment calendar sets out clearly the range of assessments staff carry out in literacy and numeracy at key points in the year. This includes formative, summative and standardised assessments. Senior leaders support staff well to develop their increasingly robust approaches to assessment and to use assessment information effectively. Teachers are increasingly confident in using assessment to inform planning and identify appropriate next steps for children. This is resulting in increasingly reliable data. Teachers now need to develop this practice across all areas of the curriculum.
- Senior leaders place a strong emphasis on robust tracking and monitoring of children's progress in literacy and numeracy. Termly discussions between teachers, raising attainment team staff and senior leaders focus on reviewing children's progress. Staff take individual children's circumstances and relevant information into account when discussing their progress and achievement. Together they identify children who are not making expected progress and may require additional support or challenge with their learning. Staff agree strategies, interventions or resources which will be used to target improved progress. The raising attainment team support literacy and numeracy interventions for individuals and small groups. They monitor the progress of children receiving additional support to ensure their needs are being met. Teachers now need to improve their approaches to tracking and monitoring to plan next steps more effectively to ensure interventions result in increased pace of learning for all learners. At key points across the year assessments provide information to support the reporting of children's progress to parents.
- Restrictions slowed the development of approaches to moderation during the pandemic. Following the lifting of restrictions, the headteacher has reintroduced opportunities for staff to develop approaches to moderation. Staff talk positively about these opportunities to share practice with colleagues within and out with their school setting. These moderation activities are helping them to develop shared expectations of standards and support their judgements about children's learning.
- Teachers use progression pathway guides to inform planning for progress in all curricular areas. Teachers should now develop approaches to the assessment of children's skills across all curriculum areas.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Key Glasgow City Council raising attainment initiatives inform how teachers plan and deliver learning and teaching in literacy and numeracy.
- Teachers have developed St Francis' progression pathways across almost all curricular areas based on the experiences and outcomes, and design principles of A Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). They use these consistently to plan learning and teaching. They are in the process of developing progression planning for the expressive arts. These progression pathways are sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of children requiring additional support and those for whom English is an additional language (EAL). Teachers are beginning to make more effective use of the pathways and data about children's progress to help them plan learning which builds on what children can already do.
- Curriculum planners outline clearly learning experiences and the approach to assessment for almost all curricular areas. Interdisciplinary learning and cross cutting themes such as Science, technology, engineering and mathematics and learning for sustainability are less well developed across the school.
- Teachers have developed an 'EAL friendly classroom climate guide' and 'a day in the life of an EAL child outline' to ensure consistency of experience across the school. The school uses a clear framework for teachers to use when supporting children who have English as an additional language.
- The Rights Respecting School initiative and the recently introduced 'Fun 31' are beginning to develop approaches to interdisciplinary learning. These offer meaningful learning contexts for children. This approach is new for this session.
- Learning in and about the outdoors is not yet consistent across the school. In a few classes, children engage in regular outdoor learning which is enhancing their knowledge of the local area and learning for sustainability.
- Children learn French and Spanish as part of their progressive languages programme. The school recognises that some children experience learning in four languages simultaneously. Children engage in physical education (PE) outdoors and in the school hall. This is not yet of a consistent quality. Not all children receive their entitlement to two hours of high quality PE each week.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Senior leaders have promoted very well a whole school approach to prioritising relationships with children and their families. They recognise the importance of supporting family wellbeing to improve children's readiness to learn in school. Parents value this nurturing, inclusive and community orientated approach. Parents and families that approach senior leaders for a range of reasons speak highly of the support they receive. These parents identify that the support to them and their family results in improved outcomes for their child. These outcomes include improvements in their child's attendance, their sense of wellbeing and progress with their learning.
- Parents are confident and comfortable in approaching senior leaders and staff to discuss any concerns they may have regarding their child's progress. They feel listened to and valued. They experience a very understanding staff team who willingly making changes to ensure their child engages well in school.
- Parents and families are enjoying reconnecting with the school and meeting with staff as part of the school recovery period from the pandemic. Staff share key information about the school and children's learning using an online platform. This is supporting parents understanding of what their child is learning about in school. A few parents, who find digital approaches more challenging to access, would appreciate senior leaders and staff considering additional methods of sharing information.

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. An area for development has been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

very 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

- All staff have a very clear and well developed understanding of the importance of children's wellbeing. Senior leaders, teachers and support staff model compassionate, caring and respectful behaviours in all their interactions with children. They understand very well their roles and responsibilities in supporting children's health and wellbeing. This supports children very effectively to feel safe, respected and cared for. Approaches to develop children's understanding of their emotions are embedded in all aspects of the school's work. These are used very effectively to develop children's abilities to recognise and discuss their feelings. Children are supported very well to discuss their feelings with others. This supports children very well to develop positive supportive relationships with their peers. Children interact positively with each other in all their activities. They are supported very well to develop high levels of respect for themselves, others and their school community. Children know there are adults in the school who will listen to them and with whom they can discuss sensitive and personal information.
- Almost all children know the wellbeing indicators well. They understand the importance of each indicator and how they contribute to their overall wellbeing. Almost all children can discuss what actions they can take to improve their personal wellbeing. The wellbeing indicators feature as themes within school assemblies and are discussed in class lessons. This supports children's abilities to speak about each indicator and what they mean for them. Teachers use the Glasgow motivational wellbeing profile (GMWP) to assess the effectiveness of the school's 'Fun 31' initiative on children's wellbeing. The GMWP is also used to assess the needs of individual children experiencing difficulties.
- Staff have an extensive knowledge of each individual child's, and their family's unique needs. They regularly undertake relevant professional learning in all aspects of practice related to wellbeing. Staff's knowledge of local and national guidance ensures they fully understand how best to support children experiencing barriers to their learning. This supports them very well to initiate targeted personalised interventions to support each child or their family. This is resulting in children engaging better, and making improved progress, in their learning.
- The school's partners are highly responsive to the wellbeing of each individual child and their family. In partnership with the school they design and use an extensive range of bespoke interventions, which support every child and their family to develop further their wellbeing. PEF is being used very effectively to fund a community development worker, linked to a national children's charity. This role is particularly successful in effecting change for families most affected by deprivation. The role of the community development worker is supporting the school to develop more meaningful relationships with those parents who find it most challenging to engage with the school. The bespoke supports offered to families meet their needs very well. These supports include organising a walking bus and signposting families to other agencies. For a few children this is resulting in improvements in their attendance or their

abilities to self-regulate their behaviour. The school's link to a local housing association supports parents very well by providing access to digital resources. Partners support children and their families during periods of school holidays to enjoy clubs, outings or family vacations. These support children most affected by deprivation to have meaningful, positive experiences during holiday periods. The local supermarket provides a clothing rail, where the school hosts a clothing bank. This supports parents with the greatest need to access clothing for their children, including school uniforms, as they grow. The siting of the school's clothing bank in the local supermarket purposefully protects parents' dignity and respect. The school food bank provides those families in greatest need to access food for their families, if needed.

- All children have a good understanding of equalities and inclusion. All children are included fully in activities across the school. Ethnicity, language, faith and cultural background are celebrated across the school. Teachers should continue to develop further the school's curriculum to support children's understanding of other cultures in a systematic and progressive way. Children, parents, carers, partners and staff are treated with the highest levels of respect and fairness. Parents from all cultural backgrounds are treated fairly and equally. Staff work effectively with partners to provide English language lessons for parents for whom English is an additional language. They arrange coffee mornings, fitness classes and breakfast events to engage parents better in the life of the school. Children understand well the importance of challenging discrimination and are confident to do so. Care experienced children are carefully monitored and tracked to ensure they remain on track in their learning.
- Teachers use a range of assessments effectively to identify the needs of children requiring additional support. Wellbeing assessment plans are used well to capture children's individual personalised targets. Teachers should now develop further their approaches to how parents and children are fully involved in setting and reviewing each child's individual targets. Children new to English language are supported very well to develop their English language skills. Teachers employ a range of assessments, interventions and support effectively. This ensures these children make very good progress in their development of English language. As a result, children new to English language settle quickly into 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 satisfactory. Strategies to accelerate progress have had positive impact and ensured attainment in literacy and numeracy is improving. As a result, children's progress at CfE early, first and second level in literacy and numeracy is good. Following dips in attainment caused by the pandemic, attainment has now recovered, and in some areas, exceeded pre-pandemic levels. Most children requiring additional support are making good progress towards their targets in learning, with a few making very good progress.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall children's attainment in literacy and English is good. In session 2021-2022, the majority of children across the school achieved appropriate CfE levels in reading and writing. Most children achieved expected levels in listening and talking.

Listening and talking

- Across the school, most children speak with confidence. The majority of children use a wide vocabulary to communicate effectively. Children who have English as an additional language are making good progress in learning new vocabulary, with a few making very good progress. At early level, children speak enthusiastically to express what they know. Most children listen attentively to instructions from staff. At first level, most children express themselves well to communicate their thoughts. The majority can talk about their ideas and preferences when discussing books. Most children listen respectfully to their peers. At second level, the majority of children provide more extended answers to explain their thinking during discussion. Most can express their views clearly using persuasive language on a topic which interests them.

Reading

- Across the school, all children are engaging with the 'Glasgow Loves Reading' initiative. They read for pleasure every day. They make thoughtful book choices based on their knowledge of the author or preferred genre. At early level, most children respond positively to print and the new sounds they are learning. Most children who have attained early level recently, read confidently. A few children need to continue to build their knowledge of sounds to help them read words they are not familiar with. At first level, the majority of children can answer literal questions about their book. They are gaining confidence in using the information they read to answer a wider range of questions. At second level, children have developed clear preferences for the books they read for pleasure. The majority of children read fluently with appropriate expression. They are becoming more confident in relating challenging texts to their own life experiences and opinions.

Writing

- Across the school, a majority of children attain expected levels of attainment in writing. Children who have English as an additional language are progressing well from their starting points. A few children at early level are beginning to write their own sentence with support. As they progress in their learning, children are adding interesting adjectives to their writing. At first level, the majority of children describe characters and plot in their writing. They are making their writing more interesting by organising their ideas in paragraphs with engaging openers. At second level, children write regularly at length. A majority of children use persuasive arguments well to understand different perspectives. Children vary in their ability to add features of grammar consistently well to enrich their work.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, attainment in numeracy and mathematics is satisfactory. A majority of children, are making expected progress. Across the school, daily maths lessons include a starter activity, 'chat that counts'. These activities challenge and develop children's ability to solve problems logically, use appropriate mathematical language and develop recall of numerical facts. Children have opportunities to collaborate and discuss the strategies they have used to solve problems. Misconceptions and wrong answers are seen as opportunities to improve and deepen children's understanding of mathematical concepts.

Number, money and measure

- Most children who have recently achieved early level can order numbers within the range 0-20 and identify accurately missing numbers in a sequence. They can add and subtract mentally to 10. Most children who have recently achieved first level apply strategies to determine multiplication facts including repeated addition, groups and arrays. Most children can record measurements of lengths to the nearest standard of unit. They need to continue to develop their skills in converting units of measure. Most children working within second level can confidently add and subtract multiples of 10, 100 and 1000 to and from whole numbers. They can calculate durations of activities and events using both 12 hour clock and 24 hour notation.

Shape, position and movement

- Most children who have recently achieved early level recognise, describe and sort common two dimensional shapes and three dimensional objects. Children who have recently achieved first level know that a right angle is 90 degrees and can find right angles in the environment and well-known two dimensional shapes. Most children working within second can confidently use knowledge of the link between the eight compass points and angles to describe, follow and record directions.

Information handling

- At early level, children use tally marks to record information correctly. They create simple pictorial displays to share information. At first level, children select and use the most appropriate way to gather and display data for a given purpose. At second level, children display information accurately using a range of ways including making effective use of technology. They can choose a suitable scale when creating graphs. Children at all levels can interpret and draw conclusions from a variety of graphs and charts.

Attainment over time

- Senior leaders track children's attainment across the school in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. The COVID-19 pandemic is effecting the attainment of a few children. Senior leaders are aware of the underlying reasons for this. They have made strategic resourcing decisions to address concerns in relation to specific cohorts. This is beginning to have a positive impact on attainment in the areas that have been identified. Senior leaders should develop further approaches to evidence children's attainment over time. In particular to identify

trends in attainment over time for particular groups of children. While most children make progress from prior levels of attainment, a minority of children are capable of greater progress.

Overall quality of learner's achievements

- Children's achievements both in and out with school are valued and celebrated through whole school assemblies, displays and social media. Certificates recognise children's efforts in following the school values. Children are proud of their own achievements and the achievements of others.
- Children are keen to contribute to the life of the school and the wider community. Most children engage in a range of opportunities to support their developing leadership skills. These include pupil council, digital leaders, Mini Vinnies and buddies. As a result, children are developing important skills such as teamwork, leadership and communication. They are building a greater awareness of global citizenship.
- The school is at the early stages of tracking children's participation in clubs and committees within the school and local community. This is helping them to identify children who are missing out. Teachers now need to use this information to ensure all children have the opportunity to take part in school-based activities.

Equity for all learners

- All staff have a very good understanding of children's and their family's socio-economic background. The headteacher uses PEF well to target support and improve children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Additional staffing supports interventions for individuals, identified by class teachers, in targeted areas such as reading, writing and numeracy. The headteacher prioritised cover for classes through periods of staff absence during the pandemic. This interrupted interventions and support for children identified as requiring additional support.
- Emerging evidence identifies the positive impact planned interventions are having on children's progress. The school's data is indicating that most children with targeted support are making improved progress in literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders now need to carefully track and evidence the impact of funded interventions on children's attainment. This will support them to demonstrate accelerated progress in closing the poverty related attainment gap.

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.