

# Summarised inspection findings

**Windyknowe Primary School and Nursery Class**

West Lothian Council

18 February 2020

## Key contextual information

Windyknowe Primary School is a non-denominational school situated in the town of Bathgate. Currently, the school has a roll of 394 children across 15 classes and a nursery class with 72 children. The established headteacher has been in post for a number of years. She is supported effectively by a depute headteacher and an acting principal teacher who have responsibility for key areas of the school.

### 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 and staff are deeply committed to creating a nurturing, inclusive culture and purposeful environment for learning. 'The Windyknowe Way' and children's rights are an integral part of daily life for the school community. This supports the mutually respectful ethos that is evident across the school, which enables children's readiness to learn. Staff have consistently high expectations of achievement and behaviour for all learners. They promote positive relationships highly effectively and challenge children to do their very best on a daily basis. As a result, children are resilient learners, who persevere in the face of difficulties. They describe how making mistakes actually makes you a better learner.
- In almost all lessons, teachers plan well and take account of children's needs. Teachers plan appropriately differentiated activities, particularly in literacy and numeracy, which enable children to achieve success. Most learning activities are enjoyable and children engage well. In a minority of lessons teachers should increase further the pace and challenge of learning.
- In almost all lessons, the purpose of learning is clear. In most classes, there is ongoing meaningful dialogue between children and teachers about the learning taking place. As a result, children have a sound understanding of themselves as learners and consequently welcome responsibility for their own learning. In almost all classes, children have frequent opportunities to lead their own learning and contribute to the planning of tasks. Children frequently undertake complex tasks with a high level of focus. In most classes, teachers support children to articulate how they will know they are successful in tasks. Children make effective use of helpful target booklets in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. This enhances further their understanding of themselves as learners. As planned, teachers should extend the use of targets across other curricular areas. This should support all children to articulate their next steps in learning across the curriculum. In a few classes, teachers provide high quality written feedback, which enables children to identify their next steps in learning. Teachers should share this practice more widely to support learners across the school to identify next steps in learning.
- Staff work together enthusiastically to improve further the consistency and creativity of their approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. They engage in frequent professional

learning and share their own learning with others to improve continuously their practice. They create regular opportunities to share each other's areas of expertise and interest.

- Across the school, all staff use the same lesson structure which builds on prior learning. As a result, children experience consistency in the approach to learning in all classes, which maximises learning time. Teachers' explanations and instructions are clear. Almost all teachers employ a range of effective questioning techniques, which are supporting children to develop higher order thinking skills. A few teachers use highly effective questioning to elicit deep, active reflection on learning from children. Teachers make effective and consistent use of plenaries. This supports children to reflect on how successful they have been in their learning.
- Staff make effective use of digital technology to support learning. For example, children in science use QR codes to access wildlife images. Staff use technology well to support the needs of a wide range of learners.
- Teachers ensure assessment is integral to the planning of learning and teaching. They gather appropriate information through planned summative and formative assessment, observation of children's learning and standardised assessments. Teachers use National Benchmarks in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing to inform their assessment. All children make effective use of wellbeing indicators to self-assess their wellbeing. Teachers use this self-assessment information well to support individual children to develop specific aspects of their wellbeing. Teachers should continue to develop further the use of high quality assessments to demonstrate children's application of skills across the curriculum.
- Senior leaders and teachers are developing a shared understanding of children's progress. All teachers engage well in regular, planned moderation activities focusing on literacy, numeracy and mathematics and health and wellbeing. This supports their understanding of expectations across the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. The majority of teachers engage in moderation of achievement of a level with colleagues in associated schools. Senior leaders should continue to develop such opportunities, to support sharing of standards.
- Teachers use helpful curriculum guidance well to inform their planning of all curriculum areas. Children in all classes are fully involved in identifying what they would like to learn in topic work. In most classes, children have opportunities across the school year to identify a few preferred contexts for learning. Teachers make effective use of this consultation to plan learning and teaching.
- Teachers meet regularly with senior leaders, stage partners and additional support for learning teachers to monitor and track children's progress. This focuses on all aspects of the moderation cycle. Senior leaders and teachers make highly effective use of these meetings to moderate teachers professional judgement of children's progress within and across CfE levels. They identify specific interventions for those who require further support, challenge or have barriers to their learning. Senior leaders make effective use of a range of data to evaluate the impact of the different interventions on 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. 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

- Overall, children's attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is good.
- Data provided by the school for session 2018/19 shows that most children across the school achieved expected CfE levels in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics. We agree with teachers' professional judgements for achievement of a level.

### Literacy and English

- Overall, attainment in literacy is good. Most children are making expected progress.

### Listening and talking

- Attainment in listening and talking is good. At early level, most children listen well to instructions and talk confidently with others to share feelings, ideas and thoughts. They should continue to focus on developing turn taking when working with others. At first level, most children contribute well when engaging with others in a group and communicate clearly and audibly. At second level, most children ask and respond well to a range of questions. They contribute a number of relevant ideas when engaging with others. Children at first and second level should now apply their listening and talking skills more regularly across the curriculum.

### Reading

- Attainment in reading is good. At early level, most children use knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns well to read words. They choose familiar texts to enjoy. At this stage, children should continue to develop their awareness of the features of different types of text. At first level, most children explain well a preference for a particular text and describe the main idea. They are less confident in reading aloud with expression. At second level, most children make relevant comments about features of language and recognise techniques used to influence the reader. They should continue to develop a range of reading strategies to support their understanding of different types of text. Teachers make appropriate use of the newly established school library to encourage children to read. They plan to develop further the reading culture across the school.

### Writing

- Attainment in writing is good. Teachers have recently developed their approaches to the teaching of writing. This has impacted positively on children's engagement and enjoyment across the school. At early level, most children write most lower case letters legibly and attempt to spell familiar words using their knowledge of sounds. A few children attempt to write a sentence independently. At first level, most children discuss the features of writing required in a few genres such as poetry and story writing. They write independently using appropriate punctuation and use relevant vocabulary. At second level, most children create a variety of text for different purposes and attempt to engage the reader using appropriate language. Across

first and second level, children need to increase the length of their writing. This should ensure they have given the reader all the relevant ideas and information.

## **Numeracy and mathematics**

- Overall, children's attainment in numeracy and mathematics is good. Most children are making expected progress. Children apply their numeracy and mathematics skills in a range of contexts. This is leading to increased confidence, which is impacting positively on most children's attainment.

## **Number money and measure**

- At early level, most children identify and use numbers well within 20. Most children share out a group of items equally into smaller groups. They link daily routines and personal events to timed sequences. At first level, most children understand the value of numbers to 1000. Children use the correct notation for common fractions. They are not yet able to explain the role of the numerator and denominator. The majority of children tell the time using analogue and digital 12-hour clocks. At second level, most children understand the value of numbers up to 1,000,000. A few children are able to order numbers below zero. Most children estimate the duration of a journey based on knowledge of the link between speed, distance and time.

## **Shape, position and movement**

- Most children describe two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects using specific vocabulary for their stage of learning. At early level, most children understand and correctly use the language of position and direction. At first level, a few children know that a right angle is 90 degrees. At second level, most children use mathematical language to describe and classify a range of angles. A few children know that the radius is half of the diameter of a circle.

## **Information handling**

- At early level, children contribute to pictorial displays demonstrating the number of toys. At first level, most children use a variety of different methods to display data. A few children make reasonable predictions of the likelihood of an event occurring. At second level, most children collect, organise and display data using the most suitable method for a given task. They use the language of probability accurately to describe the likelihood of simple events occurring.

## **Attainment over time**

- Most children are making good progress over time, with a few children exceeding expected levels in literacy and numeracy. Teachers are becoming more confident in using a range of assessment information, including standardised assessments, to support professional judgements on children's progress. The headteacher, together with senior leaders, makes highly effective use of attainment information to monitor children's attainment over time. Senior leaders meet regularly with teachers across stages to review children's progress. With teachers, they identify children requiring additional support and challenge in their learning. This supports most children to make appropriate progress in literacy and numeracy. Individual children with additional support needs make very good progress from their prior levels of attainment. Senior leaders are aware they should continue to develop tracking processes to include all areas of the curriculum.

## **Overall quality of learners' achievements**

- Children engage in a range of opportunities to support their developing leadership skills. These include language ambassadors, pupil council, 'digitech' leaders and reading buddies. Teachers should increase opportunities for younger children to engage in these groups. Children learn how to take responsibility for planning and organising different events and the skills required to do this. They benefit from a range of activities which help to develop their understanding of business and enterprise including charity fundraising. Established business

links with local employers enhance further this work supporting children to make links with the world of work.

- Children participate in a range of clubs offered by staff and the Active Schools coordinator. This is enabling children to widen their interests and develop their social skills. This has led to the school recently achieving its Gold Award from sportscotland. Children in P5 and P7 are developing confidence, resilience and self-esteem through the school's residential excursions. Staff recognise and celebrate children's achievements through assemblies, social media, 'WOW' awards and displays around the school. Children are proud of their own achievements both in and out of school and show an understanding of their importance. Teachers are not yet formally recording children's participation or progress in wider achievements. This information should help children to understand the skills they are developing across their learning experiences both in and out of school.

### **Equity for all learners**

- Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of children who may face barriers to their learning due to socio-economic circumstances. Teachers track children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Well-planned targeted interventions support children to continue to develop their learning. The school supports families to ensure all children access excursions, activities and events.
- The headteacher uses Pupil Equity Funding effectively to develop strategies to reduce barriers to learning. Staff use a variety of new resources to raise attainment in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. The headteacher employs a 'raising attainment' teacher to support identified children. There are clear signs of improvement in attainment for identified children. Senior leaders should consult more widely with all stakeholders to gather their views on the use of this funding.

## Other relevant evidence

The headteacher provides highly effective leadership to empower the whole school community. She is ably supported by a depute headteacher and an acting principal teacher. Together, they provide strong, strategic leadership for all aspects of school life. There is a relentless focus on improving outcomes for all children at Windyknowe Primary School. Senior leaders create a culture where teachers and children are empowered to try new initiatives and lead key aspects of the school's improvement priorities. Staff seek out and offer each other a range of professional learning activities to enhance their own skills and improve outcomes for children.



## 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.