

Summarised inspection findings

Dalmarnock Primary School

Glasgow City Council

12 September 2023

Key contextual information

Dalmarnock primary school is situated in Bridgeton, a short distance to the east of Glasgow city centre. The school roll at the time of inspection was 321 children. The 12 classes are made up of a mix of single stream and composite. In recent years, there has been significant staff turnover. The headteacher has been in post for 15 years. She is assisted by two depute headteachers (DHT) and two principal teachers (PT). One PT post is funded through the pupil equity fund (PEF). One substantive DHT is currently on maternity leave and another is currently seconded to another local authority school. This has resulted in interim acting positions.

In February 2022, 87% of all children were registered for free school meals, of whom 48% accessed free school meals. In September 2021 just over 90% of pupils lived in the 20% most deprived datazones in Scotland. The school's allocation of pupil equity funding (PEF), is £213,150.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very 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

- Staff work very well together to develop a culture of high expectations and a supportive ethos across the school. Staff are committed to children's rights and promote positive and respectful relationships through a caring and non-confrontational approach. As a result, children learn well in a calm and nurturing learning environment.
- Children being encouraged and supported to maximise their learning experience. This is at the heart of the school's vision and values. Almost all children feel valued and included in opportunities as they are supported by staff who know them and their families well. The highly-skilled staff team of teachers and learning support workers demonstrate a thorough understanding of children's needs. They support them sensitively to be included and to make appropriate progress with their learning. Almost all children feel supported well by staff. This results in them being highly motivated and eager participants in their learning.
- Children are well-mannered, confident and interact well with each other. Children often support each other to achieve and this contributes to the culture of respectful relationships between children. They work well independently or in groups and contribute confidently to class discussions. In most classes, children enjoy a range of opportunities to lead their own learning and contribute well to the life of the school.
- Teachers are creative in planning a range of engaging opportunities for children to extend and deepen their learning. This includes a range of well-planned partnership input and outdoor learning experiences. In almost all lessons, staff take into account children's views on what they would like to learn. This results in children being offered a range of opportunities to experience personalisation and choice in their learning. Almost all teachers

use digital technology very effectively to enhance children's learning. Children at all stages use their individual devices well to access learning materials and to present and assess their work. In most lessons, teachers use questioning skilfully to challenge children's thinking and extend their learning. As a result of these strategies to broaden the learning experience, almost all children are very engaged and curious learners.

- In a minority of classes, all children complete the same task with the pace directed by the teacher. This leads to disengagement from a few learners. Children in these classes who require additional support do not always receive tasks and activities appropriately matched to their level of need. A few children across the stages who have higher levels of ability would benefit from greater levels of challenge.
- At the early level, teachers have a sound, shared understanding of effective learning through play. Teachers have developed well the role of the adult in supporting interactions and children's experiences. They make good use of the space available to provide learning in a well-organised, stimulating learning environment. Children at early level are attaining well as a result of this.
- In almost all classes, teachers' explanations and instructions are clear. They share high-quality learning intentions and success criteria in almost all lessons. These are referred to throughout lessons and are used by teachers and children to check their understanding. As a result, most learners understand the purpose and relevance of their learning. In most lessons, teachers develop well-considered plenaries to help children reflect on and consolidate their learning.
- Senior leaders support staff well to improve learners' experiences. Almost all staff take part in professional learning and many staff lead improvements in learning, teaching and assessment. For example, they are improving how key aspects of literacy and numeracy is taught as well as making stronger links to Developing the Young Workforce (DYW). As a result, this is helping children to understand and develop skills for life, learning and work. Senior leaders should continue to develop the consistency of high quality learning and teaching across all stages.
- In almost all classes, children receive high-quality feedback which helps them to improve their learning. Almost all teachers use a range of creative approaches, including digital platforms, to share feedback which helps children understand clearly their next steps in learning. Most children use this information to set high-quality targets in discussion with their teacher. Almost all children and parents feel that staff help them to understand how they are progressing with their learning. In most lessons, children have opportunities to peer and assess their work. This helps them to learn from others as well as consolidating their own understanding.
- Senior leaders identified correctly the need to introduce more consistent and clear assessment approaches across all stages. They introduced a streamlined and comprehensive assessment framework to provide a helpful overview of assessment planning for staff. Teachers are encouraged to develop holistic assessments and use regular formative assessment strategies to assess literacy and numeracy. Staff use standardised assessments judiciously to identify children who may require additional support. As a result, consistent approaches to assessment is helping teachers and children to identify strengths and next steps in learning.
- Teachers have well-established processes within the school for staff to work together to improve the reliability of their professional judgements of children's progress and

achievement. Staff need to develop their confidence in applying national standards more robustly in assessing children's progress in learning. Senior leaders should continue to develop opportunities for staff to moderate with colleagues from cluster schools and beyond.

- Teachers use assessment information well to inform the ongoing process of planning high-quality learning experiences. They plan learning effectively using local authority progression frameworks for all curricular areas. Teachers plan well across the stages. They share their long term plans on an online forum so that these can be refreshed to meet the needs of individuals and classes. Teachers use the National Benchmarks effectively to consider appropriate assessment at the planning stage. Senior leaders have established rigorous processes to evaluate the quality of planning to better meet the needs of learners. Senior leaders continue to strengthen these processes. This is leading to teachers being better aware of children's needs and improving the consistency of learning, teaching and assessment. Teachers should continue to develop further the role of children in the planning process.
- Teachers use a well-developed system to track and measure learners' progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Senior leaders meet termly with teachers to review data about children's progress. This helps to ensure that assessment judgements used to gather this data inform children's next steps. Senior leaders and staff use the data very effectively to plan appropriate support so that children make relevant progress in their learning. They also use the tracking data very effectively to measure the impact of interventions and support strategies. Senior leaders share a high quality analysis of this data in terms of patterns and trends regarding children's progress over time with staff. They use this information appropriately to inform their ongoing planning process. Senior leaders and teachers should proceed with plans to assess and track the progress of learners across all curriculum areas.

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

very good

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Overall, most children's progress in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is very good. Most children's attainment at the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) early level is good. Most children's progress from prior levels of attainment at first and second levels are very good. HM Inspectors have discussed with senior leaders ways in which teachers could collaborate with colleagues more widely. This will help teachers to gain a more confident insight into national standards and expectations of achievement of a CfE level. Currently, data at each level does not wholly represent children's overall abilities in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics. Guided by senior leaders, moderation is developing as a priority to help ensure that teacher's professional judgement is increasingly accurate and robust.
- Most children who require targeted, planned interventions to support their learning, are making expected progress related to their individual targets. Senior leaders and teachers monitor targeted cohorts of children's attainment very well. This is an area of strength. This is helping to ensure that children who may be at risk of not achieving, continue to make relevant progress in their learning.
- Periods of remote learning during the COVID 19 pandemic negatively impacted children's attainment in numeracy and mathematics and literacy and English. School data shows that attainment has now returned to pre-pandemic levels for almost all children. As planned, senior leaders and teachers should prioritise developing systems to monitor and track children's progress, attainment and achievement in all curriculum areas.

Attainment in literacy and English

Listening and talking

- The majority of children are making very good progress in listening and talking. A few children are exceeding expected level of progress. At the early level, almost all children listen well to everyday instructions and prompts. Almost all children at first level take turns appropriately during different contexts for class discussion and offering peer feedback. At second level, almost all children are developing well their understanding and application of a variety of literary techniques. This is helping them to develop their listening and talking skills. They are becoming more confident in talking to an audience and offering measured, informed feedback to one another. This is a clear strength.

Reading

- Overall, most children's progress and attainment in reading is good. A few children are exceeding expected levels of progress in reading. Reading for pleasure has a high profile across all stages of the school and most children demonstrate a love of reading. Increasingly, children are beginning to talk more confidently about how their experiences in reading different genres is improving their writing. Teachers should capitalise on this more explicitly to help children to progress in their writing at a faster pace. Positive and enthusiastic approaches to promoting reading are having a positive impact on children's readiness to learn and engage well in their literacy.
- Most children at the early level are beginning to blend letters and sounds well. At first level, most children read aloud fluently and are becoming more confident in understanding the context of a text as they read. At first level, the majority of children are confident in identifying a variety of literary techniques from a range of genres, to inform their own writing. At second level, almost all children can use literary techniques identified in a text, to improve their own writing. Teachers should create further opportunities for this type of self-directed application of learning in different contexts across all stages. This will help children to become more experimental and independent in their writing, encouraged through reading.

Writing

- Overall, the majority of children's progress and attainment in writing is very good. A few children across the levels are exceeding expected levels of progress in writing. Across the school, taught writing and other targeted interventions are a current focus for improvement. This is having a positive impact on children's progress in writing.
- Most children at the early level are developing independent writing skills. They use common words and known sounds to write short sentences. Most children at the early level are beginning to build punctuated sentences, independently. Teachers create relevant activities through a blend of structured and free play activities for children. At first level, most children are developing well their ability to use sentence length, literary techniques and punctuation to vary structure, tone and imagery. At second level, almost all children enjoy writing for a range of purposes and are making good progress. A few children require ongoing additional support to develop accuracy in organising ideas and thoughts in their writing. A few also require support in understanding the role of basic punctuation to convey meaning clearly.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, most children are making very good progress from prior levels of attainment in numeracy and mathematics. Across all levels, a few children should be supported to make better progress in numeracy and mathematics. At early, first and second levels, most children are achieving expected Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels in numeracy and mathematics. A few children are exceeding expected levels of attainment.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, most children can count on from 20. They add and subtract within 10 and use these skills well to work with money. Most children are confident in reading analogue time. They would benefit from more practice in reading digital time. At first level, most children have a secure understanding of place value. They solve addition and subtraction problems using a range of strategies. They are confident in calculating fractions of a whole number. At second level, most children are secure in their understanding of place value to two decimal places. Most children are not yet secure in their understanding of the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. Most children at second level, are skilled in money calculations and understand the advantages and disadvantages of credit and debit cards.

They would benefit from greater opportunities to solve problems relating to time and durations in different contexts.

Shape, position and movement

- Across the school, most children confidently name familiar two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. At first level, children are not yet confident in describing the properties of shapes and objects. At second level, most children accurately describe the properties of a range of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. They can match objects to their nets confidently. Children are skilled at exploring problems relating to area and perimeter. At second level, most children describe acute, right, obtuse, and reflex angles accurately. They are less secure in understanding the properties of circles and the relationship between radius and diameter.

Information handling

- At early level, most children confidently match and sort unfamiliar objects. They can display information on bar graphs with support. At first level, most children can organise a survey, gather data using tally marks and display data in bar graphs. They need further opportunities to display and analyse data from a wider range of graphs and diagrams. At second level, most children are confident at displaying a range of data using graphs such as line and bar charts. They are developing well their skills in using digital spreadsheets to analyse and manipulate data for a range of purposes. They can accurately analyse the data to solve real-life problems.

Attainment over time

- Ongoing work to close attainment gaps, including interventions funded by PEF, is highly effective and having a positive impact on children's attainment and progress. This is an area of strength in the school's work.
- Senior leaders and staff have developed highly effective systems to track children's progress in literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders and teachers are well placed to extend this to include all other curriculum areas. This will support them in their ongoing quality assurance work to highlight gaps and inform areas for future development.

Overall quality of learner's achievements

- The majority of children develop their leadership skills through participation in experiences such as the Young Sports Leaders, Young Creative Leaders and the STEM Young Leaders programmes. The school's Young STEM Leaders programme is particularly well embedded, and children involved have achieved their second and third level awards. Children understand how these leadership roles help them to develop skills for life and work and can explain how they are contributing positively to the life of the school.
- Children's personal achievements are valued and celebrated regularly through displays, assemblies and on school media platforms. As a result, children speak confidently about their achievements, linking these achievements to the school values. Across the school, children are beginning to use the Star tracker, created in consultation with pupils and parents. This records their achievements and helps children to set personal achievement targets. Consistent use of this planner will allow staff to plan for further progressive achievement opportunities for children.

Equity for all learners

- Senior leaders and staff plan a range of highly effective interventions which support children with additional needs very well or those who need support to stay on track. All support staff provide effective targeted support for learners in literacy and numeracy as well as well-timed

emotional support for children who need it. They are responsive in their approach to ensuring that they meet children's needs very well. As a result, almost all children are supported well to engage with their learning in class alongside their peers and access their learning with increasing independence. Senior leaders measure the impact of interventions carefully to ensure that all children make good progress.

- Senior leaders and staff know families very well and have a very good understanding of the needs of the community. They make very effective use of data to identify attainment gaps across a range of different groups, including those affected by the cost of living crisis. They use PEF funding very well to enhance staffing and develop approaches to wellbeing, literacy and numeracy. Planned approaches, interventions and strategies are targeted to individual children and are having a positive impact on children's overall progress in literacy and numeracy. Attainment gaps are beginning to narrow significantly as a result of these well-planned interventions.
- The use of participatory budgeting processes is ensuring that children, parents and staff have a clear role in agreeing school improvement priorities. These are linked to closing the poverty related attainment gap.
- Senior leaders and staff are mindful of the need to minimise the cost of the school day and ensure that all activities and opportunities, including after-school clubs, are free of charge. This is helping to ensure that all children at Dalmarnock primary school have equity of experiencing a wide variety of enrichment activities beyond the school. This in turn is an area of key strength of the school's work that is engaging learners so positively in their everyday learning. This is keeping relationships between children and with children and staff, positive and focused on motivational learning experiences.

Practice worth sharing more widely

- Staff collaborate very successfully with a wide range of partners effectively to offer children a range of motivational experiences to develop their skills and talents. This is a strength of the school's work. Staff promote participation effectively and use a range of strategies, including offering experiences within and beyond the school day, to remove barriers to participation. They challenge gender-based stereotypes and promote inclusion for all. As a result, all children have participated in achievement experiences within the school day and the majority have accessed additional enrichment experiences beyond the school day. Children enjoy attending clubs and are developing their social skills and self-esteem very well. Staff report that being part of these clubs is leading to higher levels of engagement and attendance overall for these children. Staff use community facilities very well and link with local sporting clubs to develop children's technical and sporting skills. This is improving children's health and wellbeing. Staff support children to access activities within their local community and this has led to a few children progressing successfully into high-profile sporting academies. A few children also attend community clubs regularly beyond the school, supported by very strong partnership links.
- The headteacher and staff have shared successful approaches to promoting equity and closing attainment gaps locally and nationally. The school's work in closing attainment gaps and maximising sustainable approaches to equity has attracted national interest and has inspired the work of other schools and local authorities.

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.