

Summarised inspection findings

Redmyre Primary School

Aberdeenshire Council

14 May 2024

Key contextual information

Redmyre Primary School is a non-denominational school situated in Aberdeenshire Council and serves the villages of Laurencekirk and Fordoun. The school roll is 53 children working across three multi-composite classes.

The headteacher has been in post since August 2022 and has a small teaching commitment. There are three full-time equivalent (FTE) teaching staff as well as visiting specialist teachers who deliver art, drama and health and wellbeing. There is one support for learning teacher who supports children for one day per week. There is the equivalent of one FTE pupil support assistant. There have been several changes to the teaching staff this session.

Almost all children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) decile 7. In September 2022, approximately 28% of children required additional support with their learning. Attendance is above the national average. In the last three years there have been no exclusions.

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

- The headteacher and staff have worked well with children and stakeholders to refresh the school's vision and values. Teachers use the values and children's rights well to underpin approaches to learning and teaching. Children use the school values effectively to help them in their learning. As a result, there is a very nurturing and supportive ethos and a calm climate for learning across the school.
- Across the school, almost all children are respectful and well-behaved. Most children feel that staff treat them fairly and with respect. Positive relationships are evident between children and between children and adults. Children are welcoming and polite to visitors. School staff follow local authority guidance 'Promoting Inclusion and Reducing Exclusions', (2022) to promote positive behaviour and support children to be included, engaged and involved. Children learn and complete tasks as individuals, in groups and in pairs. Teachers support children to avoid disengagement by providing them with encouragement and positive reinforcement. This helps children to remember and understand expectations. As a result, children engage well in their learning and support each other during tasks.
- Staff provide children with relevant and meaningful opportunities to make choices about their learning. They provide children with 'wild card' choices which allows them to choose the context for learning that links different areas of the curriculum. This helps children to enjoy learning that is well suited to their interests.
- Teachers create well-considered classroom environments which support all children to learn independently, taking effective account of children at different ages within each class. Children

refer to learning walls which display helpful prompts and strategies to support them well to understand new concepts and complete tasks. Teachers use task boards and visual aids well. This supports children well to follow learning routines independently. Teachers provide children with concrete and practical resources which support children in useful ways as they think through solutions and solve problems. This helps children to experience 'have-a-go' situations which develops their resilience in learning and enables teachers to maximise direct teaching time.

- Led well by the headteacher, staff have engaged in professional learning to develop a whole school learning and teaching policy. This is helping all teachers to develop a shared understanding of what high-quality learning and teaching looks like. In almost all classes, teachers balance appropriately direct teaching with opportunities for children to learn independently and in groups. This approach engages children well in their learning and is supporting children to develop independent learning skills. Teachers adapt activities and tasks to provide children with different levels of support and challenge in their learning. They take effective account of children who may have barriers to learning as a result of socio-economic factors.
- In most classes, teachers provide children with clear explanations and instructions. They share the purpose of learning with children and provide them with steps to success. Most teachers use questioning effectively to check children's understanding, and in a few lessons, teachers use questioning very well to deepen children's thinking. Teachers have developed useful higher order question prompts to deepen learning. They should continue to ensure they use these question prompts consistently to develop children's thinking skills.
- Older children are becoming more familiar with setting individual targets as part of the newly developed approach to help children have greater ownership of their learning. Teachers should continue to support all children to have a greater understanding of their own literacy and numeracy targets. This should enable children to reflect on their progress and identify what they need to do to improve. Teachers provide helpful oral feedback to support children to understand the progress they make in their learning. As planned, teachers should develop approaches to feedback to ensure all staff make use of an agreed approach. This will support children to understand what they are doing well and their next steps.
- Teachers have developed a whole school approach to using plenaries at the end of lessons. This enables teachers to check children's understanding of what they are learning and supports children to consider the relevance of their learning in real-life contexts. As planned, teachers should support children to understand the skills they are developing through their learning.
- Children have regular opportunities to engage in play indoors and within the school grounds. Teachers are at the early stages of implementing play pedagogy and developing approaches to outdoor learning. As planned, teachers should engage with national guidance to develop their understanding of high-quality play and outdoor learning.
- Children use tablets and laptop computers effectively to support and extend their learning. For example, children play numeracy games, access learning apps, use matrix bar codes and engage in research to enhance their learning. They work well independently using digital technology. Teachers should continue to plan ways for children to develop their digital skills progressively across the stages.
- Teachers follow a useful assessment calendar to plan assessments in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing as an integral part of planned learning. They carry out baseline and post

intervention assessments to measure the impact of universal and targeted interventions on children's progress. They are developing well their understanding of interpreting and using data. The headteacher recognises there is a benefit in teachers having a greater focus on the national Benchmarks when planning assessments. This will support teachers to have more confidence in making professional judgements about children's progress through Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels.

- Teachers engage with colleagues in other schools to moderate children's writing. This supports teachers well in developing a shared understanding of standards in writing. Staff are working together to develop a shared understanding of standards in spelling. They have introduced a whole school approach to spelling, which is helping children make faster progress in this area.
- Teachers plan learning using the experiences and outcomes of CfE over different timescales and across all curriculum areas. They use progressive pathways in all curriculum areas, which supports them to ensure children make progress as they move through CfE levels. They have developed a useful three-year overview to plan learning that links different areas of the curriculum together. This ensures that children receive breadth in their learning and takes effective account of the multi-stage composite classes.
- The headteacher holds regular tracking meetings with teachers to discuss children's progress and attainment. They review a range of data which is supporting teachers well to track children's progress against baseline and follow up assessments. The headteacher and teachers should continue to analyse data for children who require additional support or are impacted by socio-economic factors. This will support them to identify clearly the overall progress of specific groups and cohorts and identify the interventions which have the greatest impact.

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

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- There are small numbers of children at each stage. Therefore, children's levels of attainments are expressed as overall statements rather than for specific CfE levels.
- Overall, attainment in literacy and numeracy is good. For school session 2023-2024, most children are working at expected levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy. Across the school, there are a few children who work ahead of expected levels.
- Most children who require additional support with learning make good progress towards identified targets with a few making very good progress.

Attainment in literacy and English

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

Listening and talking

- Across the school, almost all children are highly articulate, respectful and confident when speaking to each other and adults. Younger children enjoy listening to others in stories and talks. Children at the middle and upper stages contribute well to group and class discussions, building well on the ideas of others. Older children identify successfully the key features of presentations such as using a clear voice and asking rhetorical questions. Across the school, teachers should support children to be more aware of the listening and talking skills they are developing.

Reading

- Children borrow reading texts from class libraries and a shared library area. Most children are enthusiastic readers across the school. Children at the younger stages use their knowledge of sounds and letters to read simple words. Children at the middle stages of the school read aloud well adding expression to their voice. They explain clearly their preferences for different genres of books. Children would benefit from opportunities to create and answer literal and inferential questions. Children at the upper stages describe in detail the differences between fiction and non-fiction texts. They express their preferences for favourite authors and can justify their choices.

Writing

- Across the school, the headteacher and staff have identified the need to support children's spelling. They have introduced a progressive whole school approach which is raising attainment in this area.

- Children at the younger stages write for a range of purposes using writing templates. They are developing well their formation of letters. They would benefit from more opportunities to write freely during their play. Children at the middle stages write in well-structured sentences. They know how to use connectives in sentences. Older children write a range of different poems. They use figurative language such as metaphors to add interest to their writing. Children across the middle and upper stages would benefit from more opportunities to write extended texts.

Numeracy and mathematics

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

Number, money and measure

- Younger children identify numbers and count on and back within twenty. They add and subtract successfully within ten. Children at the middle stages understand well the place value of digits in a number up to 1,000. Older children have a clear understanding of why a budget is important. Older children read scales and measuring instruments successfully to identify weight and volume. Children would benefit from regular opportunities to practise and apply the number processes of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division in an age-appropriate way.

Shape, position and movement

- Younger children identify a range of two-dimensional shapes. Children at the middle stages read compass points and provide simple directions successfully. They have a firm understanding of right angles. Children at the middle and upper stages identify and describe the properties of a range of three-dimensional objects. At the upper stages, children identify acute and obtuse angles accurately.

Information handling

- Younger children use Venn diagrams to sort information successfully. At the middle stages children answer questions accurately to demonstrate how they interpret information on a bar graph. At the upper stages, children understand the features of bar graphs and pie charts. Children at the middle and upper stages need more opportunities to gather, display and interpret information more regularly throughout the school year using digital technology.

Attainment over time

- Overall, levels of attainment are good and consistent over time. The headteacher has detailed information dating back a number of years about children's attainment in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. This tracking information also contains relevant information that may impact on children's attainment including factors related to poverty.
- Teachers track children's attainment in all other curricular areas and are beginning to track children's skills. The headteacher and teachers should continue to focus on the national Benchmarks when discussing children's progress and attainment. This will support teachers' increasing confidence in making professional judgements about the progress children make.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Across the school, staff share and celebrate children's achievements in and out of school on display walls and in assemblies. This builds children's confidence well.
- Children develop their leadership, citizenship and organisational skills well in their roles as 'Shanarri Sherrifs.' For example, children are currently organising a health week and redeveloping the sand pit in the playground. Children in the school choir recently performed at a regional concert in Aberdeen which is developing their musical performance skills well.

- Staff track children's wider achievements out of school. They identify children who may be at risk of missing out and plan clubs to ensure they have opportunities to participate and achieve. Teachers are beginning to track the skills children develop through their learning and wider achievement. As a next step they should support children to talk about these skills.
- Children worked alongside their families and the Parent Council to make improvements to the school grounds. This is developing children's understanding of sustainability and helping them to be effective contributors to their local community.

Equity for all learners

- All staff have a firm understanding of the socio-economic context of the school. They take steps to ensure that no child misses out. Children's attendance levels are above the national average. The headteacher tracks children's attendance robustly and provides prompt support when a child's attendance falls below national levels.
- The headteacher uses Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) effectively to provide professional learning to teachers and to implement whole school approaches to support children's spelling and writing skills. These approaches are helping to close gaps in children's learning. The headteacher recognises it is important to measure clearly the impact of PEF on identified children's attainment.
- Children are developing well their understanding of the needs of others including people with protected characteristics.

Other relevant evidence

- Children receive two hours of high-quality physical education per week.
- The headteacher informs parents on the use of PEF through the Standards and Quality report. The headteacher should continue to consult parents fully on the use of PEF.
- 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. A few areas for improvement have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.

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.