

Summarised inspection findings

Dunbog Primary School

Fife Council

23 September 2025

Key contextual information

Dunbog Primary School is located in a rural setting in North East Fife. The headteacher has been in post for several years and is also headteacher at another school, which is a few miles away. The two schools work closely together. The current roll at Dunbog is 31. There is no nursery class. Children have access to a range of learning and play spaces in school and in garden and grass areas, the village hall and a large park. As the school is located outwith the village, almost all of the children travel to school by bus or car. Most children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation decile 7.

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 children enjoy learning and playing together. Their behaviour in the classrooms and outdoors is very good. Children support each other very well, during learning and social activities. They learn in a caring and nurturing environment. Strong and trusting relationships across the school community support children to thrive. All adults model the shared school values effectively. There is respect for children and all members of the school community. Children's rights are central to the work of the school. This is often a feature of school assemblies. As they move through each stage children develop a deeper understanding of what rights mean in their learning and lives. All children are highly motivated in their learning. They love coming to school and are eager to engage in the activities planned across the day. Younger children enjoy an active and creative start each day when they learn together outdoors in the stimulating garden environment.
- In the multi-composite classes children participate actively in learning that is appropriately challenging. Learning and wellbeing needs are well met. Children carry out a range of differentiated tasks, working well on a range of individual, pair and group activities. Teachers provide children with opportunities to work with classmates across the stages. This facilitates well more challenge or extra support as appropriate for individuals as they progress through the school. All staff know the children and their families very well. Children who need extra help with their learning are well supported by teachers, support for learning staff and support staff. In addition, volunteers engage children in their reading aloud regularly. Each child at Dunbog is valued as an individual and is being supported to become successful, confident and responsible. Children's views are listened to and acted upon.
- Digital technology is used very well across the school to support and enhance learning. Teachers make very good use of digital tools in their teaching. This includes individualised tasks on laptops and providing live feedback when children are writing. Children access a range of appropriate digital applications to support their learning in literacy and numeracy. They also have choice in using digital tools when developing skills in reading and writing. Children in the older class learn coding and are creating a digital fidget toy. Staff should

continue to monitor children's choice and use of digital tools. For a few children, there needs to be a better balance of digital and written work.

- Staff should raise their expectations for the presentation of children's work, encouraging children to value the tasks they complete and be proud of their handwriting and how they record their work. A few children need encouraged to develop handwriting and fine motor skills and write on paper more often.
- Children in the younger class enjoy learning through play both indoors and outdoors. Play activities promote enquiry and curiosity. Playful challenges are linked to learning in class effectively. Children enjoy practising and extending the literacy and numeracy knowledge and skills being taught. Children thrive in the extensive outdoor area where they have fun in creative activity. The wooden structure may one day be used as a pirate ship, the next a café. Children experience an effective balance of adult led and child initiated learning, with children's progress at the heart of planning. Staff observe children playing to regularly monitor and evaluate progress and the effectiveness of the activities. As the children move through the school, they continue to experience active learning both indoors and outdoors. The whole school focus on Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) facilitates motivating learning and ensures children enjoy skills development and enquiry based learning as they progress through the school. Staff should support children to understand how playful learning develops into different activities across the curriculum as they grow and learn.
- Children enjoy learning outdoors regularly. This includes taking learning out to the playground and grounds to apply learning in a real life setting, for example in developing their skills in counting and measurement. Children benefit from learning outdoors in woodlands on a nearby estate. A range of partners support the school in outdoor learning. Moving forward, staff should engage with children and parents to develop and define a shared understanding of what outdoor learning means for Dunbog. This should include a clear progression pathway and a shared recognition of the breadth and depth of opportunities.
- Teacher explanations and instructions are clear. All staff make effective use of questioning to check understanding and promote reflection and curiosity. High quality adult and child interactions feature in all learning. Children learn in a coaching culture. The purpose of learning is clear, and children know what is required to be successful. Staff should continue to reflect on how they share learning intentions and ensure vocabulary used is not overly technical. Teachers provide quality oral and written feedback. This supports children to improve their work and tackle next steps with confidence.
- Assessment is integral to the planning of learning and teaching. Teachers make use of a range of assessment tools including diagnostic and standardised assessments. In addition, assessment activities from core resources in literacy and numeracy support ongoing checking of children's learning and progress. Staff use the assessment information very well to plan next steps for groups and individuals. As a team, staff discuss the outcomes of assessments to inform learning and teaching, and support for all children. The support for learning teacher visits the school once a fortnight. She uses contextual assessment information to guide staff in supporting children who may need extra help in their learning. Staff enjoy close links with their joint school and cluster schools. They engage in moderation activity effectively to support assessment. This is helpful when there are only a few children at each stage of the school.
- Staff use a range of tools to support effective planning. They have developed a whole school approach to long term, medium term and short term planning. This includes rolling programmes to support the curriculum offer over three years for the multi composite classes. Teachers' approaches to planning supports progression and avoids repetition and duplication of contexts and content for learning. For example, the annual Scottish focus is carefully

planned to offer learners a broad range of experiences and knowledge as they move through the school. Teachers make effective use of local authority progression pathways to plan learning across the curriculum. Staff develop medium term interdisciplinary block plans with the children and highlight planned learning across the curriculum. In recent years staff have developed an accessible online approach to planning, tracking and recording children's learning. This ensures they have clear information about the progress of individual children across the school.

- Teachers use 'Records of Understanding' to record children's progress in literacy and numeracy. Local authority tools are being developed further to support recording all areas of the curriculum. The headteacher and the staff team discuss the progress of individual children regularly. All staff are aware of the progress of all children. This enables them to plan effectively interventions and support for any individual who may need extra support or who has gaps in their learning. The impact of interventions is carefully monitored and changes made to ensure children make the best possible progress. The tracking of children's learning across the curriculum is supporting improved reporting to parents.

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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

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

- At the time of the inspection the school roll of 31 comprised of small cohorts of children at each stage. Therefore, attainment and progress is expressed in overall statements rather than for specific year groups. Across the school almost all children are on track to attain national standards in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics. Children who need additional support are making good progress towards their individual targets. A few children exceed national expectations.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Almost all children across the school are making very good progress in reading and listening and talking. They are making good progress in writing.

Listening and talking

- Across the school almost all children are confident and articulate. They enjoy engaging in discussions in class, in small and larger groups. Almost all children listen well to teachers and each other. At each stage they are developing well skills in taking turns, contributing at an appropriate time and respecting the views of others. Older children build on the ideas of others by supporting and valuing their contributions. A few children need supported to fully engage, as they allow more confident classmates to dominate discussions.

Reading

- Almost all younger children use their knowledge of sight vocabulary, phonics, punctuation, grammar and picture cues to read with understanding. Most are developing well skills in adding expression. As they move through the school, almost all children become more confident in showing their understanding of texts. They identify and consider the purpose and main ideas of a text and use supporting detail. Almost all children at all levels talk with enthusiasm about reading. They enjoy reading a range of texts, including picture books, novels, graphic novels and non-fiction. Children appreciate the support of digital tools and texts to help them access reading should they need it. Children benefit from regular visits from a mobile library. This promotes successfully a love of reading for enjoyment. A few boys need supported to read a broader range of text types.

Writing

- Almost all younger children are developing appropriate skills for their stage of development. They write simple sentences using correct punctuation. They use different ways to start sentences to interest and persuade the reader, for example to encourage more of us to use public transport. Almost all older children write fluently. They make effective use of paragraphs to separate thoughts, ideas and events. They use recount well in writing about activities and events, for example a recent farm visit. They are developing well skills in adding description and evaluative language to text to improve quality and engage the reader. Moving forward,

older children would benefit from time to write at length across a range of genres more regularly. To embed skills and learning, all children need to revisit and practise writing text types across the school year. All children should be supported to improve the presentation of their work.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Almost all children are making very good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Children need to revisit and practise aspects of mathematics across the school year to ensure knowledge and skills, for example in shape and measurement are fully embedded.

Number, money and measure

- Almost all of the younger children are developing well their awareness of how money is used and recognise and use coins. They use a variety of coins and notes to pay for items. They explore calculating change from different values, in shopping tasks and activities by counting on. Almost all of the older children use their knowledge of fractions effectively in calculations and tasks appropriate to their age and stage. They are confident in using their knowledge, for example in calculating the sale price of an item with percentage discounts. When prompted, they use their knowledge of measurement well to measure the area and perimeter of the classroom.

Shape, position and movement

- In the younger class, almost all children confidently label common two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects in the classroom. They understand the language of position and direction and demonstrate this in their use of programmable toys. Almost all older children identify angles correctly. They use a protractor to measure and draw angles accurately. Children would benefit from extending these skills in real life contexts and outdoors.

Information handling

- Almost all younger children interpret simple charts and pictograms. They carry out surveys and use the information to make bar charts, for example illustrating how children travel to school. They are developing well skills in displaying data by labelling axes. Older children use information they have gathered to create and display data in accurate graphs. They are confident in interpreting digitally presented data and in drawing conclusions from the information. They communicate their findings clearly.

Attainment over time

- The school achieves consistently high standards for learners. School staff track children's progress in literacy and numeracy. Children's progress is discussed at regular attainment meetings. All staff monitor the progress of all children across the school. They use data gathered to analyse and consider the progress of each individual, including any child whose family may face socio-economic or other challenges. Staff take steps to plan learning and interventions to support effectively any child who may have gaps in their learning or who needs targeted support.
- Average attendance is 95.48%. This is an improving trend and is in line with the national average. Overall attendance figures are affected by families taking holidays during term time. The headteacher monitors attendance in line with local authority guidance and works closely with any family who may require support. There are no children on part-time education.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Children's achievements in and outwith school are valued and celebrated in displays around the school, in newsletters and at assemblies. Children are proud of their success in a range of sporting and cultural activities. This includes music, dance, gymnastics, rugby, and horse riding. Children are very active in school and outwith. They benefit from participating in a range

of activities including local authority festivals and events. All children participate in leadership roles and activities, appropriate to their age and stage. School staff track children's achievements and participation and develop opportunities to ensure all children can engage. Staff have developed strong links with the joint school which facilitates enhanced achievement activity and supports children mixing with larger groups of children their own age. The school has a strong focus on STEM, and meta-skills. As a result, children increasingly understand the link between learning in school and the skills required for life and work beyond school.

Equity for all learners

- School staff know children and their families very well. They ensure the cost of the school day does not impact on children's learning and wider experiences. Parents raise funds that support all children to participate in trips and excursions. Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) is used effectively to improve attainment across the school. PEF has supported the employment of additional staff hours to support literacy and numeracy. This is having a positive impact on children's learning, confidence and achievements. All interventions are evaluated regularly, and next steps identified. Staff include parents in discussions around the use of PEF.

Other relevant evidence

- Children enjoy two hours high quality physical education each week, in the village hall or outdoors.
- Across the school children learn French. As they move through the school they learn Spanish.
- The school has a strong partnership with the local church. Religious observance takes place at assemblies and in seasonal visits to church.

Practice worth sharing more widely

- Progression in STEM skills and activities across the multi-stage classes.

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.