

Summarised inspection findings

Bonhill Primary School

West Dunbartonshire Council

4 March 2025

Key contextual information

Bonhill Primary School is a non-denominational primary school in Alexandria, West Dunbartonshire. The current roll is 238 children arranged across 10 classes. The headteacher took up post six years ago. The senior leadership team consists of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and two part-time principal teachers. One of the principal teacher's posts is funded through the school's Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) allocation. Sixty-six percent of children reside in deciles 2,3 and 4 of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). A further 16% of children reside in SIMD decile 9. There are 26% of children who are entitled to free school meals. Twenty-three percent of children require additional support for aspects of their learning or wellbeing.

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

- Children benefit from the warm, supportive ethos and positive, nurturing and mutually respectful relationships in the school. Staff know children and families very well and are responsive to their needs. Across the school, all children and staff understand and uphold the school values: respect, responsibility, manners, perseverance, honesty and fairness. These values underpin the daily life and work of the school. Children and staff regularly refer to the values. There is a clear commitment to children's rights, which can be seen through the school ethos and class charters.
- Children are friendly, polite and welcoming. They are proud of their school and keen to share their learning with adults and peers. Children contribute effectively to the life of the school through engagement with their pupil leadership groups. They are actively involved in planning and making changes which impact positively on school life. Senior leaders use How Good is OUR School? with children to support this. Most children feel their views are listened to and the majority of children feel that their views are taken into account.
- Children work well independently, in pairs and in groups and are respectful and supportive of each other. In almost all lessons, children are engaged in their learning and motivated to learn. Staff have developed a 'Promoting Positive Relationships' policy for the school. They use restorative approaches well to help children resolve any conflicts that may arise. They support children effectively to reflect on how they can demonstrate their school values in their interactions with others. There is clear evidence of strong and positive relationships between staff and children, built on mutual respect. As a result, almost all children demonstrate high standards of behaviour. All classes have 'regulation stations' with resources and supports which are freely accessible for children. They know that they can use these if they are struggling to focus on their work and then return to the learning activity. As a result, almost all children are settled and focused in class.

- Staff demonstrate a strong commitment to providing high-quality learning and teaching. They engage both collectively and individually in professional learning to enhance their pedagogy. Teachers plan a variety of different learning activities to engage children, making good use of the indoor and outdoor learning environments. Teachers ensure that children experience appropriate pace and challenge in their learning and match tasks appropriately to their learning needs. A recently created learning, teaching and assessment policy should support teachers to ensure that all children continue to benefit from consistently high-quality learning and teaching.
- Almost all teachers' instructions are clear and help children to understand the purpose of lessons. All teachers use a variety of informal assessment strategies, such as regular reviews of progress and checking for understanding during lessons. In almost all lessons, teachers use questioning very well to extend children's thinking. All teachers routinely share the purpose of learning and explain how to be successful at the start of each lesson. In all lessons, children work together to identify and co-create the steps required for success. Teachers should continue with these effective approaches across the school to help them develop further children's understanding about their learning and progress.
- Teachers give all children increased opportunities to contribute to the content of learning and teaching. For example, children identify what they want to learn about in interdisciplinary learning and select activities to support learning. As a result, children are empowered to lead their learning in these areas. Teachers should now provide children with increased opportunities to lead their own learning in other areas of the curriculum.
- P1 staff have worked well together to embed a play-based approach. They have created stimulating and attractive classroom environments which support children to explore and investigate. Children demonstrate independence and confidence in their learning. They develop well their literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge through participation in developmentally appropriate and motivating play experiences. Staff ensure there is a balance of adult-directed and child-led play. They scaffold children's learning through sensitive and skilful interventions. Staff should continue to build on this very positive approach to developing children's curiosity and creativity.
- Teachers use digital technologies well throughout the school to enhance learning across the curriculum. For example, children use digital devices to research land use in the local community and to access activities, well-matched to their needs, to further support their learning. Teachers use a clear progression pathway to plan learning in digital technology. This is helping all children to develop and build upon digital skills. Older children have the confidence and ability to select when and how to use technology to enrich their learning. Children confidently use digital technology to reflect and record their learning.
- Teachers provide clear and helpful verbal feedback to children to help them to make progress and to identify their next steps in learning. Through self and peer assessment, children articulate when and how they have been successful. Children have developed very well the language of learning. As a result, they regularly reflect upon and confidently record their learning using video logs (VLOGS). In writing, all teachers give written feedback on children's individual targets. This supports children effectively to revisit their work and reflect on their next steps. Teachers should consider using this approach in other areas of the curriculum. They should use written feedback more regularly to support children to be more aware of their learning journey across the curriculum.
- Across the school, staff demonstrate a strong ethos of teamwork. Teachers plan collaboratively and effectively for learning experiences across the curriculum using a digital planning format.

They use school and local authority created frameworks well to ensure progression through all areas of the curriculum. As a result, children have a broad and rich learning experience.

- Senior leaders have created an assessment and moderation framework. This provides useful information and comprehensive guidance which helps to ensure a consistent approach to assessment across the school. All teachers use a variety of formative and summative assessments effectively to measure progress and identify any barriers to learning. Teachers use assessment information very well to inform planning. As a result, children experience learning which is appropriately differentiated by teachers to meet their needs and to provide sufficient challenge.
- Senior leaders meet with teachers twice each term to review children's progress and attainment. They analyse and discuss assessment information and children's work and plan appropriate interventions and support. Staff record actions from these meetings on the digital tracking tool. This enables them to track and monitor children's progress and achievement within and through Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Senior leaders, as planned, should now align their approaches to tracking and monitoring children's progress and attainment across all areas of the curriculum.
- Teachers are increasingly confident using national Benchmarks to support their professional judgements in identifying the achievement of CfE levels. Their judgements on children's attainment are increasingly reliable and based on robust assessment evidence. All teachers take part in a range of moderation activities in school. This has supported teachers to develop a stronger understanding of national expectations in, for example, writing. As planned, senior leaders should now extend this further to include moderation activity beyond the school and across other curriculum areas. This will help to ensure teachers' judgements about children's learning and achievements are robust across all curricular 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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

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, children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is very good. In 2023/24, by the end of P1, P4 and P7, most children achieved expected national Curriculum for Excellence levels in reading, writing, listening and talking and numeracy. Almost all children who require additional support in their learning are making appropriate progress against their individual targets. A few children are exceeding national levels and are provided with appropriate challenge in learning. Teachers take positive steps to develop successful approaches to learning and teaching which is helping to raise attainment for all learners.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Across the school, children are making very good progress from their previous levels of attainment in literacy and English.

Listening and talking

- At early level, all children interact well with each other. Most listen well to other children and are developing their turn-taking skills in conversations. They would benefit from regular practice with this. Most of those at first level are more skilled in turn-taking and respond appropriately to verbal and non-verbal cues. At second level, most older children speak clearly and express their thoughts well. At all levels, children appreciate weekly opportunities to create short individual vlogs. They use these to analyse their learning and to identify their next steps.

Reading

- At early level, most children are able to read familiar text with reasonable accuracy. They discuss the types of stories which they enjoy. Children at first level read unfamiliar text fluently and with some expression. Most are able to identify favourite books, styles of writing and authors. At second level, most older children confidently discuss different genres of writing and favourite authors. Children would benefit from continuing to broaden their experience of different writing genres.
- A community volunteer runs the school library. They are working hard to increase the stock of books and to make appropriate provision for different learners, including those with dyslexia. Each class gets 30 minutes per week to attend the library. Class members of the Library Committee help to guide their peers towards areas they are interested in. Children cannot take home library books at present, but senior managers are keen to enable this.

Writing

- At early level, almost all children write initial letters and simple words in their jotters. Their work is very neat. They are beginning to sequence familiar words to form sentences. They have started to write short pieces of personal and imaginative writing and should continue to develop

this. Children at first level use parts of speech including nouns, verbs, adverbs and similes. They should continue to develop their skills in expanding and enhancing sentences. They create pieces of transactional and imaginative writing. At second level, most older children write increasingly extended pieces of imaginative and descriptive writing. These are being assessed by their peers and are sometimes created using a laptop computer.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, most children are making very good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Children's attainment in numeracy and mathematics is stronger at early and first levels. Teachers at early level are building well on the knowledge and skills which children bring into P1 to ensure an appropriate pace for learning.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, children count forwards and backwards within 20 with ease. A significant number of children recognise and order numbers beyond 20. Across first and second levels, most children demonstrate a good understanding of place value. They would benefit from opportunities to practise their multiplication tables more frequently to enable quicker recall. At second level, most children can identify the difference between credit and debit and explain the purpose of each. Teachers should continue to extend opportunities for children to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in a variety of ways.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, most children identify two-dimensional (2D) shapes and three-dimensional (3D) objects correctly. They use their knowledge of 3D objects well to build structures as part of their play experiences. They understand and use simple positional language for example, above and below. Children at first level demonstrate a very good understanding of shape. Children identify the different features of 3D objects. Children working towards the end of second level have a very good understanding of shape. Most children confidently identify different compass points.

Information handling

- Across the school, children demonstrate an appropriate understanding of how to gather, record and display information. Children working at early level do this in different ways such as sorting materials by colour, shape and size. Children at first level understand the purpose of, and use, tally marks successfully to collect data. Older children can explain the purpose of using a particular type of graph. Most children can extract pertinent information from a range of graphs. Teachers should continue to develop children's understanding of ways to display data, including digital technology.

Attainment over time

- Overall, the school's attendance is in line with local and national averages. The senior leadership team has developed robust procedures to encourage and improve children's attendance. Leaders have a good understanding of potential barriers which may have an adverse impact on children's attendance. Senior leaders monitor children's absences rigorously and take prompt action when a child's attendance dips below an acceptable level. They are taking positive steps to improve an identified group of children's attendance. This includes working successfully with partners, reducing the cost of the school day and maintaining regular individualised support for children and families. Senior leaders also, when necessary, collect some children and bring them to school. They make good use of partners to help improve children's attendance.
- Senior leaders have developed very effective approaches to collate and analyse data on children's attainment. They make use of local authority tools to create an overview of children's

progress as they move through the school. Over the last few years, teachers have become more confident in making professional judgements about children's progress. As such, it is evident that children are making very good progress over time. Senior leaders and staff analyse a wide range of data to ensure children get appropriate support to make the best possible progress in their learning. For example, teachers make very good use of their knowledge of children to make necessary adaptations and adjustments to accelerate children's progress.

- Teachers make very good use of shared information when they take over a new cohort of learners. They also use key assessment information very well to enable children to make continuous progress in their learning. Learning assistants support children well in classes.
- Teachers are building a detailed picture of children's progress across the whole curriculum. They use this information well to enable children to apply and progress their learning as part of, for example, interdisciplinary learning.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Staff share and celebrate children's achievements in classes, at assemblies and through social media. They also award 'Value Champion' and 'Four Capacities' certificates. This builds children's understanding of the school values well. Children contribute to the life of the school and local community through a wide range of committees and leadership roles. For example, play leaders, reading buddies, the digital change makers and Bonhill Community News Team.
- Staff consult with children to plan and offer a wide range of lunchtime and after-school clubs in areas such as sports, French, music, dance and jewellery making. This is supporting children well to develop their confidence, teamwork and communication skills. A few children in the upper stages develop their leadership skills through leading lunchtime clubs, such as construction, gymnastics and a chess club.
- Staff work in partnership with the partners in the local community, parents and volunteers to provide children with opportunities to experience a range of wider achievements in school activities. This supports children to be confident individuals and effective contributors. Children demonstrate their sporting skills well by enjoying a range of local competitions and the school has recently won a national gold sports award.
- Teachers have started to record and track children's wider achievements and participation in clubs. They use this information to ensure that no child is at risk of missing out. Senior leaders have identified the next step is to continue to develop systems to track the skills children are developing through their wider achievement activities. This will support children to understand further the links between their achievements and skills for life, learning and work.

Equity for all learners

- School staff have successfully identified children who are at risk of not achieving as well as their peers. This includes those who come from a less advantaged background, those with English as an additional language, those who are entitled to free school meals and those who are care experienced. Teachers have put interventions in place, often funded by PEF, to address the gaps in learning which these children have. Implementing these targeted interventions increases children's confidence and self-esteem, helping them to make progress in their learning. These interventions are succeeding in preventing a poverty related gap appearing in children's attainment.
- Staff have introduced other interventions in class, such as the 'regulation station' which enables children to choose short-term activities which help them to get back successfully on

track with their learning. Staff also offer targeted interventions after school to help children to enhance their reading and writing skills and improve their attainment.

- The Parent Council runs fundraising activities across the year. It uses the proceeds to provide funding for children who may otherwise face a barrier to participation due to the cost of certain activities. The school also makes second-hand uniforms available to families to further reduce the cost of the school day.
- Teachers use interdisciplinary learning topics to highlight, celebrate, value and study the range of children's ethnic backgrounds in the school. They cross-reference these learning activities with the school values.

Other relevant evidence

- In all classes, children are receiving high-quality learning experiences in physical education. The school is meeting the national minimum expectations.
- Children are learning French across the school, beginning in P1, following a progression framework. However, there is no second language being taught at present. Staff plan to introduce Spanish lessons.
- The Parent Council supports the school with fundraising events. It holds monthly meetings, which are also attended by members of staff. Senior leaders consult parents on the priorities for using PEF and present the finalised plan to the Parent Council.
- Classes have timetabled religious and moral education (RME) lessons each week. The RME curriculum follows an appropriate progression framework. The local minister visits classes when they are studying Christianity to give a presentation. She also comes in once a term to lead assembly as well as at Christmas and Easter.
- 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 documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole-school approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of children through food in school. Minor areas for improvement have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.

Practice worth sharing more widely

Vlogs

Senior managers and teachers have implemented a system where each child, once a week, will create a short vlog about their learning. Staff have developed and enhanced this approach since its introduction. Children are constantly reflecting on their learning and on their personal targets as they create regular vlogs. Each class has an area with a laptop computer and a microphone so that children can record their vlog when ready to do so. Teachers use vlogs for diagnostic assessment and senior managers monitor children's responses to their learning across all classes. Children enjoy making these short videos and are keen to share them. They know that the headteacher often watches them and they are motivated when she leaves a voice note for them. Children understand that staff value their vlogs, as they award certificates for the best ones at assembly.

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.