

Summarised inspection findings

Gigha Primary School and Pre-Five Unit

Argyll and Bute Council

27 August 2019

Key contextual information

Gigha Primary School and Pre-Five Unit is situated on the Isle of Gigha and serves a small number of families. Currently there are ten children in the primary school in one P1-7 class and a small number of children in the Pre-Five Unit. Recently there have been changes to staffing. A new teacher has been appointed and will take up her post in August 2019.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- The school's culture and ethos is positive, nurturing and inclusive. It is built upon positive relationships between children and staff. The school's values of respect, fairness, diligence, wisdom and kindness are demonstrated by the children and staff. Children are polite and respectful to each other and to visitors to the school. Most children engaged well with the inspection team. Older children are patient and kind to younger children in the class. Overall, the majority of children are motivated and have a positive attitude to their learning.
- The majority of children are motivated by the range of learning experiences provided for them. They demonstrate a stronger engagement in their learning when they are involved in more active learning contexts such as science and outdoor learning. Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) has allowed the staff to develop outdoor learning activities relating to phonics and numeracy in the school garden.
- Across the school there is scope to provide children with a greater level of challenge and a faster pace of learning. The school should review how much time is dedicated to the teaching of literacy and numeracy across the school week. In addition it will be important to review how lessons are organised and delivered to ensure they maximise opportunities for supporting the acquisition and progression of skills in literacy and numeracy. More reinforcement and consolidation of learning is required to improve recall.
- Staff should consider the pace of learning to ensure children are appropriately challenged and making progress in reading. Staff should ensure that resources are matched to the children's ability, and support the acquisition of early reading skills in a way which allows them to effectively build on prior learning.
- Children should be encouraged to work more independently as some children are overly reliant on adults to support their learning. There is scope for children to have more choice and responsibility, such as opportunities to plan and lead their learning on a more regular basis. Involving children in identifying their areas of strength and next steps in learning would contribute to their ability to be independent learners.
- Older children consider that they have a voice and that their suggestions for learning contexts are taken on board. They led a 'Hot Compost' topic and are given the opportunity to lead a

personal topic on a yearly basis. Most children feel that they are valued members of this unique island community. They contribute to project plans and design wall displays in the classroom. In the context of learning for sustainability, most children play an active role in the school and wider community. There is scope for all children across the school to engage in leadership roles and to ensure that their views impact on decision-making about their school.

- Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the majority of lessons observed, children are supported through their learning activities. There are too many whole class lessons, where children spend extended periods of time listening to teachers. The school should review how they organise lessons to ensure appropriate differentiation and greater engagement of children.
- The purpose of lessons should be shared with children and they should be provided with guidance on what they need to do to be successful. Teachers' questioning techniques promote children's higher-order thinking skills. Feedback to children is of a variable quality. Overall, staff's verbal feedback is helpful. Their written feedback needs to be more detailed as children are unsure as to what they need to do to improve their work. A more consistent approach should be developed by staff to provide feedback to children so that they are clear about their next steps in learning. Developing more effective approaches to feedback will better model for children how to effectively provide feedback when undertaking self and peer assessment. Currently there are few examples of this practice.
- Overall, children's learning is planned using the experiences and outcomes from Curriculum for Excellence. We have asked staff to improve their approaches to planning as currently it is unclear how aspects of learning are planned. This will also help to ensure children experience appropriate support and challenge in learning and avoid unnecessary repetition as they move through the school. Local authority progression pathways are provided for a few curricular areas. This should be streamlined to be more manageable and clearly linked to assessment. A range of assessment information is used to support and challenge learners. This includes summative assessments and standardised tests. There is a need to make more effective use of formative assessment. The school should continue to develop a more consistent whole-school approach to assessment, linking assessment to planned learning and teaching. Holistic assessments should be a focus of further assessment developments and moderation activities to ensure breadth, challenge and application. Staff should increase their engagement with colleagues from other schools to moderate children's learning. This will enable them to have a shared understanding of standards and higher expectations of children's levels of attainment and achievement.
- The headteacher and support for learning teacher meet to discuss specific children's progress. They identify a range of interventions required to support and challenge these children. A systematic approach to monitoring and tracking should be developed. This would provide rigorous and robust information in order to provide learning activities, which are differentiated to better meet the children's individual needs. Monitoring and tracking should be developed to ensure progress in learning across the curriculum is of an appropriate pace and is suitably challenging for all children.

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 that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

weak

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

- There is one multi-stage class in the school. Due to the fact that every cohort in this school is fewer than ten, statements about progress have been made to ensure the anonymity of individual children.
- Inspection activities, which included observing children's learning at all stages, sampling of children's work, engaging with children in class and in focus groups does not validate the data presented by the school. To ensure the validity of attainment data, the school should continue to engage in rigorous moderation processes to ensure expectations, outcomes and experiences for all children are accurate.
- Children who experience specific barriers to their learning benefit from a structured and planned approach to enable them to make progress in their learning. Support for learning plans should be developed to ensure that the learning needs of all children with additional needs are being met. This would improve overall levels of attainment and achievement.

Attainment in literacy

- Overall, children's progress in literacy and English is weak.

Listening and talking

- In class, most children listen well to staff. Recently, all children presented the books they had written, supported by a writer in residence, to a wider audience including their parents and members of the wider community. Across the class, the majority of children are articulate and respectful of each other, waiting to take their turn when speaking. Most listen well to stories being read aloud by adults. At the early level, children are learning to take turns when listening and talking in a variety of contexts. At the first level, children take turns and contribute at the appropriate time when engaging with others in very small groups. At the second level, children have participated in self-evaluation of their talking skills and contribute relevant ideas, information and opinions when engaging with others. Although children have experiences such as these, they are not yet able to articulate the different skills they are developing in listening and talking. Across the school, children could be more confident when engaging with adults and build on the contributions of others. A clear focus on teaching and assessing the skills of talking and listening would improve most children's ability and confidence in this area.

Reading

- At the early level, a few children identify common words and use their knowledge of sounds and letters to read words. They use pictures to help them to understand simple texts. They can answer questions about events and ideas in a text. At the first level, children read aloud but

could read with more confidence and fluency. They have a few strategies to decode words. They can identify the main ideas in a text and can answer literal questions, but are not yet confident in answering inferential questions. At the second level, children understand the purpose of a text and can describe the main idea. They can demonstrate an understanding of punctuation and can apply a range of reading skills for example skimming and scanning and prediction but are not confident nor fluent readers. They understand and can identify a few features in relation to genre. Children are not yet developing their reading skills using challenging texts. Children need to be more able to interrogate texts and discuss a range of literary features.

Writing

- At the early level, children's writing is developing at a very slow pace. A few children are still at an early mark-making stage and require an adult to scribe for them. The school should take immediate action to support children to make better progress in their writing. At the first level, a few children can start a sentence in a variety of ways to engage the reader and can spell the majority of commonly used words correctly. They can write for a variety of purposes including science reports, letters and instructions. At the second level, a few children have an understanding of writing for a range of purposes and audiences selecting appropriate genre, form, structure and style. They can order their writing chronologically to give an account of events. Children should be encouraged to produce extended pieces of writing for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, children's progress in numeracy and mathematics is weak.

Number, money and measurement

- Across the class, children's progress is weak. Their skills in mental agility and problem solving are not yet sufficiently well-developed. Children are not confident in carrying out written calculations. Their skills in this area need to be developed alongside mental agility and problem solving. At the early level, children are developing their understanding of number bonds. They can check estimates by counting and can identify and recognise numbers from zero to ten. At the first level, children understand place value to 100. They require more practice in rounding numbers to ten and 100. They are able to give the answer to a few of the times tables appropriate to their stage. However, this needs to be consolidated more effectively to ensure accurate recall of times tables. At the second level, children could apply their knowledge of rounding to give an estimate to a calculation appropriate to the context. They can use their knowledge of equivalent fractions and decimal fractions to solve problems. However, they lack confidence in using fractions and percentages. Overall, children lack confidence in applying their numeracy skills.

Shape, position and movement

- Across early and first levels, children are able to identify 2D shapes and 3D objects as appropriate to their stage. At the early level, children could recognise a line of symmetry. At the first level, children are not confident in identifying right angles. At the second level, children can identify a range of angles and triangles but are unable to explain the circumference or radius of a circle.

Information handling

- Across the early, first and second levels children have engaged with different ways to interpret and display data relating to meaningful contexts such as lunchtime food waste. They can describe how they would gather information for specific purposes for example class surveys. However, children are unable to recall recent learning in this area for example Venn and Carroll.

diagrams. Across all stages children would benefit from opportunities to collect, display and interpret information from a variety of charts, diagrams and tables.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Older children are playground leaders and digital leaders. Most children have the opportunity to become reading buddies. These opportunities are developing the children's leadership skills. Success is celebrated in school newsletters and at fortnightly assemblies. Certificates gained both in and out of school are recognised and celebrated. Children do not always receive their two hours of quality physical education (PE) due to the facilities in the school and on the island. PE should be taken outdoors to address any shortfall in the two hours requirement. Given the unique context of the school there is a need to provide children with access to lunchtime and after school clubs to further develop their skills for learning, life and work. Also, a programme of events from Active Schools would be beneficial to the children to improve their PE skills. Visitors who are invited to the school to speak to the children about their occupation or profession help the children to identify skills for learning, life and work. There is scope to work with the children to make them more aware of the skills they are developing as a result of their involvement in wider achievement and how these relate to the world of work. Children's achievement in out of school activities should now be tracked and linked to the development of skills for learning, life and work. There is a need to ensure that pupil voice is heard in a meaningful and systematic way, for example, by setting up a pupil council and other school groups or committees.

Attainment over time

- Staff report that children are making progress over time. However, they are not yet tracking children's progress in a meaningful and robust way. Staff now need to have a more robust picture of children's attainment and achievement as they move through the school. Rigorous and robust tracking and monitoring systems and processes need to be developed and implemented. Also, the analysis of data from the Scottish National Standardised Assessments and in class summative and formative assessments will support the reliability of teachers' professional judgement of a level.

Equity for all

- In this very small school, staff know children and their individual circumstances very well. They take positive steps to ensure all children feel included and valued. PEF has been used to take forward developments in reading, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Staff now need to track the impact of these interventions within the school more robustly. There is a need to raise aspirations about what children can achieve.

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.