

Summarised inspection findings

Windygoul Primary School

East Lothian Council

22 August 2023

Key contextual information

Windygoul Primary School is located in Tranent in East Lothian. The headteacher is supported by four deputy headteachers and two principal teachers. The school has experienced a number of staff changes over the past few years.

In May 2023 the roll is 613 in the primary school and 18 in Woodside, the specialist provision for children with additional support needs. Windygoul Nursery is located within Windygoul Primary School.

Children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data-zones 1-9. Attendance is in line with the national average.

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

- Relationships between children, their peers and staff are positive. The focus staff have on children being 'ready, respectful and safe' is supporting a calm and inclusive environment for learning. Most children engage positively with learning opportunities. They are keen to learn and talk enthusiastically about their experiences in school. They work well individually, in pairs and in small groups.
- Learners experience a broad range of learning opportunities both in the classroom and beyond. There are well-planned opportunities for children to contribute to the life of the school through pupil voice groups, leadership positions and sports and music clubs.
- In the majority of classes, learning is well matched to the needs of individual children. However, current approaches to differentiation are mainly by task and do not fully meet the needs of all children. Teachers should ensure all learning is appropriately challenging, including for children who are capable of more demanding work. Children would benefit from greater opportunities to lead their learning, including more activities which provide greater personalisation and choice.
- In almost all lessons, teachers provide clear explanations and instructions. They share learning intentions and success criteria. Senior leaders have identified correctly the need to improve how children understand the purpose of their learning and how to be successful. Teachers now need to be more consistent in involving children in co-creating ways to judge their success in learning. This will ensure children have greater ownership of their learning and support the further engagement of all children in learning.
- Teachers are beginning to use digital technology more extensively to enhance learners' experiences. In a few lessons, teachers use this well to motivate and engage children. A few children are supporting staff and other children to develop their digital skills, including the use

of assistive technologies. These children are working well to improve both children and staff's understanding of how technology can be used to support learners who have a barrier to learning.

- Almost all teachers use a range of approaches to check learners' understanding. A few teachers ask questions skilfully to help children explain more fully their thinking and the reasoning behind their answers. Senior leaders should build on the successful practice found in these classes to support all teachers to improve questioning. This includes ensuring staff support children to develop higher order thinking skills. As staff develop their skills in asking questions, they will have a clearer awareness of children's understanding. This will support teachers in planning next steps in learning that best meet the needs of all children.
- Younger children have regular opportunities to engage in play-based activities. Teachers are at the early stages of developing learning through play and do not yet use play-based approaches fully to engage children in their learning. Teachers should engage with national practice guidance, 'Realising the Ambition: Being Me', and look outwards to other schools to observe examples of high-quality learning through play. This will help them improve approaches to learning through play for younger children, by enriching their learning environment and experiences.
- Teachers are responsive to the needs of the children in their classes. They use verbal feedback well to support children to make progress in their learning. At present, the quality of written feedback is not sufficiently effective in supporting children's progress in learning. Children will benefit from clearer feedback to help them understand what they need to do to have greater success in their learning.
- Teachers use a range of well-defined approaches to assess where children are in their learning. They use National Benchmarks, standardised assessments and local authority assessments well at key points in the year to identify children's attainment in literacy and numeracy. These approaches, along with on-going assessment, are providing teachers with a clear understanding of where children are in their learning. Teachers, supported by senior leaders, should continue to develop approaches to assessment that will improve further children's progress and attainment. This will help ensure an understanding across the school of what high-quality assessment is.
- Senior leaders, working with teachers, have developed helpful approaches to discuss and monitor children's attainment and progress. These approaches are used well to confirm whether children are on track, off track or exceeding expectations and to plan what further support is needed for each learner.
- Staff have engaged in helpful moderation activities, both internally and externally, with their associated school group and local authority colleagues. The focus has been on writing. This has strengthened teachers' understanding of national standards in this area. Staff should continue, as planned, to increase the range of moderation activities to other areas of the curriculum.
- Senior leaders, working with staff, have introduced new approaches to planning, tracking and monitoring this year. While at the early stages, the new approaches are providing clearer expectations for teachers in the planning of learning, teaching and assessment. Senior leaders have reviewed teachers' plans and have provided helpful feedback to all teachers to build on the positive start made. Senior leaders should continue to work with teachers to ensure all planning is of suitably high quality across the school.

- Teachers use local authority progression frameworks across all areas of the curriculum. They plan over different times scales taking into account the needs of the learners in their class. In a few examples, children are involved very well in planning their learning. Senior leaders should continue to support staff to ensure all learners are meaningfully involved in planning their learning.

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 across the school in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is good. Most children achieve appropriate Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels in literacy and numeracy and, across the school, a few children are exceeding nationally expected levels. A few children have the capacity to make better progress and achieve more.
- Most children who require support with their learning are making good progress towards individual targets in learning.

Attainment in literacy and English

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

Listening and talking

- At early level, most children follow instructions well and can confidently share ideas within pairs and small groups. They can ask and answer simple questions about familiar stories. At first level, most children share their ideas in class and group discussions and listen well to the views of others. At second level, children have opportunities to develop presentation skills in class, at assemblies and through various pupil leadership roles. They are aware of different communication techniques such as eye contact, clear enunciation, and use of tone to engage the listener.

Reading

- Across the school, children have regular planned opportunities to read for pleasure including through breakfast reading groups, reading buddies and other whole school events linked to reading. This is supporting the development of a culture of reading for pleasure which is supporting improved outcomes in reading.
- At early level, most children use known sounds to blend and read words and simple texts. At first level, most children can identify the main ideas in text and can confidently make predictions. Children at first level would benefit from further opportunities to answer increasingly complex questions on texts. At second level, most children can answer inferential and evaluative questions and explain reasons for their views. Children at second level would benefit from more opportunities to explore the reliability or otherwise of a range of sources.

Writing

- At early level, children draw increasingly detailed pictures to illustrate their stories and ideas. Most children at early level can write simple sentences and use capital letters and full stops. At first level, most children write information reports, recounts and poems. They would benefit from more opportunities to experience writing across a broader range of genres. Most children at second level can write information reports, recounts, diary entries and pieces of descriptive writing. Children at second level would benefit from more opportunities to write extended texts. More opportunities for personalisation and choice in writing would support increased enthusiasm for writing and improved outcomes.
- As planned, teachers should continue to review approaches to writing, including monitoring the impact on children's progress.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics from their prior levels of attainment.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, most children are working within numbers to 30 with a few working with numbers up to 100. They are confident in counting money, telling the time and fractions. At first level, children can use their knowledge of place value to perform calculations and can recall multiplication facts. They are not yet confident with fractions and percentages. By second level, children are confident with all four number processes and can round numbers with decimal fractions to the nearest whole number. Children are not yet confident with the links between fractions, percentages and decimals.

Shape, position and movement

- Almost all children at early level are able to identify common two-dimensional shapes. They understand and correctly use positional language. At first level, the children are confident with one line of symmetry. They are confident with the properties of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects but are not yet confident with angles. At second level, children are confidently using appropriate mathematical language including acute, obtuse, straight and reflex to describe and classify angles.

Information handling

- Across the school, there are opportunities for children to gather and analyse information. At early level and first level, almost all children can collate information in a tally chart and display it using a bar graph. By second level, almost all children are aware of different methods of collecting data and can display it correctly in a range of ways. Children now need to apply and extend their information handling skills in real-life and meaningful contexts across the curriculum.

Attainment over time

- Attainment was negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic particularly at early and first level. Senior leaders and staff have planned and implemented effective approaches to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy for identified groups of children. Senior leaders monitor the impact of interventions closely and effectively to ensure they are having a positive impact on attainment. Overall, most children are predicted to achieve appropriate levels for literacy and numeracy in June 2023.
- Teachers meet formally with senior leaders three times a year to discuss children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Together, senior leaders and teachers analyse data to identify and target areas for support and challenge. This helps all children to make

good progress from prior levels of attainment. As planned, senior leaders should continue to develop processes to use information relating to attainment over time. They should also develop approaches to gathering information on children's progress across all areas of the curriculum.

Overall quality of learner's achievements

- Staff celebrate children's achievements at assemblies and in classes, with a strong focus on those occasions when children exemplify 'ready, respected, safe' and the school values 'responsible, positive, respectful'. Children are proud of this recognition and celebration of their hard work and resilience. Older children lead clubs to provide support for younger children, such as Books at breakfast and Woodside buddies. This is developing their leadership and cooperative working skills. Groups such as the Tech Team lead information evenings for parents and assemblies. Children from these groups describe the confidence and pride in themselves they have developed as a result.
- Children participate in a range of clubs and activities during and after school. These include Junior Road Safety Officers and the Eco group. The groups are well supported through partnership work with the local community, for example, litter picking with the Tranent Wombles. Senior leaders monitor participation in activities closely, both in and outwith school and identify children who are not taking part in any of the activities on offer. They are proactive in addressing barriers to participation. Staff provide all children with rich experiences in sports and expressive arts, often working with community and local authority partners. The next step is for senior leaders to develop a progressive skills framework which will help children identify and articulate the many and valuable skills they are currently developing.

Equity for all learners

- The headteacher, senior leaders and staff have a very clear knowledge of the social and economic contexts of their children and families, including financial pressures. They use this knowledge very effectively to work towards ensuring that all children have equity of opportunity and achievement. Senior leaders and teachers monitor the progress of individuals and groups of children. This includes those who require additional support, those who are care experienced, young carers and those who face poverty-related barriers to their learning and wellbeing. They use attendance, free school meal entitlement, additional support for learning, care experience and under-performance data effectively to identify poverty-related and other attainment gaps. Staff are beginning to monitor progress towards closing these gaps. As a result, staff are working together to identify children who are not making suitable progress and provide appropriate interventions. One impact of this can be seen in the significant reduction in the number of exclusions. Senior leaders are also very proactive in working with other organisations to identify and make available additional opportunities, such as free entry to sporting facilities for care experienced children and young carers.

Context

Woodside within Windygoul Primary School is a local authority provision which supports children with autism and communication needs. The centre opened in 2020 and supports 18 children aged 5-12 years in three classes at P1-2, P3-4 and P5-7. Woodside shares the same vision and values as the school and aims to provide a responsive environment which respects children's rights and motivates them to learn. Staff aim to develop children's communication skills and support them to achieve their potential through personalised support.

QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

- Teachers and support staff have developed a strong focus on child-centred learning which reflects clearly the vision and aims of the centre. This is underpinned by the Social Communication, Emotional Regulation and Transactional Support (SCERTS) model for improving communication and social and emotional abilities. All staff motivate children to learn in a kind and respectful way which takes account of their individual needs, rights and preferences. Resources and learning activities reflect children's personal interests and help children to move on when ready, including joining some mainstream lessons.
- Teachers and support staff are skilled in supporting children to manage their emotions and focus on their learning. Positive support plans, prepared jointly with partners, anticipate individual difficulties and support staff to use strategies which de-escalate anxieties successfully. The well-resourced learning environment and adjacent outdoor area offer a safe, accessible and supportive learning environment where children learn through play. Well-structured learning activities and routines, picture prompts, digital images and real objects of reference support children's understanding and minimise anxieties. These approaches encourage children to engage more readily in learning activities. Teachers are developing the use of digital technology well to support communication and encourage independence in learning tasks. They plan to develop further other contexts for learning to support children's life skills including links with the local community.
- The depute headteacher and staff have implemented a systematic approach to assessing children's progress in learning which takes account of their individual needs. This supports accurate information about children's progress and working levels towards and within CfE. As planned, staff should now develop their approach to tracking the progress of learners' experiences and outcomes across all areas of the curriculum. The depute headteacher monitors closely the progress and wellbeing of children experiencing additional social challenges and ensures additional support from partner agencies when required.

QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

- Taking account of their additional support needs, most children are making good progress in communication and literacy and numeracy and mathematics. A few are making very good progress from their starting points.
- In literacy and communication, half of children in P1-P2 are working at pre-early level and half at the early level. At P3-P4, most children are working at early level. A small number are working on aspects of the first level and pre-early level. At P5-P7, the majority of children are working on aspects of first level and a few at early level.

- In numeracy and mathematics, at P1-P2, half of children are working at the pre-early level and the remainder at the early level. In P3-P4, all children are working at the early level. In P5-P7, most are working at the early level with a small number working on aspects of first level. A few children can talk about skills they are learning and know what they need to do to improve.
- The majority of children attend the Woodside provision almost all the time. A few children's attendance has improved significantly over the past year. The depute headteacher and staff work closely with the families of children who are not attending school regularly and agree appropriate support with partner agencies, where appropriate, to reengage children with school.
- An increasingly robust system for tracking children's attainment along with effective staff interventions are supporting children to make appropriate progress across the Woodside provision. The school is at an earlier stage in tracking children's progress over time. This is as a result of its fairly recent opening and altered arrangements during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Staff recognise children's achievements within and out with the school through communications with parents. Woodside often shares children's achievements at home with the school community. Children receive certificates for their achievements and staff feature their achievements and talents in videos, school shows and events. Visiting organisations such as Venturing Out and Drake Music provide annual outdoor learning skills opportunities. Staff identified that opportunities for wider achievement and life skills, particularly within the local community, is an area they are keen to develop.

Other relevant evidence

- The school submitted information relating to compliance with the revised Nutritional Regulations 2020 and key duties as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007. The Health and Nutrition Inspector (HNI) discussed this information with relevant staff and children. In addition, the HNI examined sample documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole school approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of children through food in school. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.

Practice worth sharing more widely

A group of children from the mainstream primary school regularly meet with children from Woodside socially and in learning activities as signalong ambassadors and Woodside buddies. They are learning to sign and use their skills to form successful friendships with Woodside children, promote inclusion and awareness of alternative communication. They do this through visiting classes regularly, demonstrating signing at assemblies through 'sign of the week' and use signing at key events at Christmas and Halloween. Buddies lead outdoor games with Woodside children such as mini football, hide and seek, basketball and cycling.

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.