

Summarised inspection findings

Eaglesfield Primary School

Dumfries and Galloway Council

12 May 2026

Key contextual information

Eaglesfield Primary School is located in the village of Eaglesfield, in Dumfries and Galloway Council. The school roll is 62 children working across three multi-composite classes. The headteacher is in his third year at the school. There are two full-time class teachers and a principal teacher who is class committed for four days per week. There is also a support for learning teacher who visits the school for one day every fortnight and liaises with staff online. There are two learning assistants.

Almost all children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles 7 and 8. Approximately forty percent of children require additional support with their learning.

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

- Across the school, there is a highly positive ethos for learning and children learn in a very calm and nurturing environment. All staff foster supportive and respectful relationships with children very well. They use the school values of 'relationships, ambition, inclusion, support and enjoyment' effectively as core features of their practice. Almost all children demonstrate the school values successfully in their interactions with adults and each other. Children speak with pride about their school and are confident and highly enthusiastic learners. All staff support children very effectively to identify and understand their rights. Most children speak articulately about their rights. They are rightly proud of the national award which they have received for work on children's rights.
- Almost all children behave very well. They benefit from daily emotional check ins, calm spaces and sensory supports if required. Children manage their emotions effectively and engage positively in lessons helping each other well in their learning and play. Teachers provide children with a daily 'soft start' which supports children's wellbeing and readiness to learn effectively as they transition from home to school.
- Across the school, staff have created bright, attractive and well organised learning environments, where children's work is valued and celebrated. Increasingly, teachers make effective use of their school grounds and unique rural setting to plan different experiences for children to take their learning outdoors. For example, younger children benefit from developing numeracy skills within the local woodland area. This supports children to learn in different contexts and develop an appreciation of the natural world. As planned, staff should

continue to develop approaches to outdoor learning to ensure that children develop and apply their skills in a progressive way.

- The headteacher and staff use a helpful learning and teaching policy and the 'Good lesson at a Glance' document to plan effectively for learning. Children in the pupil council have created a 'What good learning looks like' document. These documents together support staff well to develop a shared understanding of high-quality learning and teaching. In all lessons, teachers provide clear explanations and instructions. They share with children the purpose of learning and discuss with them how they can be successful. Almost all children work well together in pairs and in groups as enthusiastic learners. In almost all lessons, teachers set learning at different levels of difficulty to meet children's needs well. In almost all lessons, teachers use questioning well to help children revisit prior learning, recall facts and to check for understanding. As planned, teachers should continue to develop their use of open-ended questions to further develop children's higher order thinking skills.
- Teachers continue to develop play-based approaches well to support younger children's learning. They share this effective practice with other schools in the local authority. Teachers are developing well their skills in observation to identify next steps and respond to individual needs. They discuss with children what learning experiences and activities they would like and respond to children's suggestions, changing resources weekly. Building upon this approach, staff have started to extend play for older children including during the daily 'soft start' sessions. Further engagement with national practice guidance should support staff to continue to develop purposeful play pedagogy across the school.
- Teachers make very effective use of digital tools to support children's learning. They use interactive whiteboards well to engage and motivate children. For example, teachers use multi media clips as a stimulus to inspire children in their writing. Younger children use digital devices and software packages to help them develop numeracy skills and use programmable toys to learn about coding. Children who require support with learning use assistive technology software successfully to access tasks and activities to help them overcome barriers to learning. As planned, staff should further enhance the use of digital technology through progressive planning and tracking of children's digital skills.
- Across the school, children engage very well in their learning, showing a real determination to succeed. Children set and evaluate their own targets for literacy, numeracy and across other curricular areas successfully. They do this in partnership with teachers in valuable learning conversations twice a term. Children also discuss their learning with their families during 'learning conversations' at parents' evenings. These approaches support children well to understand how they best learn. Teachers support children successfully to review their progress in literacy and numeracy, through effective oral and written feedback and during 'Target Review Time'. All children enjoy helping to maintain personal 'Target Folders' which contain examples of their best work and demonstrate their increasing progress in literacy and numeracy.
- Almost all children agree that staff help them to understand the progress they are making in their work. They engage successfully in opportunities to effectively peer and self-assess their work. For example, older children particularly enjoy using their 'reading glasses' to review and edit their writing. Teachers refer to the skills children develop during learning. Children talk confidently about these skills as appropriate to their age and stage. For example, younger

children enjoy wearing character lanyards to show the skills they have used, such as creativity and communication.

- The headteacher has introduced a helpful assessment calendar and policy for staff. These outline clearly a wide range of assessment approaches and the timing of national, standardised and summative assessments. Teachers collate a wide range of assessment evidence in children's individual assessment folios which evidences mostly children's progress in literacy and numeracy. In addition, teachers assess children's progress in health and wellbeing regularly. Building on this, it would be beneficial for staff to gather a wider range of evidence of children's progress across further curricular areas.
- Staff moderate learning together in school through collaborative planning, sharing of practice and regular informal discussions. They engage effectively in moderating the teaching and assessment of literacy and numeracy within the local cluster and lead the moderation of numeracy. As planned, the headteacher should continue to provide teachers with further opportunities for moderation. A next step is to develop further staff's understanding of national expectations across a greater range of curricular areas.
- Teachers plan children's learning over different timescales across all curricular areas. They use the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) effectively to support their planning. They use local authority progression frameworks to plan progressive learning for children, taking effective account of children's different learning needs. Teachers consider children's experiences across different contexts, such as through personal achievement or the wider life of the school, when planning learning. Teachers use a comprehensive three-year overview to plan progressive learning that links different areas of the curriculum within different contexts. This ensures children receive breadth of learning within multi-stage classes. Children have choice within these topics about what they would like to learn and where possible, have choice in the context.
- The headteacher and teachers meet three times a year to discuss and record children's levels of attainment. They review a wide range of relevant data well, focusing on the progress and next steps of every child. They agree on actions to be taken, including the delivery of whole school interventions. For example, they have implemented approaches to teaching reading at the younger stages, numeracy and writing to accelerate progress. This supports children to get the help they need to thrive in their learning. They review the success of these actions and make appropriate adjustments, if required.
- Teachers work in close partnership with support for learning teachers. They plan well-considered interventions for children who require additional support with their learning. Teachers and learning assistants support individual children well helping them to overcome wellbeing barriers or address specific aspects of learning. Learning assistants value the training they receive to help with this. Teachers carry out pre- and post-assessments to evaluate carefully the impact of interventions on children's progress and adjust interventions if required. Going forward, it would be helpful for staff to include support for learning teachers in tracking meetings, where appropriate. This will further strengthen the school's approach to tracking and monitoring children's progress.

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, young people. 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

- There are small numbers of children at each stage. Therefore, attainment is expressed as overall statements rather than for specific year groups. Overall, attainment in literacy and numeracy is good. Across the school, most children work within national expectations in literacy and numeracy.
- Most children who require additional support with their learning make good progress towards planned targets.

Attainment in literacy and an English

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

Listening and talking

- Across the school, almost all children use a wide range of vocabulary appropriately for their age and stage. Almost all children at the younger stages retell familiar stories accurately. They take turns well when working with each other in class. Almost all children at the middle and upper stages, listen well in groups and to video news bulletins. They share their thoughts and ideas, building well on the views of others. Older children contribute clearly and audibly in discussions about their school and their learning. Across the school, children should continue to be supported to present to a wide range of audiences as appropriate to their stage.

Reading

- Almost all children at the younger stages use their knowledge of letters and sounds effectively to sound out unfamiliar words. They enjoy engaging with a range of texts, including non-fiction. They should be given opportunities to explore further the features of non-fiction texts as a next step. Most children at the middle stages talk confidently about their favourite authors and books. They summarise events well in books to demonstrate successfully their understanding of plot and character. Children at the middle and upper stages read aloud fluently as appropriate to their stage using punctuation clues to add expression. Most older children distinguish between fact and opinion with appropriate explanation. They should be supported to develop further their understanding of techniques that writers and poets use to engage readers, such as the use of similes, metaphors and alliteration.

Writing

- Most younger children write in sentences with capital letters and full-stops as appropriate to their age and stage. They should be supported to continue to develop their writing skills in a range of real and imaginative contexts. Most children at the middle stages enjoy writing for different reasons. They use a variety of openers and joining words to make their sentences more interesting. Children identify nouns in a sentence correctly but are less confident in adding adjectives to texts. Most older children enjoy writing for a variety of purposes, and across a range of different genres, including personal writing, functional writing and stories. They use paragraphs well to organise their thoughts and ideas. They should continue to be given opportunities to write extended pieces, using more sophisticated word choice and emotive language.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, most children make good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Teachers use a range of concrete and pictorial materials to help children engage actively during numeracy lessons. Their approaches to numeracy deepens children's understanding of numeracy concepts and is helping to raise attainment at the younger stages.

Number, money and measure

- Almost all younger children have a firm understanding of number according to their age and stage. Children are building their knowledge well of addition and subtraction using concrete materials. Children at the earlier and middle stages need support to revise the concept of time as appropriate to their stage of learning. Most children at the middle stages have a secure understanding of place value up to 1,000. They recognise zero as a place holder and add numbers using hundreds, tens and units. Children at the middle stages require more regular revision of subtraction. Most older children have a sound understanding of place value. They compare costs and determine affordability within a given budget. They calculate time durations accurately bridging across several hours. They need more practice to develop further their understanding of the relationship between fractions, percentages and decimals.

Shape, position and movement

- Most children at the younger stages identify, draw and describe a range of two-dimensional (2D) shapes. They draw pictures accurately with one line of symmetry. Most children at the middle stages name and identify a range of 2D shapes and three-dimensional (3D) objects. They describe their properties accurately such as face and edge. Children are not yet secure in identifying and naming right angles. Most older children identify accurately 3D objects using the correct mathematical language including side, face, edge and vertex. Most older children know that a radius within a circle is half the diameter. They classify correctly a range of angles and use a protractor to draw different angles successfully. They are developing their understanding of complementary and supplementary angles.

Information handling

- Most children at the younger stages sort items according to specific criteria, such as shape and colour. They create and continue their own patterns correctly using beads. Most children at the middle stages interpret information accurately from a bar graph to identify the most popular and least popular items. They sort items accurately using Carroll and Venn diagrams. Most older children are developing their skills well in using various types of graphs, pie charts and tables to interpret and analyse data sets. Children across the school would

benefit from further experiences to create charts, graphs and tables to present information within a range of real-life contexts.

Attainment over time

- Over time, most children make good progress in their learning. Staff have improved their approaches to learning and teaching and using data more effectively to raise attainment. Staff gather a wide range of data about children at each stage. The headteacher reviews attainment data carefully to identify trends and patterns for groups, cohorts and individual children. Staff use this information well to implement universal and targeted approaches to raise attainment. For example, teachers have introduced approaches to the teaching of literacy at the younger stages which is improving attainment in reading. In the middle and upper stages, teachers have introduced new research-based approaches to raise attainment in writing. This approach is increasing children's confidence and motivation to write. However, it is too early to identify the impact of this work. The headteacher has rightly identified that reviewing approaches to assessing children's writing will support staff to measure the impact of this work carefully.
- Staff use ongoing improvement of approaches to learning, teaching and assessment as their strategy to raise attainment. They make increasingly accurate judgements about children's levels of attainment. Teachers would benefit from further opportunities to moderate standards of children's attainment with greater reference to the national Benchmarks. This will support them to make confident judgements about children's levels of attainment as they move through CfE levels.
- Children's levels of attendance are currently 94.5% which is above the national average. The headteacher identifies carefully children whose attendance needs to improve. He follows local authority guidelines carefully and where necessary works in partnership with outside agencies to promote and support attendance for children. There are no children on a part-time timetable.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Staff share and celebrate children's achievements from inside and outside of school. For example, they highlight children's achievements in learning through informative class electronic newsletters which they share with parents. These approaches build children's confidence well. Staff track children's participation in out-of-school achievements to identify children who may be at risk of missing out.
- Children have an increasing voice in shaping the life and work of the school. Children in the pupil council have created a 'what good learning looks like' document to contribute effectively to school improvement. All children develop their leadership skills in an age-appropriate way through membership of school committees. For example, the eco group recently led a whole school focus on how environmental issues have impacted on elephants. They have successfully sponsored an elephant, and children enjoy taking 'Ellie the Elephant' home when they promote sustainability or global issues in and out of school. Membership of these groups support children to demonstrate they are responsible citizens and develop teamwork and organisational skills.

- Community partners support children well to learn new skills. Children worked closely with the Community Council and parents to survey the local field for plants and minibeasts. This helps children to know they have a voice in improving their local community. Children celebrate their success with parents through an increasing range of opportunities for parental involvement. For example, parents and children worked together during a numeracy and mathematics open afternoon and participated in a local maths challenge. This helps children to demonstrate their mathematical skills.
- Children develop their sporting skills well through roles such as the young sports leaders and through participation in cycling proficiency courses. Teachers invite visitors to the school to talk to children about different jobs and careers, which helps children gain an understanding of the world of work and consider future careers.

Equity for all learners

- The headteacher consults the Parent Council on the use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). The headteacher and all staff know children and their families well. They have a firm understanding of the socio-economic context of the school and are mindful of the cost of the school day. The school supports a free breakfast club which is open to all children. The school receives a small amount of PEF which the headteacher uses to supplement the cost of trips and wider achievement activities. This ensures that all children feel included and involved in all aspects of school life.
- The headteacher uses PEF to purchase resources to improve approaches to literacy for younger children. There is evidence that this is contributing to raising attainment at identified stages. In addition, PEF is used to fund resources to support children's wellbeing. The headteacher and staff should ensure that they evidence carefully how their use of PEF is accelerating the progress in closing the poverty related attainment gap for identified children.

Other relevant evidence

- All children receive two hours of high-quality physical education every week.
- Children receive their entitlement to religious education and observance in line with national expectations.
- Children learn French progressively from P1 to P7 and Spanish from P5 to P7, to receive their entitlement to modern languages in line with the national '1 + 2' initiative.
- 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 education and the catering service.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard HMIE 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.

On behalf of His Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland.