

Summarised inspection findings

Long Calderwood Primary School

South Lanarkshire Council

12 May 2026

Key contextual information

Long Calderwood Primary School is a non-denominational school serving the community of Calderwood in East Kilbride, South Lanarkshire. At the time of inspection, the school roll was 167 children taught across seven classes. 81% of children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation data zones 3, 4 and 5. Senior leaders report that 27% of children require additional support with their learning. The school leadership team comprises of the headteacher and two 0.5 full time equivalent principal teachers. The headteacher has been in post for around one year. There has been fluctuation in the staffing team over the last two years with a number of temporary posts.

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

- Led ably by the headteacher, staff have the school values at the heart of their work. They model the values of respect, kindness and achievement to ensure that children experience a caring and nurturing environment. Children and staff have worked together to develop a rights-based approach which reflects well the school values.
- Senior leaders have recently worked with staff to establish a positive relationships policy. Teachers have also developed class charters in conjunction with children, and children feel a strong sense of ownership over these approaches. This is helping them to understand how their behaviour impacts on their own and others' learning and wellbeing.
- Most children display very positive, respectful and well-mannered behaviour. Senior leaders have devised behaviour, attachment and support plans for a few children who struggle to regulate their behaviour. These plans incorporate effective strategies to support children to re-engage with learning successfully. Staff are embedding effective strategies to pre-empt and respond to incidents of disruptive behaviour. They make use of recently re-zoned areas of the school, such as the learning hub, to help support children well. Staff use these areas to enable children to learn in small group settings with few distractions. Staff trained in nurture approaches use the rainbow room well to deliver more in-depth nurture and attachment work with children who require additional support. As a result, incidents of disruptive behaviour have declined significantly over the past year.
- Staff have created attractive, purposeful and well-organised learning environments that are both welcoming and supportive. Teachers implement a consistent approach to learning and teaching across classrooms. This is helping to ensure predictable routines for children. Teachers discuss and display clear classroom expectations and routines, with all children welcomed warmly as they arrive. This supports a calm and positive start to learning.

- Across the school, teachers support children well to engage with their learning. In all lessons, teachers share the purpose of learning clearly and explain what children need to do to be successful. In most lessons, they provide clear explanations and instructions. In a few lessons, teachers make helpful links to the skills children are developing and how these skills apply in learning, life and work. Senior leaders and staff are continuing to embed their recently revised approach to developing consistent teaching approaches. As they do so, teachers should develop their use of effective open-ended questioning to extend children's learning. They should also continue to ensure that all children have a clear understanding of the skills they are developing during learning tasks. This should help children articulate their learning more confidently and apply their developing skills with increasing independence.
- Teachers support children well during whole-class, paired and group learning. Most children work effectively with partners and in groups. Teachers should now build further on this by supporting children to expand and deepen their discussions. For example, they could offer helpful extension prompts during activities such as think-pair-share. This should strengthen children's ability to develop their thinking.
- Most tasks are appropriately challenging, and almost all children engage well in lessons. Teachers use a 'challenge by choice' approach, which provides children with a range of tasks at varying levels of difficulty. This enables children to select an appropriate level of challenge for their learning. Teachers support children who are ready to attempt more demanding work. In a few lessons, there is scope to refine this approach further to ensure it provides sufficient differentiation for all learners. In a few lessons, introducing a more balanced mix of teacher-led and learner-led approaches would help children take greater ownership of their learning.
- Teachers across the school have undertaken training in the verbal, concrete, pictorial and abstract approach to teaching numeracy and mathematics. They support children well to explain problems using appropriate vocabulary before demonstrating their thinking with concrete materials, such as shapes and number blocks. Children build on this by using pictorial representations and abstract notation, engaging with progressively more complex mathematical equations. As a result, most children experience appropriate challenge and progression across numeracy lessons and are developing a stronger understanding of mathematical concepts.
- Teachers use oral and written feedback effectively to support children in their learning. Senior leaders are developing more consistent approaches to feedback. This helps make written feedback meaningful and accessible for children. This is having a positive impact on children's understanding of their next steps in learning. Staff should continue to support children to articulate their learning targets clearly and provide further opportunities for children to peer-assess their work. This will help children talk with greater confidence about their learning.
- Staff ensure younger children have regular opportunities to engage in free play. These sessions build on children's interests and help them make sense of the world through role play, exploration and problem-solving. Senior leaders have rightly identified the value of strengthening the use of observation for assessment during play, in line with national guidance. This should help enable staff to capture children's learning through play more accurately.

- Staff have recently implemented a successful outdoor play initiative to engage children across the school in more purposeful play during breaks and lunchtimes. The Parent Council supported the purchase of resources and equipment. Staff worked with partners to improve children's capacity to resolve conflict independently and to promote greater responsibility. This is resulting in improved playground relationships and fewer negative incidents. Staff should continue to prioritise this important work.
- Senior leaders and staff are working together to develop a whole-school framework for evaluating progress and attainment in literacy and numeracy. They use data skilfully to plan targeted interventions that support the learning of individuals and groups of children, including those who require additional support. For example, teachers use tracking data to identify children who are not on track to meet national expectations. They then put in place effective supports, such as small-group literacy or numeracy interventions. Staff track and monitor effectively the progress of children who have additional support plans. Staff use targeted interventions effectively, with previously disengaged children now demonstrating improved progress.
- Teachers gather a range of assessment evidence including data from formative and summative assessment approaches. They use standardised assessments for literacy and numeracy, which they schedule for set points throughout the year. This is building consistency in assessment across the school and is supporting staff to plan appropriate next steps for children. Teachers are increasing the accuracy with which they make professional judgements about children's achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) level.
- Teachers make appropriate use of local authority progression pathways to plan learning across all curricular areas. They have participated in recent professional learning and in-school moderation approaches that are helping them develop a shared understanding of standards. Their confidence and consistency in assessing progress within and across levels are increasing as a result. Staff should continue to strengthen moderation activities including further developing partnerships within their learning community.

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. 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

- Overall, children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is good. At P1, P4 and P7 most children achieve expected CfE levels. Most children who require additional support for their learning are making good progress towards their individual learning targets.

Attainment in Literacy and English

- In literacy and English, most children make good progress in their learning.

Listening and Talking

- Most children listen well. At early, first and second levels, most children are eager to share their learning with others. At all levels, a few talk over others in their enthusiasm to discuss their interests. Most children ask relevant questions to further their learning. By P7, most children are confident to lead and present to others at assemblies and in lessons. A few children need to project their voice when speaking aloud in front of others.

Reading

- At all levels, most children are developing helpful skills in reading which they use increasingly well in different aspects of their learning. At the early stages, most children recognise simple words. They use strategies appropriately when they read sentences and attempt to read unfamiliar words. At first level, most children enjoy making predictions in stories. They know and apply different features of language when reading, including in front of others. At first and second levels, most children know about different genres and have clear views on their preferences and reasons for selecting texts. They describe ably the reasons for choosing different books for personal reading, including key facts about the author's writing style. Most answer different types of questions with confidence and accuracy. By P7, most children are confident and fluent readers. A few need to continue building their confidence when reading aloud.

Writing

- At all levels, most children are developing good writing skills which they often illustrate with various related drawings. At the early level, most children write sentences about different topics, including different celebrations or thank you notes. At first level, children are developing important skills which improve their sentences. This includes editing and revising their work. At first and second levels, most children write well for various purposes, including fiction and non-fiction. Their use of grammatical features, including punctuation, enhances their writing. By P7, most children structure their work well. They use descriptive language well

to elaborate their writing. They use paragraphs well to organise key points in logical ways. At first and second levels, a few children should continue to develop their skills in presentation.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

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

Number, money and measure

- At early level, most children recognise, write, count and order numbers within ten with confidence. Most children identify correctly the number before and after. Most children add and subtract within ten, a few by mental calculation and others supported by concrete materials. At first level, most children confidently round to the nearest 10 and 100 and demonstrate a firm grasp of place value. Most children understand simple fractions and describe well the difference between a fraction and a whole number. They would benefit from more practice using time, particularly with the twenty-four-hour clock and duration. At second level, almost all children round confidently to the nearest 10, 100 and 1000. Almost all children demonstrate a good understanding of fractions and should now use this knowledge to make connections between fractions, decimal fractions and percentages.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, children are developing their understanding of simple two-dimensional (2D) shapes and three-dimensional (3D) objects. At first level, almost all children identify 2D shapes, while most identify a range of 3D objects. Most children identify the simple properties of 2D shapes. At second level, most children identify with accuracy lines of symmetry and diagonals, and identify right, acute, obtuse and reflex angles. Children should further develop this knowledge to include complementary and supplementary angles.

Information handling

- At early level, children are developing good knowledge of colour, shape, size and other properties to match and sort items in a variety of ways. A few children understand well a variety of charts, such as graphs depicting children's lunch orders. At first level, most children interpret with confidence and accuracy simple information contained in a range of graphs and charts. At second level, most children can interpret information contained in simple graphs and charts. They need to continue to develop their skills in this aspect of learning, including using digital technology to help them gather and interpret data from various sources.

Attainment over time

- In recent years, children's attainment in literacy and numeracy has been improving. Despite a dip last year in literacy and numeracy, most children are on target to achieve expected national levels of attainment in literacy and English and in numeracy and mathematics. Over the current school session, children's attainment has improved significantly. Continuity of staffing and stable leadership have underpinned this improvement. Those who are not on track to achieve national expectations are making good progress from individual targets and prior levels of attainment.
- Over the past year, senior leaders have been using data well as part of new monitoring and tracking arrangements. As a result, children's outcomes are improving. Staff are adding value to children's attainment, including for those who need specific interventions. For example, children who attend the learning hub are improving their attainment in literacy and numeracy.

- Children's attendance is in line with the national average. The attendance of a few children is below 90%. School staff are taking forward plans to address this. They ensure that parents are aware of the impact of low attendance on children's attainment and achievement. Staff use a range of strategies to promote positive attendance, including through initiatives such as 'Toast to Go' and 'Attendance Avengers'. Staff also meet and greet children when they arrive at school. This is beginning to have a positive impact on children's attendance. Where attendance has improved, children have demonstrated better progress in their learning and attainment.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Children's achievements are celebrated very well, through weekly assemblies, social media and in monthly newsletters. Staff also showcase children's successes through events such as 'Conversation Stations' and 'Learning Together' sessions. Children are gaining a range of transferable skills for learning, life and work. Through participating in fundraising activities, they are taking responsibility and are developing as caring children who are proud of the school and the wider community. Children's involvement in sporting festivals, musical theatre, the P7 residential outing, STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) competitions and 'LC News' contributes positively to developing their resilience. All children are influencing school improvements through being a leader or member of one of the various leadership groups. All of these achievements are increasing children's confidence, self-esteem and sense of belonging.
- Staff track children's participation in activities and identify and target those at risk of missing out. Children know that they are acquiring various skills through their wider achievements. A next step would be for children to identify more clearly which skills they are developing through their achievements. Staff should support children to record these in order to help build on existing skills as children move through the school.

Equity for all learners

- The headteacher and staff know children and families well. Their increasingly effective use of data helps them to identify and address any gaps or barriers in children's attainment, particularly for those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. As a result, individual children receive appropriate and targeted support. The attainment gap is reducing as a result of targeted interventions for individuals and groups of children, alongside increased support for families. This work is supported through the effective use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). As a result, most identified children are on track to achieve expected national levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy by June 2026. At all levels, the attainment gap is closing. Senior leaders also use PEF for supporting after school clubs and activities, funding visiting productions and swimming lessons. These approaches are helping to remove barriers to participation and learning. Attainment has improved in aspects of literacy, numeracy and in health and wellbeing for identified children, particularly in reading, numeracy and mental agility. Further intervention is required in writing.

Other relevant evidence

- Most parents have high levels of trust and confidence in the school. Parents describe relationships with staff and the new headteacher as open, approachable and supportive. They are well-informed about their children's learning, with clear communication, timely updates, and additional support provided when needed. Parents value the strong partnership ethos, with regular opportunities to engage in learning activities, give feedback, and be involved in school improvement.
- Children receive their entitlement to religious and moral education and religious observance. Children also receive their full entitlement to two hours of high-quality, progressive, physical education each week.
- In P1-P7, children learn French in a planned and progressive way. Children across the school also learn about the Scots language.
- Teachers across the school support a strong reading culture and have recently revitalised the school library with a broad range of engaging fiction and non-fiction texts. Staff encourage children to read for pleasure and guide them towards texts that deepen their understanding of diversity, inclusion and wellbeing. School leadership groups use the library effectively as a meeting space. It is also where older children support younger peers to enjoy books and become familiar with how a library works. As a result, children understand the library classification system, are confident in describing different genres, and can explain the importance of reading in their learning.

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.