

Summarised inspection findings

Largoward Primary School

Fife Council

21 January 2025

Key contextual information

Largoward Primary School is a small, rural school in the East of Fife. It serves the local community of Largoward and surrounding areas. At the time of inspection there were nine children attending the school, ranging from P1 to P7. Children are taught in a mixed-aged, multi-composite class. Most children live within Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles five and six. Attendance is in line with the national average. There has been no exclusions in the last year.

The headteacher has been in post since August 2020. She is also the headteacher of another primary school in St Andrews. There have been a number of changes within the small staff team over the last few years.

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

- Led effectively by the headteacher, staff have developed a positive and purposeful climate for learning which is underpinned by a strong focus on children's rights. Children demonstrate well the school values of respect, kindness, happiness, safety and learning in their actions throughout the school day. Staff encourage and support children to demonstrate positive behaviour through their use of nurturing principles, school values and through setting clear expectations. These approaches are summarised in a Promoting Positive Relationship and Behaviour policy which is shared with parents/carers. Staff support any children who require targeted support to regulate their emotions and manage the school day, sensitively and with compassion. Overall, children are well behaved and respectful towards adults and peers.
- The headteacher and staff know children very well as individuals. They are committed to improving outcomes and work together effectively to support learning for all children. They create bright, attractive, and well-organised learning environments. Displays are created with children and are used well to support learning. Staff make good use of the school grounds and the local environment to motivate children. This supports children well to understand their unique local environment and ways to stay safe outdoors. Staff work well with partner organisations to enhance and extend children's learning across the curriculum. As planned, staff should increasingly discuss with children the skills they are developing. This should help children apply their learning in new and unfamiliar contexts.
- Almost all children are motivated and enthusiastic in their learning. They demonstrate a willingness to contribute to discussions and share their skills, knowledge and opinions. Teachers plan regular opportunities for children to work independently, in pairs and in groups. However, the majority of lessons are too teacher led resulting in a few children becoming passive in their learning experiences. Teachers should provide children with increased opportunities to lead and extend their own learning.

- Staff have an agreed approach to lesson structures to provide consistency in high-quality learning experiences. All teachers provide clear instructions and explanations. In almost all lessons, teachers share with children the purpose of their learning and how to be successful. In the majority of lesson, children are involved in co-creating what success will look like. Teachers use questioning well in most lessons to re-cap prior knowledge and to check for understanding. In a minority of lessons teachers use a range of questioning techniques to develop children's higher order thinking. Teachers use plenary sessions successfully to share examples of good work to encourage and support children to reflect on their learning. A few children require a brisker pace of learning and increased challenge. The headteacher should continue to support teachers to plan and provide activities which are carefully matched to the needs of all children.
- All teachers use praise well and provide supportive verbal feedback in lessons. Children are developing skills and confidence in assessing their own learning and that of their peers. Teachers' written feedback to help children improve their work and identify next steps is not yet of high enough quality. Teachers should ensure feedback on children's work, supports children to understand better what they need to do to improve.
- The headteacher's approaches to leading learning are underpinned by a strong drive to ensure all children attain and achieve. She has developed an effective quality assurance calendar, detailing approaches to evaluating and monitoring the quality of learning and teaching. She regularly samples children's work, gathers the views of learners and observes learning experiences across the curriculum. Teachers value the role of quality assurance activities in developing further improvements in learning and teaching. Teaching and support staff engage in regular professional learning and research-based activities, for example, digital technology, play and literacy. They use this learning effectively to reflect on how best to support children's progress. Staff work closely together and with colleagues in the learning partnership to share ideas and good practice. There is a very strong sense of teamwork across the whole staff.
- Teachers use interactive whiteboards well during direct teaching to present information and instructions. They use a digital skills-focused progression pathway successfully to support the development of digital learning across the curriculum. This ensures that digital technology enhances learning and builds on children's prior learning. Children use digital devices positively to support their learning. They are able to access the internet to support research projects and can use digital codes confidently. They enjoy using a range of relevant online games and apps to extend and consolidate their learning in literacy and numeracy. A few children make very good use of accessibility tools to aid their writing. This is impacting positively on children's independence, motivation and progress in writing.
- Staff are introducing play experiences successfully into younger children's daily routines and as part of learning. They have reviewed the learning environment to provide improved learning spaces, including construction and role play areas. Children use their imagination and develop their creativity when using these areas. Staff should continue to engage in professional learning to support them to plan a range of learning experiences which are appropriate to children's stage of development.
- The pupil support assistant supports children very well with their learning, both in class and when working with small groups. They are sensitive to the needs and wellbeing of all children. They provide a range of interventions which are helping children with barriers to their learning to make progress.
- Teachers use a range of assessment data to measure the progress children are making in literacy and numeracy. This includes standardised assessments and ongoing class assessments. Teachers use assessment information to inform short-term and long-term

planning of learning. In most lessons, teachers use formative assessment strategies well to check children's understanding. Staff should continue to gather assessment information over time. This will help to support their shared understanding of children's progress across the curriculum.

- Teachers have participated in cluster level moderation work to develop a shared understanding of expected standards, particularly in writing. This session they are focusing on health and wellbeing. Teachers should continue to engage in moderation activities with colleagues within the school and cluster. This will support them to develop their confidence in applying national standards accurately when assessing children's progress in learning across all curricular areas.
- Teachers plan children's learning across a range of timescales. Teachers use local authority progression pathways to plan children's learning across all curricular areas. They link these to the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) and national Benchmarks. Teachers bundle areas of the curriculum together in a three-year rolling programme. This supports effective planning for a multi-stage class. Teachers involve children in the planning of learning by gathering their views on what they already know and what they would like to find out. Teachers create termly learning overviews, which they share with parents/carers. This helps parents/carers to understand their child's learning and achievement journey. Teachers plan learning that is set at different levels of difficulty to take account of children working at different stages within each class. This meets the needs of most children well. A few children would benefit from more challenge in their learning. The headteacher should support teachers to ensure all learning activities are planned at the right level of difficulty. This will enable all children to make appropriate progress in their learning.
- The headteacher meets with teachers termly to discuss children's progress and attainment in literacy and numeracy. They are at the early stages of tracking children's progress across all areas of the curriculum. The headteacher and teachers use local authority tracking proformas and pathways to identify the progress children are making. They make predictions of children's projected levels of attainment. They identify children who require additional support with their learning. Teachers and the pupil support assistant provide targeted interventions to raise attainment for individual children. Staff should review interventions more regularly to ensure they are accelerating children's progress.

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

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

- The school roll comprises of a small number of children across P1 to P7. As a result, attainment and progress will be expressed in 'overall' statements, rather than for specific year groups or CfE levels.
- Overall, attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is good. Most children are on track to achieve expected levels of attainment in listening and talking, reading and numeracy. The majority of children are on track to achieve expected levels of attainment in writing. A few children are capable of achieving more.
- Children who require additional support with their learning, are making good progress towards their individual targets.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, most children make good progress in literacy and English.

Listening and talking

- Across the school, children listen well in teacher-led activities and follow instructions confidently. They engage enthusiastically in class discussions. They recount experiences and build on the ideas of peers well. Children apply verbal and non-verbal techniques with increasing confidence, for example, vocabulary, eye contact, expression and/or body language. At times, a few children require support to apply effective listening and talking skills, such as turn taking. Children ask and answer questions about texts to show and support understanding appropriate to their age and stage. They are less confident at identifying techniques used to engage or influence the listener, for example, vocabulary, emphasis, tone and/or rhetorical questions.

Reading

- All children share their favourite authors and explain confidently their reasons why. They read well with fluency and expression, appropriate to their age and stage. They use a range of appropriate strategies to help them read new and unfamiliar words. They talk well about main ideas in a text and demonstrate a good understanding of setting and characters. Children answer a range of literal and inferential questions about texts with increasing confidence. They would benefit developing further their understanding of the features of non-fiction texts.

Writing

- Children write well for a variety of purposes across genres, for example, recipes, instructions and imaginative stories. This is often stimulated by stories, learning outdoors and real-life events. Their recent texts show clear signs of progress and improvement, with increased

length and featuring more ambitious vocabulary. They would benefit from further support to use a range of punctuation accurately in their writing. Children should continue to have regular practice in developing their handwriting and presentation skills.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, most children make good progress in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure

- Across the school, children are developing their understanding of number and number processes appropriate to their age and stage. They are developing confidence in adding and subtracting whole numbers. They are less confident talking about a range of strategies they use to add and subtract. They read and record time in both 12 and 24-hour notation and convert between the two, appropriate to their age and stage. Across the school, children need to develop their knowledge and understanding of fractions, decimal fractions and percentages.

Shape, position and movement

- Children name and discuss confidently the properties of two-dimensional shapes. They need to further develop their understanding of three-dimensional objects. Children understand and correctly use the language of position and direction appropriate to their age and stage, including compass points and grid references. Children will benefit from further developing their understanding of angles.

Information handling

- Children sort and display data in a variety of different ways. They know how to collect information using tally marks and display their data in graphs and charts. Older children select independently the correct scale to use for graphs. They work together regularly to analyse, interpret and draw conclusions from data. Children use digital technology well to enhance their skills in information handling.

Attainment over time

- Given the very small school roll and changing cohorts of children each year, overall attainment over time is varied. The headteacher and teachers track the progress individual children are making towards meeting their individual targets. This progress is aligned to Curriculum for Excellence levels. Overall, children are supported well to make good progress over time in literacy and numeracy from their prior levels of attainment. The headteacher and teachers meet regularly to track and monitor children's progress in all aspects of literacy and numeracy. They use this data well to inform whole school improvement and provide targeted support to close the gaps. For example, the implementation of whole school changes to writing pedagogy is leading to improvements in children's writing attainment. As planned, senior leaders and teachers should continue to improve approaches to tracking children's progress across all curricular areas.
- Attendance is in line with the national average. The headteacher monitors the attendance of children regularly and closely, following local authority guidance. There are robust procedures in place to ensure children's safety if they are absent from school. Should a child's attendance dip below a benchmark, staff notify the parents/carers and agree support to help the child attend school. The headteacher works closely with families when children require support with their attendance. Supports include attendance meetings, social stories and morning routine timelines. This helps to retain positive levels of attendance across the school.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Children are proud of their achievements in and out of school. They celebrate achievements at assembly, in class and through weekly newsletters. All children participate well in school

leadership groups, including the pupil council, digital leaders and eco committee. These experiences help children develop confidence, leadership, and communication skills. The school community is working towards national accreditation for its work in digital technology, eco awareness and children's rights. Older children enjoy taking on further roles of responsibility such as house captains and junior leaders. Junior leaders successfully plan and lead sporting activities including tennis and football during break times. All of these leadership roles are supporting children to develop and demonstrate the four capacities of CfE. Children are proud of the contribution they make to their school.

- Staff, partners and older children offer a range of lunchtime and after school clubs such as rugby and digital coding. Children enjoy attending these clubs. They are learning new skills, including teamwork, and game strategy.
- Staff track children's participation in committees, clubs and outside activities regularly to ensure they identify gaps in children's opportunities for achievement. Staff are at the early stages of introducing a progressive approach to skills development. Through this work, they should support children to identify confidently and profile the various skills for learning, life and work they are developing in a meaningful way.

Equity for all learners

- All staff have a clear understanding of the social, cultural, and economic context of the children and families who attend the school. The headteacher monitors the cost of the school day closely. Staff provide a range of supports including breakfast cereal and snacks, a uniform exchange, school trips and referrals to local supports within the community. Parent Council fundraising ensures all school events are free.
- The school receives a small amount of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). The headteacher works effectively with parents and staff to plan the best use of PEF to support children facing additional challenges. Additional pupil support hours are supporting individual children's attainment in aspects of literacy. Staff now need to monitor regularly the impact of interventions on outcomes for children. This includes evidencing the progress they are making in accelerating closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

Other relevant evidence

- All children have access to two hours high-quality physical education each week at the village hall and within the playground. Teachers plan children's learning in physical education using local authority frameworks linked to CfE experiences and outcomes and Benchmarks.
- All children receive their entitlement to learn 1+2 modern languages. Teachers use a progression vocabulary framework to teach children French. All children also learn British Sign Language.
- Children benefit from a well-stocked class library that provides a range of fiction and non-fiction texts. A library van visits the school fortnightly. Children borrow texts to read for pleasure in school and at home.
- Children receive religious and moral education through planned learning opportunities to learn about different religious beliefs. Children participate in religious services with the local church.
- Teachers work effectively with colleagues at all stages of transition to support children well as they come to school from early years settings or move on to secondary school. They share a range of appropriate information well to help ensure children's continuity of learning, wellbeing and progress. At P1, there is a well-established transition programme in place that is supportive and helpful for families. Children moving to S1 are supported well to make successful transitions. Staff organise a range of different events across the school year. This includes opportunities for children at P1 and P7 to learn, play and socialise with same-age peers from the partnership school.

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.