

# Summarised inspection findings

**Grange Primary School**

Falkirk Council

26 September 2023

## Key contextual information

Grange Primary School is a non-denominational school which serves the catchment area to the west of Bo'ness, approximately eight miles from Falkirk. The headteacher has shared headship for Grange Primary School and Blackness Primary School. The schools share a management team of one full-time depute headteacher and two full-time principal teachers. At the time of inspection, there were 267 children across 10 classes on the school roll and 47 children in the Early Learning and Childcare Class (ELCC). The school has an enhanced provision which offers an adapted learning environment for a small number of children with additional support needs. Approximately one-third of children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles one to four.

### 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

- Senior leaders and staff have established a calm, inclusive learning environment which supports a positive school ethos. In all classes children benefit from nurturing and mutually respectful relationships with staff. As a result, children are motivated and eager to learn.
- In most lessons, children engage well with their learning. Children enjoy and are highly motivated by opportunities to work as part of a group or in pairs. Extending this approach across the school will support children to take more responsibility for leading their own learning. Children use well-developed problem-solving skills to find solutions and different strategies to help them progress their learning. These include 'try it' jotters to spell tricky words, digital technology to access information online, or asking peers or staff for help. Children are supportive of each other and positively offer guidance to classmates who need it.
- Staff working at early level are developing play-based approaches to learning. Children enjoy opportunities to play. Staff should continue to evaluate their practice, considering the balance between planned direct teaching of groups and play opportunities. Staff should collaborate with practitioners in the ELCC to develop a shared understanding of the role of the adult in the learning environment.
- Almost all teachers discuss with children the purpose of learning and what successful learning looks like. They support children well to connect prior learning to new concepts being explored. In a minority of lessons, teachers encourage children to co-construct their success criteria. In these lessons, teachers regularly return to the success criteria during and at the end of learning, which helps children to identify their progress and success in learning. This practice should be developed further and embedded across the school.
- All teachers have established well-organised and attractive classrooms. Children's work is displayed well to celebrate their achievements. Teachers use impactful wall displays to support

children's learning in a range of curriculum areas. Almost all teachers offer clear instructions and explanations. Most teachers show a strong awareness of children's needs and the strategies which help them to learn. In most lessons, teachers scaffold learning activities well for children who require additional support with their learning. A few children would benefit from increased pace and challenge in their learning which would support them to make better progress.

- All teachers use praise and encouragement well to help motivate children. Most teachers use questioning effectively to check children's knowledge and understanding of tasks. Teachers should now extend their range of questioning to develop children's higher-order thinking skills. Most teachers use a range of approaches to offer children high-quality written and verbal feedback on their work. Most teachers make effective use of self and peer-assessment to help children reflect on their learning and identify improvements. This supports most children to identify their next steps in learning.
- Teachers use a range of well-considered summative and standardised assessments to review children's progress in literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders have developed a helpful assessment calendar which identifies what needs to be assessed and when. Teachers successfully collate the evidence gathered from assessments and record children's progress. Staff use this information well to inform planning and to maintain progress for children.
- All teachers engage in regular, helpful moderation discussions with colleagues about learning experiences and assessment across stages. They engage in appropriate professional discussion about the progress children are making, including at points of transition. Teachers are confident in using a range of data effectively to support the accuracy of their judgements. These approaches have supported an increased confidence in teacher's professional judgements. Senior leaders should re-establish opportunities for teachers to engage in moderation activities with colleagues from other schools. This has the potential to improve further the reliability of professional judgements.
- Teachers take appropriate account of the needs of all children and include opportunities to revisit and build on prior learning. They successfully use a range of progressive learning pathways and other resources provided by the local authority to plan for breadth and depth across the curriculum. Digital technology is being used effectively to support teachers to plan learning collaboratively with stage partners across curriculum areas.
- Senior leaders and teachers have developed robust approaches to monitor and track the progress of children in their learning. They hold regular, helpful progress and wellbeing meetings to identify and plan interventions for children who are not on track with their learning.
- Senior leaders developed the learning and teaching policy and the 'Four Phase Teaching Model' to support greater consistency in teaching across the school. Teachers benefit from opportunities to watch their colleagues teaching, which supports the sharing of good practice. Senior leaders and staff should continue to work together to develop a shared understanding of high-quality learning and teaching across the school. It will be important to involve the wider school community in this work, including children and parents.

## 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

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, attainment in literacy and numeracy across the school is good. At early level, almost all children are achieving national standards in literacy and numeracy. At first and second levels, most children are achieving national standards in reading, listening and talking and numeracy. The majority of children at first and second levels are achieving national standards in writing.
- Most children, including those who require additional support with their learning, are making good progress from their prior levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy. A few children would benefit from further challenge in their learning to enable them to make better progress.

### Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, most children are making good progress in literacy and English from their prior levels of attainment.

### Listening and talking

- At early level, almost all children follow simple instructions and share ideas and experiences within a small group. Children communicate and share stories through imaginative play. At first level, most children develop presentation skills and are aware of different communication techniques such as eye contact and clear annunciation. A few children require support to listen to others and take turns in group tasks. At second level, children enjoy participating in class debates. They should continue to develop use of techniques to engage and influence listeners.

### Reading

- At early level, almost all children use known sounds to blend and read words and simple texts. At first level, most children can explain preferences for authors and texts. They discuss characters and confidently make predictions. At second level, most children share thoughts about structure and the main ideas in the book. At first and second levels, children are not as confident answering literal, evaluative and inferential questions on a range of texts.

### Writing

- Writing continues to be an area of focus for improvement. Across the school, children write regularly across different contexts for learning. This is helping children to enjoy writing more and is supporting improved outcomes.
- At early level, almost all children write simple sentences and use capital letters and full stops. At first level, the majority of children can describe a character and a setting, write a report and a letter. At second level, most children write across a range of genres, using appropriate language including figurative language. Across first and second levels, children should be

supported to improve handwriting and presentation of written texts. They should strengthen further their knowledge and application of spelling patterns and rules in their extended writing.

### **Numeracy and mathematics**

- Overall, most children are making good progress from prior levels of attainment in numeracy and mathematics. Children's progress in numeracy across all stages could be supported further by use of concrete materials.
- Across the school, children use a range of strategies to undertake mental mathematics calculations. Most children have opportunities to collaborate and discuss the strategies they have used. Misconceptions and wrong answers are seen as opportunities to improve.

### **Number, money and measure**

- At early level, almost all children identify numbers within ten and count totals to ten. At first level, most children demonstrate a good understanding of number processes. They round whole numbers to the nearest 100 and solve addition and subtraction problems. Children at second level demonstrate a good understanding of the four operations. They are not as confident in multiplying whole numbers by two-digit numbers. At second level, most children calculate simple percentages of a quantity. They are not as confident calculating the perimeter of simple shapes.

### **Shape, position and movement**

- At early level, almost all children identify, recognise and sort common two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. At first level, most children use mathematical language to describe the properties of common shapes and objects. At second level, most children identify and illustrate line symmetry. At second level, children describe complementary and supplementary angles. They would benefit from further practice in interpreting maps, models, and plans.

### **Information handling**

- At early level, most children create simple pictorial displays to share information. They confidently collect and organise objects for a specific purpose. At first level, children select and use the most appropriate way to display data for a given purpose. Across first and second levels, most children discuss the key skills in information handling and interpreting information. Children working at first and second levels now need to explore further the use of technology to display data.

### **Attainment over time**

- Senior leaders and staff track children's progress and have an overview of attainment over time in literacy and numeracy. Attainment was negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly at first and second levels. Senior leaders have developed staff confidence in using data to plan interventions and approaches to support individual children's needs. Supported interventions and approaches are having a positive impact on raising attainment in literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders and staff should now develop approaches to track children's progress across all curriculum areas.

### **Overall quality of learners' achievements**

- Children's achievements are celebrated in a variety of ways including at achievement assemblies, through wall displays and on digital platforms. Children have opportunities to develop skills and attributes through lunchtime and after school clubs. As a result, children enjoy access to a wide range of sporting and other activities which is helping to develop children's teamwork and resilience.

- Children in the upper school have leadership opportunities, for example as members of the Pupil Council, House Captains, digital leaders, and buddies of younger children. These leadership roles enable children to contribute to the life and the work of the school. Children should now be supported to identify and profile the skills for learning, life and work which they are developing through these leadership roles. Younger children would benefit from increased participation in leadership roles.

### **Equity for all learners**

- Senior leaders and staff know children and their families well. As a result, children and families benefit from a range of practical support. This is helping to mitigate against barriers children face to participating in a range of activities.
- Senior leaders make effective use of data to identify poverty-related attainment and other gaps. This informs the rationale for Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) spending. PEF interventions are supporting improved engagement with learning and beginning to have a positive impact on narrowing poverty-related attainment gaps. Senior leaders should continue to track the impact of funded interventions to ensure accelerated progress in closing poverty-related attainment gaps.

## Quality of provision of Special Unit (contributes to school evaluations)

Grange Primary's enhanced provision offers an adapted learning environment in a small group setting for children with additional support needs. Nine children across the local authority attend the enhanced provision. Falkirk Council's Placement Change Panel allocate pupil places based on the level of support which children require for learning. Almost all children have speech and language difficulties or Autistic Spectrum Disorder. Children in the enhanced provision attend carefully selected lessons in the mainstream setting.

### QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

- The enhanced provision is a calm, purposeful learning environment. Children are supported by nurturing staff who maintain positive relationships. Adults model respectful and friendly interactions and motivate children to be tolerant and kind. Staff meet children's learning and care needs effectively. Children's learning is supported well by predictable routines and structured lessons in small groups and during effective one-to-one tuition.
- Each child has an individualised timetable and almost all children successfully attend lessons with their peers across the school. Senior leaders place an important emphasis on ensuring that children have socially diverse experiences. This is increasing opportunities for inclusion across the school. Teachers from the enhanced provision work well with mainstream colleagues. They adapt the curriculum collaboratively to suit children's learning needs.
- Staff successfully provide a learning environment that takes account of children's sensory needs. Learners have areas within the classroom for quiet, calm working. Staff provide carefully selected resources such as noise-cancelling headphones to help children feel safe, comfortable and minimise distractions. This is helping children to work independently and engage better in learning.
- Staff work well with partners in educational psychology and speech and language services. Together they devise strategies and plans to help children overcome barriers to learning. Staff ensure that most children experience an environment where their communication needs are met effectively. Across the school, staff support improved communication using signing and visual cues to help children understand what is happening in the classroom. This is helping children to express themselves well and helps staff to understand children's preferences and choices.
- Teachers should consider expanding children's use of assistive technologies to improve engagement and provide children with skills for their future. A few children would benefit from speech to type software. The majority of children could make use of interactive digital reading and phonics applications to enhance independent learning.
- Some children present aspects of distressed behaviour associated with their support needs and require support to develop strategies to self-regulate. When children are upset, staff skilfully intervene using previously identified approaches to help children manage their emotions and remain calm. Teachers compile detailed learning profiles. These identify effectively positive strategies and possible triggers for unsettled behaviour. All relevant staff are familiar with these profiles. All children have a child's plan which details long term targets agreed at a meeting involving parents, the child, school staff and other supporting agencies. These are reviewed regularly, reflecting children's needs well.

- Teachers plan learning effectively using the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) early and first levels for literacy and numeracy. Most children are progressing well and planning, tracking and monitoring is effective and based on sound assessment judgements. A few children would benefit from planning using the milestones to support learners with complex additional support needs. Teachers should now begin to make better use of individual milestones to assess and track the development of identified learners. This will also take account of the more diverse ways in which children with complex additional support needs learn.

### **QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement**

- Most children make good progress from their prior levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy and across the curriculum.
- In literacy, a few children working at early level can identify initial sounds of letters. A few children need support and revision to maintain their current levels of progress. Almost all children establish and maintain concentration for short periods and enjoy their learning tasks. A few children demonstrate understanding by giving reactions to show that they enjoy the story and by showing interest in books. Children working at first level are successfully using strategies to identify common words and beginning to decode words using phonic skills. They are developing fluency in reading and can answer simple questions about the story or text. More regular practice of reading will help to develop children's confidence and independence in this area.
- In numeracy, children working at early level need support when adding and subtracting within 10. With support, children at early level can identify numbers to 20 and 30. A few children demonstrate success and progress in numeracy by sorting objects and anticipating a familiar sequence of events. For these children, teachers should now begin to use the milestones for pre-early education to support learners with complex additional needs to record progress. This will help teachers to assess the very small steps in progress which these children make.
- Children working at first level are making good progress with addition and subtraction using concrete materials to support learning. They can confidently count and identify numbers to 100. They are practising their skills in identifying numbers before and after, and ordering and sorting numbers within 100.
- Children's successes are shared and celebrated regularly in the enhanced provision and in a way which children and their families appreciate and enjoy. The school celebrates achievements and accomplishments from school, at home and in the community. Teachers invite families to assemblies to share children's success. Children are motivated by praise from staff and peers, and parents enjoy the communication they receive about their children's success in school. Children from the enhanced provision receive headteacher's awards, have their picture on the 'achievements board' and the school 'wall of fame'.
- Senior leaders recognise the need to capture meaningfully children's views on their learning and find ways to improve how they represent the views of children. Staff are working towards implementing the 'listen to me' resource. This should enrich learner participation and increase children's ability to make effective contributions to decisions about life in their school.

## 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.