Summarised inspection findings

Mount Cameron Primary School and Nursery Class

South Lanarkshire Council

1 October 2019

Key contextual information

Mount Cameron Primary School provides learning through the medium of English and Gaelic at nursery and primary stages. The school refers to themselves as having an English and Gaelic department (Gaelic Medium Education - GME). At the time of the inspection, there were 258 children on the school's roll. At the primary stages, there were 156 children learning in the English department, with 70 children in the Gaelic department. At the nursery stages, there were 17 children in the English department, and 16 in the Gaelic department.

Children from out with the school's catchment area attend Mount Cameron Primary School for GME.

The school has some interruptions to staffing. There is a vacancy for a teacher of GME, which has been vacant for almost the entire session. Some incentives have been put in place to attract applicants. These include a relocation package. Following the most recent local authority recruitment campaign, extra teaching staff have now been secured for the school.

The school provides counselling services, with a related project manager based in the school for part of the week.

Attendance figures are above national averages.

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	

■ Children in both the Gaelic and English departments benefit from positive relationships. This is with each other, and the adults with whom they work in their classrooms. Children are polite, articulate and mannerly. They talk about their school with pride. All staff are committed to ensuring that the wellbeing of every child is at the heart of the school. All classes have planned opportunities to learn about children's rights. The vision and values jigsaw clearly outlines shared, high expectations for children. The jigsaw is yet to be made available through the medium of Gaelic. Such translations help children appreciate the value of the language that they are learning. The headteacher places great importance on the aim of ensuring that for children 'School Should be a Joyous Place'.

■ Overall, the quality of learning and teaching in both the Gaelic and English departments is good, with a few very good examples. Almost all teachers provide clear explanations and instructions during lessons. Most teachers use skilful questioning to check understanding, extend thinking and build on prior learning. In most lessons, children are able to construct questions for others to answer. The use of higher-order thinking is developing across the school. Teachers should continue to share best practice in learning and teaching, including in providing children with challenging activities.

■ There is some strong teaching in the Gaelic Department, with teachers able to evaluate how teaching can be improved further. In most cases, the learning environment is strongly driven by teachers' very high quality fluency in the Gaelic language. Staff are building an environment to promote immersion in Gaelic language and culture. This is supported by assemblies for children in GME. National and local events, and competitions are used as a context for learning in which children apply their Gaelic language skills. Teachers have been improving pedagogy, including by having a clearer understanding of how their use of Gaelic drives fluency. They should continue to embed these improved practices, including in the use of play supported by quality interactions. It would be useful to refer to the Advice on Gaelic Education on avoiding the use of simultaneous translation when immersing children in language. Teachers recognise the importance of getting an appropriate balance between teacher-led activities, immersion approaches and children's independence in their learning. Children are proud of being bilingual citizens. The depute headteacher (DHT) has developed a policy on GME and immersion, which is based on the Advice on Gaelic Education. All staff delivering 3-12 GME should have regular opportunities to collaborate to discuss effective implementation of this policy.

■ Across the school, children are fully engaged in their learning when tasks and activities provide appropriate support and challenge. Children have opportunities to work on their own, in pairs and small groups. Almost all children interact well with each other, asking questions and confidently sharing thoughts and ideas. Children have opportunities to contribute to planning their topic work. Teachers collate what children know, questions they would like answered and ways they would like to learn. Teachers should now build on this positive start to provide further opportunities for children to plan and lead their own learning across the curriculum.

■ In almost all classes digital technology is used well. Laptops and tablets are used regularly by children to access a range of educational games. Children in GME have used technology to produce a short film for the national competition, Film-G. Teachers use interactive whiteboards well to enhance learning and teaching. Staff should continue to identify opportunities to use a wider range of digital technology to continue to enhance learning and teaching.

■ In almost all classes, the purpose of learning is made clear. Most teachers refer to the key learning points throughout lessons. They use these with children to support discussion and feedback. Most children can talk about what constitutes successful learning. Children are ready to be more involved in identifying how they will be successful.

■ Staff in both the Gaelic and English departments have plans to develop further outdoor learning. This is very well supported by the Parent Council. This will provide further opportunities for children to learn beyond the classroom in meaningful and relevant ways. Events such as the whole school dance-a-thon, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) week, along with trips, provide opportunities for children to develop a wide range of skills. For example, children in primary (P) 7 have linked their learning from their residential trip to the wellbeing indicators and skills for learning life and work. In continuing to develop the curriculum, teachers should use these events to continue to shape and design learning experiences that motivate and engage learners.

■ All children in both the Gaelic and English departments set termly learning targets for literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing. Over time, these targets have become more child-friendly. Children, parents and staff evaluate these targets and children gather some evidence in their profiles to showcase their learning. There is scope for these targets to be used more frequently to support children understand themselves as learners.

■ Across the school, teachers give a range of oral and written feedback to children. In most classes, this is of high quality. It helps children understand their progress, and how their work

2 | Summarised inspection findings
  Mount Cameron Primary School and Nursery Class and Gaelic Department (8531625)
  South Lanarkshire Council

could improve. In most classes, children self-evaluate their learning using traffic lights. In a few classes, children write evaluative statements about their learning. Teachers use a range of formative assessment strategies. A positive next step would be to share approaches to improve further consistency across the school.

- In both the English and Gaelic departments, teachers use a range of formative and summative assessments to support their professional judgements in literacy and English, literacy and Gàidhlig, and numeracy and mathematics. It would now be beneficial to have a strategic overview of how well assessment can continue to support teacher professional judgements. This overview should map how holistic assessments can improve the consistency and quality of evidence of the achievement of levels across all curricular areas.

- Across the school, teachers plan over three blocks each year. Across the curriculum, they use a variety of progression pathways and planners. Teachers use a range of ways to track coverage of outcomes. At planning and tracking meetings, senior leaders and teachers discuss strategies, interventions and next steps for all children. This information is recorded within cohort folders and collated by the headteacher. There is scope to streamline approaches to planning and tracking to ensure it is proportionate and not overly bureaucratic. A more consistent approach to planning would ensure there are no gaps in children's learning. Teachers would welcome opportunities to plan collaboratively.

- Across the school and cluster, teachers have met to share resources and approaches to planning. Teachers would benefit from a more systematic approach to moderation. Planning collegiately for learning, teaching and assessment will support teachers in ensuring there is breadth, challenge and application of learning for all. In addition, it will strengthen agreed standards and expectations and lead to more robust teacher judgements about children's achievement of a level across the curriculum. Teachers in the Gaelic department would benefit from more time to collaborate as a team. They should also continue with their plans to collaborate with other provisions for GME within their Regional Improvement Collaborative.

- Overall, staff know children and their families well. They are committed to supporting those who have additional barriers to their learning. A variety of interventions are in place to support literacy and health and wellbeing. These aim to help every child make the best possible progress of which they are capable. As planned, teachers should build on this to extend the range of interventions to support numeracy.

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.

4 | Summarised inspection findings
Mount Cameron Primary School and Nursery Class and Gaelic Department (8531625)
South Lanarkshire Council

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

- Overall the school is making good progress in raising attainment. The school's strategy in raising attainment is linked to the priorities in the national improvement framework. This develops children's wellbeing as central to their learning and achievement. There has been very useful engagement with improving children's mental wellbeing which, if required, gives children and their families access to counselling services.

- The school's data on achievement of levels in literacy and numeracy is now based on four years of Curriculum for Excellence data. These show a picture of a school reporting improvements where most children, and on occasion almost all children are achieving appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels. Teacher professional judgements were initially supported by standardised assessments, and now Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSAs). The Gaelic department is implementing the Gaelic medium version of SNSAs (Measaidhean Coitcheann Nàiseanta na Gàidhlig) this session. Staff are clear on when to use MCNG and SNSAs. Staff talk about children's progress in aspects of wellbeing through the use of questionnaires, the national wellbeing indicators and by measuring engagement, for example.

- The school presented statements on how well children were progressing across curricular areas. On discussion with HM Inspectors, teachers confirmed that these statements did not yet reflect the totality of levels. Staff will continue to plan assessment and moderation across the curricular areas.

- Teachers shared a mainly accurate picture of their current children's strengths and next steps in literacy and numeracy through the medium of Gaelic and English. They would now benefit from discussing further the totality of levels to increase the reliability of some of their professional judgements. It would be helpful to revisit the moderation cycle and have a more strategic approach to how teachers collect a wide range of evidence from both ongoing and periodic assessment. This would assist in providing teachers with a clearer picture of children's progress as they move through the school. Staff should plan in-school stage moderation to take account of their two mediums of learning. The distinctive pedagogy for GME, particularly at early and first levels, should be considered in how moderation is carried out.

- The headteacher has worked hard to have in place a consistent way of tracking and monitoring children's progress at a whole-school level and for cohorts. This information is used to identify gaps and put interventions in place. This system has evolved over time. It should continue to be developed to assist with having strategic information readily accessible to inform further improvements.

5 | Summarised inspection findings
       Mount Cameron Primary School and Nursery Class and Gaelic Department (8531625)
       South Lanarkshire Council

Literacy and English across the school

■ Across the school, overall attainment in literacy and English is very good. Staff have successfully increased their use of strategies to raise attainment in literacy and English. Most children in P1, and almost all children in P4 and P7, are on track to achieve appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels at the end of the school year. There is scope to provide greater opportunities for children to act on and apply teacher feedback in written work. Approaches to assessment and moderation in listening and talking should be developed further. This would assist in making more robust teacher professional judgements on achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels.

Listening and talking

■ Overall, almost all children are making very good progress in listening and talking. Across the school, almost all children listen well to teachers and one another. In small groups and pairs, children speak confidently and articulately. At early level, almost all children listen and respond appropriately when following instructions about their learning. By first level, almost all children contribute to group and class discussions. They are able to engage in discussion by sharing information for a range of purposes. At second level, almost all children can contribute a number of relevant ideas to discussions. They build on the contributions of others by clarifying points, supporting opinions or asking additional questions.

Reading

■ Almost all children are making very good progress in reading. They engage well with a range of texts across learning. They regularly select books for personal reading, including in some classes for sharing with their paired reading partner. At early level, most children are using knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns to read words. By the end of first level, almost all children can identify the main ideas of a text and answer literal and inferential questions. At second level, almost all children are finding and using key information from texts, including digital texts, to make notes for different purposes. This enables them to show an understanding of a topic or issue.

Writing

■ Overall, children are making very good progress in writing. Across the curriculum, children write for a range of purposes. At the early level, most children can form lower case letters legibly and leave a space between words when writing simple sentences. At first level, almost all children can punctuate sentences accurately using capital letters, full stops and question marks. Almost all children can organise ideas and information in a logical order, and use common conjunctions to link sentences. At second level, almost all children use sentences of different lengths and vary openers to engage the reader. Almost all children make appropriate choices about layout and presentation of writing across a range of genres.

Literacy and Gàidhlig, and as appropriate English (Gaelic Department)

■ Overall, attainment in literacy and Gàidhlig is good. In a few cases, some teacher professional judgements are over ambitious, particularly at the early and first levels. There is potential for pace of progress to be brisker at these levels in literacy and Gàidhlig through improved approaches to immersion.

Listening and talking

■ Across all stages, children listen well for instructions and information. They are respectful in taking turns, both in situations led by the teacher, or in which they are leading their own learning. Across stages, there is an appropriate focus on developing grammatical accuracy. It would be useful to revisit the total immersion phase to ensure that children are being exposed to a wide range of grammatical structures. At the early level, children exemplify their understanding of Gaelic in a range of ways. They are not doing so frequently through speaking

Gaelic. At other levels, English words are often embedded within Gaelic conversation. At first and second levels, children are extending their vocabulary and phrases. Children enjoy taking part in discussions. They offer their opinions and views, and ask questions of their peers. Children in GME come together in regular assemblies which gives children an effective opportunity to develop their skills in talking and presenting information to a larger audience. The older children as *Ceannardan* (Leaders) work very effectively with younger children. In these situations, the *Ceannardan* show a good understanding and responsibility in their use of Gaelic for immersion.

Reading

■ Across stages, children enjoy reading, including for pleasure. By P7, children are reading aloud with fluency. At the early and first stages, children are developing their understanding and use of sounds, letters and patterns. At the moment, children at the first level are not receiving sufficient immersion in Gaelic. Staff deployment has been considered to reduce the impact of staffing shortages. However, at the first level, children's skills in reading are more advanced through English than in Gaelic. At the first and second levels, children talk about many features of why books appeal to them. By the end of the second level, children are familiar with the skills of skimming, scanning, summarising and predicting.

Writing

■ At the early stages, a few children are independently writing personal communication, which uses a capital and full stop. Due to difficulties in staffing, those at the first level, are doing more writing through English than Gaelic. The school plans to increase reading and writing through Gaelic next session. By P7, most children are writing in detail, with good attention to punctuation and presentation. The school plans to review how well their writing programme affords progression in genre.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics across the school

■ Overall children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Attainment is good. Across the school, there is scope to improve the consistency of planning in numeracy and mathematics to avoid gaps in learning. This will ensure children have opportunities to regularly revisit concepts and apply their learning in a range of contexts.

Number, money and measurement

■ Across the school, children have a good understanding of number processes. At early level, children order numbers to 20. They identify the number before, after and between. They confidently add and subtract within ten. By the end of early level, children match coins to £2, and use money in simple addition and subtraction. They estimate and measure the length of everyday objects using non-standard units. Children compare and order objects by height and weight. By the end of first level, children confidently round two-digit numbers to the nearest 10 and three-digit numbers to the nearest 100. They count in twos, fives and tens, and add and subtract three-digit numbers using mental strategies such as partitioning. They use the correct notation for common fractions and are identifying equivalent fractions with increasing confidence. Children find problems with more than one-step and word-based problems more challenging. Most were not confident in selecting the correct operation, particularly in problems that require written strategies to solve problems. Children at the end of first level would benefit from further opportunities to talk about the strategies they use to solve problems. Children at the end of second level link fractions, decimals and percentages. They use their knowledge to solve problems, including real-life scenarios linked to money. Almost all can select appropriate mental and written strategies to solve problems. Most can share their strategies and approaches confidently. They use negative numbers in simple calculations. They add, subtract, multiply and divide with confidence. Children confidently describe the strategies they have used. Across the school, children have opportunities to apply their number skills within

learning contexts. For example, weighing ingredients in baking and recording and tracking their times in physical education.

Shape, position and movement
■ Children at early level choose a range of 3D objects to create junk models. They name regular 2D shapes. They use computer programmes to draw simple shapes with one line of symmetry. Children at the end of first level name regular 2D shapes and 3D objects. However, they are not confident in describing their properties. By the end of second level, children describe the basic properties of shapes. They calculate the perimeter and area of simple shapes. At first and second levels, children have a limited knowledge of angles. Across first and second level, children would benefit from revisiting progression within shape, position and movement.

Information handling
■ At early level, children create simple bar charts. By the end of first level, children record information using tally marks and answer questions using information in simple tables. By the end of second level, children create questionnaires and surveys, gather data and display information on a bar graph. Across the school, children would benefit from opportunities to gather, interpret and display data in a wider range of ways. The use of digital programmes should be reviewed to ensure their use to support this learning.

Overall quality of learners' achievements
■ Children talk with pride of their achievements, the school's successes and their contribution to the life and work of the school. These are celebrated at assembly and on display boards. Whole-school awards have raised children's awareness of environmental issues.

■ Staff and partners plan a wide range of opportunities to develop children's interests, skills and capacities. There are strong group and individual children's performances in sports, music and dance. The school uses accreditation well to recognise their successes. For example, they have achieved four Eco-Schools Scotland Green Flag Awards and a sportscotland School Sport Award silver level. Children are now working towards gold level. The school monitors children's attendance at clubs. They have used this data to successfully increase children's participation.

■ Children are involved in groups to improve the school. They are clear of their roles and remits, and how they represent their peers. The pupil council is developing skills in consultation and making decisions through consulting on the range of clubs to be offered. They are gaining an insight into budgeting by having a role in purchasing books for the school library. Children in P7 act responsibly as buddies to support those in P1. House captains contribute effectively to the school, including by having a role in assemblies.

■ Personal Learning Plan and Achievements Journey booklets allow children, staff and parents to set targets and review how much and how well children are learning. Throughout the year, children are supported by their teachers to reflect on the impact of achievements. They relate successes to the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities for Curriculum for Excellence. There is scope for children to better articulate the resultant skills that they are developing. A whole-school overview of children's achievements would enable a strategic overview of where support should be targeted to ensure equity of opportunity for all learners.

Equity
■ The headteacher is conscientious in collecting and using data to support equity. As a result, children's attendance at school is high. There are no exclusions over time in the school. Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) has been used to improve access to specialist services such as

counselling, and speech and language therapy. Resources and professional learning have been targeted to closing gaps. PEF is being used to raise attainment.

Other relevant evidence

■ The headteacher should increase the visibility of GME in school documentation, such as the school's handbook. While a separate pamphlet is available on GME, the handbook should give GME a higher profile an integral component of the school. One way of achieving this is to develop the curriculum rationale to articulate how having GME as a contextual feature impacts on the whole school. The handbook's list of useful websites should also support family learning for GME by including Gaelic for Parents, for example.

■ The school has considered the statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education, 2017. They should adopt a systematic approach to its implementation.

9 | Summarised inspection findings
Mount Cameron Primary School and Nursery Class and Gaelic Department (8531625)
South Lanarkshire Council

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.

10 | Summarised inspection findings
Mount Cameron Primary School and Nursery Class and Gaelic Department (8531625)
South Lanarkshire Council