

Summarised inspection findings

Guildtown Primary School

Perth and Kinross Council

27 May 2025

Key contextual information

Guildtown Primary School is a non-denominational school serving the village of Guildtown in rural Perthshire. There are 37 children across two multi-composite classes. The school roll has trebled over the last five years due to the building of new housing nearby. The acting headteacher has been in post since August 2024. There have been significant changes to the staff team since August 2024 with almost all staff being new to the school this session. Almost all children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation decile four. Across the school, a minority of children require additional support with their learning. A minority of children have English as an additional language. A small number of children are in receipt of free school meals.

1.3 Leadership of change	good
This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are: - developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community - strategic planning for continuous improvement - implementing improvement and change	

- Led effectively by the acting headteacher, the new staff team have established collaborative and supportive working relationships effectively across the school. Staff have rightly focussed their attention on developing a happy and calm school ethos. As a result, they have mitigated successfully against any potential negative impact of staffing changes for children and their families. Staff work together very effectively to ensure a positive and inclusive ethos permeates all aspects of the growing community at Guildtown Primary. All staff have high expectations of children, and children respond well to these.
- All staff work well to ensure the school's values of 'supportive, togetherness, ambition and respect' (STAR) are understood by all children and embedded into daily school life. Almost all children articulate well the school's values and talk enthusiastically about how these are promoted across the school. Children earn awards to become a Guildtown 'STAR' which celebrates their demonstration of the school values. This supports children to have high expectations of themselves and drives their ambition to succeed.
- Since taking up post, the acting headteacher has been responsive to the needs of the school. She has correctly reviewed strategic priorities to ensure that they are appropriate and manageable in the context of the changes of staffing. The acting headteacher prioritised correctly developing relationships and ensuring all staff had a shared understanding of newly introduced systems to ensure consistency in practice. The acting headteacher has developed a comprehensive collegiate calendar which identifies plans for improvement across the year. This calendar provides time for all staff to engage in professional dialogue on learning and teaching, planning, tracking and monitoring. All staff embrace the culture of shared responsibility the acting headteacher has created. As a result, the acting headteacher has gained the confidence and trust of staff, children and parents.
- The acting headteacher is ably supported by the staff team. Together they have committed to identifying initial areas to support the direction of school improvement. This session, staff have prioritised; improving learning environments and teachers' planning, creating a shared

understanding of standards in writing and supporting children's emotional literacy. However, due to the need to establish the new team and to ensure continuity for children, many improvements are at an early stage in development. As planned, the acting headteacher should continue to work with staff to increase further the pace of change. As part of this process, staff need to ensure they better include all stakeholders in taking forward new developments.

- The acting headteacher has established clear systems to monitor the quality of children's experiences. Teachers benefit from a helpful quality assurance framework which identifies key monitoring activities to be undertaken across the school year. For example, the acting headteacher monitors children's learning and undertakes lesson observations. She meets with staff regularly to discuss planned learning and children's progress and attainment. Teachers receive helpful information that identifies clearly their strengths and next steps.
- All staff undertake professional review opportunities where they identify individual plans that reflect well their own needs and those relating to school improvement priorities. All staff are extremely enthusiastic about supporting improvements going forward. Staff leadership is at an early stage of development. A few staff have leadership roles, for example, improving the library and meeting children's needs. The acting headteacher should now look at ways to increase opportunities for more staff to lead school improvement priorities.
- Older children act as buddies to support younger children's experiences. For example, they support children with their reading, in the playground and during joint activities such as making fruit kebabs together. In addition, all children have opportunities to contribute their views informally in classes and during assemblies. As a result, most children feel their views are listened to and considered. For example, children's suggestions have resulted in improvements to lunchtime experiences. Staff should continue to provide meaningful opportunities for children to contribute to improving school life. This will support children to develop leadership skills, build their confidence and be more actively involved in school improvement.
- All staff have a strong understanding of the school community, their unique context and individual families' circumstances. The acting headteacher uses Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) well to provide additional staff who facilitate well planned and targeted support for children with barriers to their learning. She discusses with parents how best to use funding and shares information about progress of plans with them regularly.

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

- All children benefit from learning in a caring, positive and nurturing environment which reflects well the embedded school values. Most children feel staff treat them fairly and help them to understand and respect others. Children are highly respectful of each other, staff and visitors and are well-mannered and welcoming. Relationships between staff and children, and between children, are very positive. Most children feel they are encouraged to do the best they can.
- Almost all children display a positive attitude to all aspects of school life. They work well independently and in groups or pairs. Older children are positive role models for their younger peers. For example, older children act as buddies and pair up with younger children for a variety of activities and when interacting in the playground. Overall, almost all children behave very well and demonstrate high levels of engagement in learning.
- A minority of children have an awareness of their rights as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Although staff share class charters to support this understanding, a majority of children have a limited awareness of children's rights overall. Staff should continue to deepen children's understanding further of their rights and embed this into daily practices in school.
- Staff benefit from guidance set out in a new learning, teaching and assessment policy. This provides staff with a shared understanding of key aspects of high-quality learning and teaching. Teachers provide clear explanations and instructions to support children to undertake learning activities. In almost all lessons, teachers share accurately the purpose of the lesson and provide clarity to children about how they can be successful in their learning. Teachers make links regularly to prior learning which supports children well to develop their understanding and build on learning from previous lessons. In all lessons, teachers use questioning effectively to check children's understanding and to recall key information. In addition, in most lessons, teachers use questioning skilfully to support and extend children's thinking, creativity and curiosity. As a result, children are developing well their higher order thinking skills. As planned, staff should continue to develop their bespoke learning, teaching and assessment framework to provide further clarity on key features of high-quality lessons in the school.
- Younger children enjoy 'Smart Starts' for the first part of each day. This provides children with rich, adult-led, opportunities to consolidate previous learning and explore new concepts through play. Staff have made improvements to children's learning spaces to support this approach. As a result, younger children are deepening their understanding of key learning as they play together. During these structured times, staff observe and engage in discussion well with children which helps them to consolidate and deepen their learning. The acting headteacher and staff should now look to provide a greater balance of adult-initiated and child-led experiences as they develop play pedagogy further. This will allow children to

develop and apply their skills and knowledge in contexts of interest to them. In addition, staff should look at ways to extend this approach across the school. This will help all children to develop enquiry skills appropriately according to their age and stage.

- Across the school, staff use digital technology well to support children's learning. The school received national external accreditation last session in recognition of their digital learning approaches. Teachers engage children well using interactive whiteboards effectively to support their teaching and to make learning enjoyable and interesting. Children use digital platforms, a variety of electronic equipment and applications well to enhance learning, such as accessing games and learning about coding. Older children are encouraged to exercise choice in using a variety of electronic tools to support their learning. As a result, children's independence and engagement in learning has increased. The acting headteacher and staff should now develop a digital skills pathway to identify the skills children develop through these opportunities, across different stages.
- Almost all children are developing well their skills in peer and self-assessment in writing. Teachers provide helpful oral and written feedback to support children to identify strengths and next steps in their writing. As a result, most children feel staff help them to understand how their writing skills are progressing. As a next step, staff need to consider ways to apply this approach to other areas of the curriculum. This will support and encourage children to be more reflective in their learning across all subjects.
- Staff benefit from guidance set out in the school's annual assessment calendar. This calendar identifies all assessment activity planned across the year for each stage. Across the school, staff use a range of approaches to measure children's progress in learning. This includes the use of summative and standardised assessments. Staff are gaining greater confidence in interpreting the data available to them to support their professional judgements of achievement of a level. Staff use assessment evidence well to identify children who require support with their learning. Staff now need to ensure greater challenge is provided for a few children who are capable of making better progress.
- Teachers have benefitted from opportunities to moderate standards with colleagues from another school. This year teachers have reviewed the outcome of planned writing activities alongside national Benchmarks to develop a stronger understanding of achievement of a level in writing. The acting headteacher should continue to provide further moderation opportunities for staff to work with colleagues in other schools.
- Staff have established consistent approaches for planning learning and assessment. They plan over different time periods, long- term, medium- term and short-term. Teachers share medium term plans with parents to help families understand what their children will be learning. Teachers plan well to meet the needs of most children including those who require additional support with their learning.
- Staff have clear systems and procedures in place to monitor and track children's progress in learning in literacy and numeracy. The acting headteacher and teachers meet regularly to discuss children's progress in these curricular areas. During discussions, staff use assessment evidence well to plan targeted support for individuals and groups of children. Staff monitor the impact of interventions carefully to identify which interventions are improving outcomes for children. Building on this, staff need to now ensure they monitor and track children's progress across all areas of the curriculum.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- All staff use local authority learning pathways to support planning for all areas of the curriculum. The pathways make clear links to Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) experiences and outcomes and national Benchmarks. Staff use these pathways to support them to plan learning progressively across all curricular areas and build on children's prior knowledge.
- This session, staff are reviewing their approaches to planning learning across the curriculum. Currently, staff refer to a pre-populated plan where experiences and outcomes have been 'bundled' together. As planned, staff should continue to develop a programme that better meets the needs of their specific context and multi-composite class structure.
- Children benefit from a broad range of learning experiences. For example, children have been learning about Scottish culture through poetry, dance and learning Scots language. Children's enthusiasm to read for enjoyment is enhanced during national Book Week activities and the local 'Guildry' supports well children's understanding of their local context and heritage.
- Staff and children have worked together effectively to update and improve the school library. Children have worked with staff to identify new books for the library which include texts to raise children's awareness of diversity. Children and staff have relocated the library to a central point in the school building. In addition, children have agreed a new name for the library. As a result of these improvements, children talk positively about borrowing books and reading with their buddies, which is promoting well, children's enthusiasm for reading for pleasure.
- Children benefit from access to a wide range of learning spaces. They take part in physical education lessons in the local village hall and enjoy using the local park and playground to support their learning. Children learn about biodiversity and sustainability as they access the greenhouse and garden area. In this area, children enjoy growing plants and are currently engaging in creating a space to encourage bee pollination. Older children develop a greater understanding of life cycles of salmon, through observing and recording these changes live in their classroom. The acting headteacher and staff should now create a programme for outdoor learning experiences to support children to develop skills in sustainability progressively across the stages.
- All children from P1 to P7 learn French as part of the national modern languages programme. In addition, older children learn Gaelic and Spanish in blocks of learning. Going forward, the acting headteacher should ensure the modern languages programme is built upon progressively across all stages.
- The acting headteacher should continue with plans to support children to develop appropriate skills for learning, life and work. Teachers are at the early stages of developing children's awareness of these skills.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Most parents report that their child likes being at school and feel their child is making progress. A majority of parents say they feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or issues. However, a majority of parents express concern regarding the significant changes to staffing and leadership of the school. The local authority should continue to inform the parents of their plans to provide long-term, stable leadership for the school.
- School staff communicate well with parents through regular newsletters and through online platforms. The acting headteacher realises there is scope to improve further, opportunities to work together with parents to support children's learning. A significant minority of parents would like more information on their child's learning and development.
- The school is supported well by an active and engaged Parent Council (PC). Members of the PC are consulted regularly on decisions which affect the school and appreciate the clarity and quality of information provided by the acting headteacher. The PC raise funds to support the life and work of the school. For example, they have recently provided funding to support the development of the school library and to subsidise a trip to the pantomime for all children.

2.1 Safeguarding

- 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.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- All staff are committed to improving children's wellbeing. They build strong, caring and nurturing relationships with children and families, supporting children to learn in a calm and inclusive environment. Relationships amongst children and between children and adults are warm and respectful. Almost all children treat each other with kindness and acceptance. As a result, almost all children are happy and settled in school. Almost all children feel safe at school and know an adult they can talk to if they are worried or need help. All school staff support children who may find managing their emotions challenging with sensitivity, ensuring all children are treated with dignity and respect. Teachers use their strong knowledge of children and families to plan both universal and targeted supports to help children achieve their best.
- Children are beginning to develop their understanding of children's rights however, this work is in the early stages of development. A few children speak confidently about aspects relating to the UNCRC and of how this can improve their lives. The acting headteacher has recently started to explore children's rights in assemblies with children. For example, they have discussed their right to play and right to education and how this impacts their daily lives. As planned, staff should continue to explore and embed children's rights across all aspects of school life.
- Children are developing an increasing understanding of health and wellbeing as they discuss and evaluate their own wellbeing. Using a wellbeing tool, children assess and discuss their wellbeing with staff, when appropriate, to help them understand their own feelings and needs. The acting headteacher and staff review this data and plan appropriate interventions to improve children's wellbeing. At present, just less than half of children show a strong awareness of all wellbeing indicators. Moving forward, children need more support to develop further their understanding of the wellbeing indicators and their relevance to their own health and wellbeing.
- Children speak enthusiastically about their health and wellbeing experiences in school. Almost all children feel the school helps them to stay healthy. The school engages in partnership with a community worker who supports children's learning about food and nutrition. Children take part in cookery sessions weekly and learn basic hygiene, food preparation and cooking skills. As a result, children speak knowledgeably about food and health. They explain confidently different food groups and sort foods into healthy and less healthy groups. Older children carry out their buddying responsibilities well with younger children during whole school cookery sessions. This allows them to support younger children to develop cooking skills and also develops their own leadership skills.
- Teachers plan children's health and wellbeing learning well using experiences, outcomes and benchmarks. They provide children with a range of appropriate health and wellbeing learning

opportunities. For example, teachers follow national advice and guidance effectively to support children to learn about substance misuse, smoking, relationships, sexual health and parenthood. As a result, children develop knowledge and skills in all aspects of health and wellbeing well. All children benefit from two hours of high-quality physical education weekly. Staff carefully plan learning that develops well, children's physical education skills.

- Teachers plan religious and moral education (RME) effectively using progressive learning pathways to enrich children's awareness of key festivals in Christianity and other world religions. Staff should now make links to places of worship and religious leaders to further support children's learning in RME going forward.
- All staff have a strong understanding of their statutory duties to ensure children's wellbeing, equality and inclusion. All staff have up-to-date training relating to safeguarding and child protection. The acting headteacher ensures that all school partners are aware of their responsibilities and the school's approaches to ensuring children's safety. This includes sharing what to do if they have concerns for the wellbeing of a child. School staff support children who require additional support with their learning very effectively. They work closely with external agencies and voluntary organisations to ensure children and families get the support they need, when they need it. All children who require additional help with their learning are supported through well-considered plans which are reviewed and updated regularly. These plans include appropriate targets to support children make progress. The acting headteacher ensures parents are involved in the planning process. Moving forward, staff should ensure that, in line with children's rights, children are involved in planning for their support, learning and achievement.
- Children who require additional support with their learning are supported very effectively by skilled staff and partner agencies. All staff are committed to professional learning and participate in training relevant to meeting the needs of children. For example, staff have engaged in professional learning relating to trauma informed practice, de-escalation techniques, restorative practice and the principles of nurture. Staff ensure that this professional learning is used well during all their interactions with children. As a result, children's wellbeing needs are well met.
- All staff model acceptance and understanding to create a welcoming environment. The school's approach to promoting respectful and trusting relationships has impacted positively on children. Children new to the school form friendships quickly. Children respond well to the support offered by staff to manage any conflict between them and almost all children believe the school deals well with bullying. Staff help children to learn about the impact of bullying through assemblies and class-based learning activities. Whilst staff have access to an appropriate antibullying policy and positive relationships policy, the acting headteacher has identified the need to review and update these. As part of this update, they should include the views of staff, children, parents and partners to support this work.
- Most children have a growing awareness of inclusion and diversity. To support this, recently staff have purchased new reading material to help children to learn about and understand cultures across the world. The acting headteacher and staff should now include a focus on this in school improvement planning going forward.

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

- Due to small numbers of children at each stage, broad statements have been made to ensure children's anonymity. Children's attainment and progress is therefore expressed in overall statements, rather than for specific year groups or CfE levels.
- Overall, attainment in literacy and numeracy is good. Most children across the school are achieving nationally expected levels in literacy and numeracy. However, a few children across the school are capable of achieving more.
- Most children who require additional support with their learning are making good progress based on their individual learning targets.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Across the school, most children are making good progress in literacy and English.

Listening and talking

- Across the school most children are articulate and speak clearly and confidently. They have a well-developed vocabulary and understanding of spoken language. Younger children listen well to stories and retell these providing relevant detail. They enjoy listening to others and engage well as they work in pairs and small groups. Most older children share their ideas and opinions confidently in class and in small groups. They engage well in discussions, interacting effectively with each other and with adults. Most older children understand and respond well to more complex instructions. Across the school, a minority of children would benefit from more experience of being a quality audience. They would benefit from more support to develop skills in turn taking and building on the contributions of others.

Reading

- Almost all children across the school engage enthusiastically with reading activities. Most younger children recognise sounds and letters confidently and identify these successfully in their reading books and class-based texts. They use picture cues alongside their knowledge of sounds to read unfamiliar words confidently. Most older children identify the key features of fiction and non-fiction texts. They read and talk confidently about a variety of genre such as stories, poems and newspaper reports. Most older children recognise the key features of texts, such as the author, title, chapters and blurb.

Writing

- Younger children form letters and words correctly and write simple sentences using capital letters and full stops independently. Younger children are developing their understanding and use of more complex literary techniques well to improve the quality of their writing. For example, recently younger children have been identifying alliteration in stories and using this in

their own writing. Most older children write well for a variety of purposes. They embrace helpful advice given in self, peer and teacher assessments which helps them to make good progress in writing. Older children write for a range of purposes including recounts, newspaper reports, imaginative stories and persuasive writing. Across the school, most children would benefit from more opportunities to write for real life contexts. Moving forward, teachers should support children to improve the presentation of written work.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Across the school, most children make good progress in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure

- Almost all younger children articulate number sequences to 20 and beyond. They count on and back in fives and 10s. They confidently identify coins to £2 but would benefit from understanding more about the values of these coins in relation to larger and smaller amounts. Children at the middle stages use place value effectively to order numbers to 10, 000. They demonstrate confidence in ordering months of the year and identifying the seasons months lie in. They recall the correct measurements for height and weight but need support to revisit measuring volume. Older children have a strong understanding of place value of numbers to 1,000,000. They are increasing their confidence in completing two step problems and round numbers, including decimal numbers effectively. They show confidence in describing the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. They need to revisit how to simplify fractions.

Shape, position and movement

- Almost all younger children recognise simple two-dimensional (2D) shapes and three-dimensional (3D) objects. They use the language of position well to identify left and right and above and below. They use their knowledge of properties such as shape, colour and size to sort a group of items. At the middle stages, children confidently describe most properties of 2D shapes and some 3D objects. They are confident in identifying eight points on a compass and have a strong knowledge of symmetry. They would benefit from revisiting the differences between clockwise and anticlockwise. Older children use mathematical vocabulary accurately to identify different angles and understand that complimentary angles add up to 90 degrees. They identify points on a grid using co-ordinates accurately. They are less sure of the key features of a circle.

Information handling

- Almost all younger children effectively sort and match items according to size. They answer questions about data gathered using simple pictograms. At the middle stages, all children confidently describe how to gather and present data, including the use of frequency tables, pie charts and tally marks. They name different types of graphs accurately. They need support to revisit the key features of graphs such as axes, scales and titles. Older children have a strong understanding of the language of probability to describe the likelihood of events happening. They confidently describe how to collect, organise and display data effectively on a variety of displays. They would benefit from learning more about how to use software to present data digitally.

Attainment over time

- Overall, most children make good progress in literacy and numeracy over time. Teachers meet with the acting headteacher termly to discuss children's progress and plan next steps in their learning. Teachers are becoming increasingly confident in using data gathered from a range of assessments to improve their judgement of children's progress. The acting headteacher recognises the need for staff to continue to work together with other schools to support moderation. This includes providing time and space for teachers to discuss planning, learning,

teaching, assessment and attainment with colleagues from similar schools. This will support further a shared understanding of standards across the staff team.

- Attendance at school is 93.3%. This is in line with the local and national averages. The acting headteacher and teachers monitor school attendance regularly and offer appropriate and sensitive support to families to promote attendance. Staff recognise that most absence relates to family holidays taken during term time. The acting headteacher works very well with partner agencies to support any child who experiences challenges in attending school. This includes support for any child receiving part time education, to make appropriate progress. All children who experience part time education are supported by well-considered plans which are reviewed within appropriate timescales.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Children benefit from participation in a range of sporting activities in school. They speak enthusiastically about their participation in hockey, curling, basketball and swimming activities and of their success in these sports. All children developed increased confidence and resilience as they performed in the school Christmas show. All children are proud of their achievements in activities provided by a local artist, such as in creating the Guildry murals in school. Children speak confidently about their role in this and are beginning to describe the skills they are developing as a result. In addition, this learning has improved children's knowledge of their local heritage.
- School staff celebrate children's achievement through online platforms, attractive wall displays and school assemblies. Children speak proudly of their awards in recognition of their efforts to demonstrate the school's values. Children's successes out with school are celebrated regularly. Teachers track children's participation in clubs and activities and intervene sensitively to support children who may be missing out. Moving forward, staff should support children to identify and track the skills they are developing through these activities.

Equity for all learners

- Staff have a sound understanding of the socio-economic context of the school and local community. Staff know children and families very well and offer sensitive support to families who may require assistance. Staff work well with partner agencies and local charities to ensure that appropriate supports are in place for families who need them. They source grants from local and national businesses to provide additional experiences for children. For example, a recent grant has provided art and health and wellbeing activities for all children in school. Staff encourage parents to access pre-loved uniform in school and advertise this regularly through newsletters. All children are supported to gain a free bus pass which helps reduce the cost of transport for trips in their local community.
- The acting headteacher uses PEF appropriately to provide additional staffing for children who require additional support with their learning. This includes both universal and targeted support in literacy and numeracy which supports children to learn and achieve. The headteacher allocates additional funding to ensure no child misses out on activities and experiences due to financial constraints. As a next step, school staff should track the use of PEF more rigorously to ensure that targeted interventions are helping to reduce the poverty related attainment gap.

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.