HMIE | His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education in Scotland
Luchd-sgrùdaidh an Rìgh airson Foghlam ann an Alba

Summarised inspection findings

Fossoway Primary School

Perth and Kinross Council

24 November 2026

Key contextual information

Fossoway Primary School is a non-denominational school situated in the village of Crook of Devon in rural Perth and Kinross. The school roll is 114 children arranged across five classes. The headteacher has been in post for five years. The headteacher is supported by a principal teacher and seven teachers. The principal teacher has a class commitment four days a week.

Almost all children reside in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles 7 and 8. Across the school, a few children are registered for free school meals. The headteacher reports that a minority 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

- The headteacher and staff have created successfully a very welcoming and inclusive ethos which reflects very well the school values of ambition, friendship, resilience and respect. Children and staff benefit from highly positive relationships. This is a very positive feature across the school. Children demonstrate pride in their school and are actively developing their links with the local community. This is helping them build a strong sense of belonging.

- Across the school, children learn in a calm and purposeful climate. Almost all children are highly engaged and enthusiastic learners. Children are polite, articulate and able to talk confidently about their learning. In all classes, staff have high expectations of children's behaviour based on agreed class charters and clear, consistent routines. As a result, almost all children feel safe and secure. Across the school children behave very well in school and in the playground.

- The headteacher has provided effective leadership of learning, teaching and assessment. She has established high expectations and worked well together with staff to develop 'The FossoWay', learning, teaching and assessment framework. Teachers implement this agreed guidance very effectively in almost all lessons to ensure children experience consistently high-quality learning and teaching across the curriculum. For example, consistent use of this framework has helped ensure children benefit from impactful and progressive learning approaches in reading and numeracy. Children benefit from teachers providing clear instructions and explanations. In almost all lessons, children understand the purpose of the learning and how they can be successful. Children demonstrate increasing confidence in creating steps to success. This is supporting them to understand their own progress in learning well.

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- In almost all lessons, teachers use a range of teaching approaches to effectively engage children in learning. For example, children have opportunities to make choices and work collaboratively in groups and pairs to learn alongside their peers. Children enjoy talking about their learning and teachers consider children's views well when planning learning. As a result, almost all children are engaged and motivated learners.

- In almost all lessons, children benefit from teachers' effective questioning. It helps children to recap and consolidate their learning. In most lessons, teachers use effective questioning to extend children's thinking, and to encourage children to justify and explain their ideas. Teachers should continue to develop their questioning strategies to help children practise and apply higher-order thinking skills.

- In almost all lessons, teachers use formative assessment strategies well during lessons to assess children's understanding and identify next steps. Teachers use clear written and verbal feedback appropriately to guide children and help them improve during lessons. This is supporting children to understand how to progress in their learning. All children benefit from regular learning conversations with senior leaders. Children reflect well on their progress in literacy, numeracy and wellbeing. This helps children identify their targets and next steps in learning. This is helping children to better understand themselves as learners and increase ownership of their learning.

- Children's digital skills are enhanced as a result of teachers' approaches to the use of digital technology. This well-planned approach is enhancing children's learning experiences effectively. Children are motivated and engaged in learning through their use of technology. They use devices and applications confidently to independently research topics and present information. In almost all classes, digital platforms are used effectively by staff to support targeted learners, particularly during literacy activities. Children identified as requiring additional support with their learning make effective use of assistive technology to support them to access to the curriculum. This is supporting them to make good progress towards identified targets, particularly in literacy.

- Teachers use a detailed assessment calendar to implement a range of highly-effective assessment approaches consistently across the school. They use a wide range of baseline, summative and diagnostic assessments effectively to evaluate children's knowledge, understanding and progress. Teaching staff engage well in moderation activities at school and at cluster level, predominantly in literacy and numeracy. Teachers use national Benchmarks regularly to assess children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. This has led to increased teacher confidence and accurate levels of teachers' professional judgement for these curriculum areas. The headteacher should now work with teachers to develop this practice across all other curricular areas. Teachers should extend moderation activity to include all other areas of the curriculum to support their shared understanding. This will support teachers to assess whether children are making expected progress towards achievement of a level across the curriculum.

- Teachers know children very well and draw on high-quality information about individual needs. In almost all lessons, teachers use this information very effectively to plan learning activities that provide appropriate support and challenge. Children value and make effective use of a range of universal supports, available in all classrooms, to achieve success in their learning.

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- The headteacher has developed effective approaches to planning with clear expectations of medium- and long-term planning for all staff. With support from the headteacher, teachers use progressive frameworks and Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) planners very well to plan for all areas of the curriculum. All teachers plan learning using the outdoor spaces, include the school grounds and local woods increasingly well. All children receive their entitlement to 1+2 languages. Across all stages children experience a progressive programme of learning in French. In P5-P7, children learn Mandarin with support from partners from the nearby Confucius Hub. Teachers plan themed weeks such as science week, textiles week and wellbeing week. These experiences provide highly engaging, motivating and challenging learning through real-life contexts. This is ensuring that the children experience learning across the curriculum which is helping them develop their skills for learning, life and work.

- The headteacher has developed a very effective tracking system. This system allows staff to use data rigorously to monitor children's attainment, attendance and progress over time. Staff ensure they track in detail cohorts of children, such as care-experienced and those requiring additional support with their learning. The headteacher and teachers meet three times a year to consider all tracking and assessment information to review progress in literacy, numeracy and wellbeing. Teachers use this information very effectively to plan and implement targeted interventions and in-class supports which is ensuring children are appropriately challenged. Staff evaluate the progress of children who require additional support with their learning well and monitor the impact of interventions effectively. As a result, children are making very good progress in their learning.

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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.

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3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	very 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

- Overall, attainment in literacy and numeracy is very good. Most children achieve expected CfE levels in reading and numeracy. Most children at P1 and P7 and the majority of children at P4 achieve expected CfE levels in writing. Almost all children across the school achieve expected CfE levels in listening and talking. Across the school, a minority of children exceed national expectations in literacy and numeracy.

- Most children who require additional support with their learning make very good progress towards their individual learning targets. Strategies to accelerate progress have had a positive impact on improving attainment for identified groups.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, most children make very good progress from prior levels of attainment in literacy and English.

- Staff have sustained a highly effective focus on raising attainment in literacy. Children apply their literacy skills well in a range of real-life contexts including highly engaging, theme weeks. Children confidently apply listening and talking skills across all areas of the curriculum. Across the school, as part of reading for enjoyment, children regularly read a wide range of genre. At first level children need support with inferential questions. Children would benefit from further practice in writing using the features of different genres and opportunities to write at length.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, almost all children make very good progress from prior levels of attainment in numeracy and mathematics.

- Children experience high-quality learning and teaching in numeracy and mathematics with a clear focus on raising attainment. Most children demonstrate resilience and confidence when applying their knowledge and skills in newer contexts. Most children share their strategies and solutions with confidence across a range of different concepts. At second level children demonstrate sound mental agility skills, including quick recall of number facts, and use these to solve simple problems. Children's progress has been supported by a sustained focus on mental maths skills and regular retrieval practice in lessons.

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Attainment over time

- The headteacher has clear evidence that the school has raised attainment for most children in literacy and numeracy over time. She has embedded robust systems and processes to monitor and track attainment in literacy and numeracy. She discusses with staff the progress and attainment of individuals and cohorts of learners regularly. This helps children maintain or exceed expected progress. The headteacher should develop further the current systems and processes to begin to track children's progress across all areas of the curriculum.

- The headteacher has developed a well targeted raising attainment strategy. Staff have a clear understanding of strategies to raise attainment. They are focused on school improvement priorities that will make the most difference at a whole school level, for individuals and groups of children. In literacy teachers are using a more structured approach to improve children's writing skills. Staff are employing a whole school approach to retrieval practices in numeracy effectively. Staff's current focus on literacy has led to improved outcomes in reading and writing, particularly for boys. Staff make effective use of a wide range of qualitative and quantitative data about the progress of individual children, groups and cohorts. They use this robust data to inform targeted and highly impactful interventions for individual children not making expected progress. This is supporting well children who require additional support with their learning. As a result, most children make very good progress from prior levels of attainment.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Children participate in a wide range of valuable experiences to develop personal achievements. Almost all children have engaged in teacher led and child led clubs. Staff offer worthwhile clubs such as choir, chess, coding and gardening. Older children lead well a range of lunch time clubs for younger children, for example art and sports clubs. This is building children's confidence, resilience and teamworking skills. Children are proud to have achieved a range of local and national accreditations, including awards for sports and children's rights.

- All children participate in a range of leadership groups including junior road safety officers, eco group and digital leaders. Children are beginning to recognise and reflect upon the valuable leadership skills they are developing because of the roles and responsibilities they experience. This is supporting them to be effective contributors. Children play an active role in the wider life of the school and local community. Children work enthusiastically with local community organisations such as the Fossoway Gathering. This is supporting children to develop a strong sense of belonging and be responsible citizens within their locality.

- Staff track children's achievements and participation in clubs and activities. They analyse this participation data to identify children at risk of missing out or address identified equity gaps, for example, gender. This has increased participation for particular groups of children. As planned, staff should now track the skills children gain from their achievements. In addition, staff need to now support children to link these to skills for learning, life and work.

Equity for all learners

- The headteacher and staff know their children and families very well. They have well-established connections with a range of partners and organisations to provide equity of opportunity for all children. They ensure family circumstances are not a barrier to any children's participation in opportunities for learning or achievement.

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- The headteacher employs a highly effective strategic approach to addressing socio economic and wider equity attainment gaps. Staff skilfully analyse and use a range of data to identify groups of learners who require targeted support. For example, staff used data well to identify a gender attainment gap for boys. They have engaged in professional learning to inform approaches used which have significantly reduced attainment gaps for boys. Staff plan and evaluate a range of highly effective interventions for other groups of children, including socio economic disadvantage to address barriers to learning. This is accelerating identified children's progress and closing attainment gaps in reading, writing and numeracy.

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Other relevant evidence

- Overall attendance at the time of inspection was 95.75%. This is above the national average. This has increased by 2.5% over a three-year period. The rate of persistent absence (attendance below 90%) is 6%. This has decreased by 14% over the past three years. The headteacher has worked closely with families to reduce persistent rates of absence. She relentlessly communicates the impact these absences have on children's outcomes. As a result, persistent absences have significantly reduced. There are currently no children on a part-time timetable.

- The headteacher and staff worked relentlessly to improve children's attendance. The headteacher uses the local authority guidance very well to manage attendance. Attendance has improved in the past three years. The main impact on attendance is families taking holidays during term time. The headteacher and staff have developed highly productive partnerships with parents to support high levels of attendance for all children. They communicate effectively the impact of regular attendance on children's progress in learning. Across the school, strong positive relationships exist between children and staff. The supports most children to feel they are treated fairly and with respect. They feel listened to and know their views are considered. This has resulted in not only a reduction of persistent absence but also an increase of the number of children whose attendance that exceeds 95%.

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Practice worth sharing more widely

The headteacher has developed and implemented data driven approaches to support improving outcomes for children. She worked with staff effectively to close identified gaps in children's progress and learning.

The headteacher employs a highly effective strategic approach to addressing socio economic and wider equity attainment gaps. The headteacher has increased the range of assessment data staff use to assess children's progress and supported staff to build their confidence in using data. The headteacher has established robust tracking and monitoring processes to track children's progress. As a result, staff now skilfully analyse and use a range of data to identify groups of learners who require targeted support. For example, staff used data well to identify a gender attainment gap for boys. Staff plan and evaluate a range of highly effective interventions for other groups of children, including socio economic disadvantage to address barriers to learning.

Overall, this is accelerating identified children's progress and closing attainment gaps in reading, writing and numeracy.

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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.

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