

Summarised inspection findings

Aberlour Primary School

Moray Council

12 May 2026

Key contextual information

Aberlour Primary School is a non-denominational school situated in the village of Aberlour, in Speyside. There are 117 children enrolled in the school, organised across five multi-stage classes. The school has an enhanced provision, called the Rainbow Room, which supports children with a range of additional support needs. Currently five children are enrolled in the Rainbow room. The headteacher has been in post for nine years and is supported by an acting principal teacher who has been in post for a year. The principal teacher has one day a week management time.

Most children reside in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles 7 and 8, with a few in SIMD deciles 5 and 6. Currently 43% of children are recorded as having an additional support need. Around 6% of children have English as an additional language.

1.3 Leadership of change	good
This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are: ■ developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community ■ strategic planning for continuous improvement ■ implementing improvement and change	
■ The headteacher is leading the school community well to review the school vision, values and aims this year. The school community are working together effectively to ensure these are understood by all, remain relevant to the community and are ambitious. Staff revisited the values of kindness, belonging, achievement and pride with children during assemblies and class lessons. This ongoing work is supporting most children well to have a clearer understanding of the shared values and expectations. It is helping them to feel included in ensuring any changes are a good fit for the school and children now and for the future. Staff, parents and partners had an opportunity to share their views. As a result of this work, staff have developed two draft visions for the children, parents and partners to comment on next. The current vision and values underpin daily school life and interactions. Children are rightly proud of their school and are ambitious to make it even better. ■ The headteacher involves teachers, support staff and children well in improving the work of the school. She empowers staff to lead change across the school and manages the pace of change appropriately. The detailed quality assurance calendar outlines the activities which help senior leaders and staff to monitor progress towards school improvement priorities. This includes senior leader and peer observation of learning and teaching, pupil surveys, and self-evaluation activity. Feedback provided by the Local authority also add to this evidence as well as pupil assessment and achievement data. The headteacher and principal teacher know the strengths and areas for improvement of the school well. This wide range of data helps the staff to evaluate meaningfully progress towards improvement priorities and identify accurately future areas for development.	

- The headteacher ensures all staff are meaningfully involved in relevant professional development. Staff engage in regular formal and informal professional learning and discussion to build effectively on their skills and support improvement priorities. Staff are highly reflective and supportive of one another. They work well together to improve children's outcomes, supporting newer members of staff effectively and sharing good practice and resources.
- Recent school improvement priorities have focused on developing an Aberlour standard for learning and teaching. This is helping staff to agree consistent standards, expectations and learning and teaching approaches. Staff have been successful in creating shared routines. They are beginning to be more consistent in sharing learning intentions, success criteria and making links to skills in almost all lessons. Senior leaders now need to lead all staff to review teaching approaches. This includes planning learning effectively to meet all children's needs, learning through play and the use of questions. Staff need to work together to build on and embed these consistently across the school. Senior leaders need to review learning and teaching regularly with staff to ensure improvements are made in this area.
- The headteacher supports all teachers well to take on leadership roles across the school. These roles are linked appropriately to school improvement priorities or areas identified during staff reviews. They include leading areas of the curriculum, outdoor learning, children's rights and delivering after school clubs. Teachers work closely together in improvement groups to take forward areas of the school improvement plan. As part of a planned focus on meeting children's additional support needs across the school, all teachers have taken part in impactful professional learning. A few staff deliver purposeful training for others. This includes, developing inclusive classrooms and supporting and understanding children with neurodivergent differences. Teachers are increasingly confident in supporting children's needs as a result of this improvement focus. All support staff engage in relevant professional learning, and a few lead areas within the school, for example friendship groups or change and loss groups. Staff value these opportunities to successfully lead change across the school.
- Staff developed a helpful infographic which supports children, parents and partners to understand the school improvement plan priorities. Most children know the priorities and feel included in decisions about school life. All older children and a minority of younger children have purposeful leadership opportunities across the school which lead to improvements and change. The 'Rights Respecting' group successfully implemented a change to physical education (PE) kits. They collaborated with a local community group to provide a t-shirt free of charge for all children in their house colours. They secured improvements to the school toilets, following pupil comments in the pupil voice boxes. Children are involved in different leadership groups including eco schools, where they are successfully reducing food waste. Older children are buddies, play leaders and house captains. A few older children lead their own lunchtime clubs for other children, which helps them develop well a range of skills including leadership, creativity and organisational skills. All children have leadership roles within their classes. Senior leaders should now support all children to have increased opportunities for meaningful leadership roles across the school.
- Children are beginning to use How good is OUR school? challenge questions to share their views about school. They share what learning they enjoy and make suggestions about how adults could offer more choice in a few learning tasks. Staff value children's views and are now rightly focusing on how to increase children's voice in learning and teaching and future school improvement priorities. Children are capable of having a greater role in school development going forward.

- The headteacher uses Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) to employ additional support staff. These staff support literacy, numeracy and wellbeing interventions. These interventions are monitored to ensure children are closing gaps in learning. The headteacher involves the Parent Council in decisions about how PEF is spent. She now rightly plans to involve parents, staff and children more widely in decisions about how PEF is spent.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

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

- Staff have created a calm and nurturing ethos across the school, underpinned by the values and children's rights. Relationships across the school are very positive and children benefit from respectful interactions with staff and their peers. Children enjoy attending Aberlour Primary School and are proud to be part of the school and wider community. As a result, almost all children behave very well most of the time. Occasionally, a few children display low-level disruptive behaviour. In the few incidences where children become dysregulated staff support children effectively. For example, staff sit with children in a quiet space and help them to regulate their emotions, referring successfully to well-understood regulation strategies.
- Most teachers have created well-resourced and inclusive classrooms. They use successfully a helpful auditing tool to evaluate and enhance their classroom environments. As a result, there are visible consistencies across all classrooms. Children access calm corners, fidget tools and dyslexia toolkits to enable them to maintain their focus in learning. The majority of classrooms are well-organised and support children meaningfully to access resources independently to remove barriers to success. This is helping children well to take increasing responsibility for their learning. Senior leaders should continue to build on these changes, ensuring consistency across all learning areas.
- The headteacher and teachers have created a useful Aberlour Primary School Standard to highlight and agree features of highly-effective teaching and learning. This is beginning to help teachers to develop a consistent standard of teaching across the school. Teachers should continue to refer more closely to this agreed standard to ensure teaching and learning is of a consistently high-quality in all lessons. This includes a greater focus on planning learning which is challenging and meets the needs well of all children.
- When teachers plan learning which is active, involves group work and is well-matched to children's needs and interests, children demonstrate high levels of motivation. They engage very well in learning in these lessons. However, in the majority of lessons, learning is overly teacher led, with too much time sitting, and listening to the teacher. This results in children disengaging from their learning. Teachers need to ensure learning is more active, provides appropriate challenge for all children and meets their needs. Children should also be provided with more opportunities to lead and take responsibility for their learning. Staff should plan learning which helps children to be more engaged in all lessons to enable them to make increased progress.

- In almost all lessons, the purpose of learning is clear and is shared with children. In most lessons, teachers' instructions and explanations are explicit. Most teachers create and share with children appropriate steps to success, and in a minority of lessons children are involved in co-creating these. This is helping most children to understand how to be successful in their learning. In the majority of lessons, teachers use a variety of questioning techniques well to elicit information and to enhance children's understanding of key concepts. In a minority of lessons, teachers use skilled questioning which extends children's thinking further. Teachers should now extend the use of high-quality questions to help all children think more deeply about the learning.
- In the majority of lessons, teachers provide effective verbal feedback which extends children's learning and supports them to improve their work. Teachers encourage children to assess their own and others' writing, supported by helpful checklists. This is helping children know what they are doing well and how to improve their work. Most teachers provide written feedback on children's writing; however, the consistency of this written feedback is variable. Teachers should now work together to improve the quality of written feedback children receive. They should ensure children have the opportunity to act on feedback given.
- Most teachers discuss features of quality five-star work with children and share these expectations on wall displays. Teachers should display more examples of a range of children's work, to highlight the five-star quality. This will support children to know what a good example looks like and to be proud of their work.
- In most lessons, teachers use interactive whiteboards effectively to support children's learning. They provide opportunities for children at all stages to develop a range of digital skills, supported by a progressive pathway. For example, children develop well their coding skills through weekly teaching inputs. A few children across the school use a range of assistive technology to successfully remove barriers to their learning. They use independently 'speech to text' software, audiobooks and digital reading pens which scan and audibly reproduce text. Children speak with pride about the difference that assistive technology has made to their writing. Teachers should now ensure children have increased opportunities to use digital technology throughout all learning activities.
- Teachers make effective use of a variety of outdoor spaces in the school grounds and wider community to enhance children's learning across the curriculum. All teachers engaged successfully in training related to outdoor learning. A few teachers work effectively to upskill colleagues across the school in developing outdoor learning. This has improved teacher confidence and increased the outdoor learning opportunities children receive. All teachers provide opportunities for children to develop outdoor skills such as fire lighting. Almost all children are highly-motivated to learn outdoors. In doing so, they develop well their resilience and adapting skills. Teachers should now implement an outdoor skills progression pathway, ensuring that children experience outdoor learning in appropriate breadth and depth.
- Teachers are at the early stages of implementing play experiences for children in the younger classes. Where this is working well, children have opportunities to explore spaces such as the construction and role-play areas. These opportunities support children well to develop their communication and creativity skills. However, children do not yet have sufficient access to high-quality play experiences. As a priority, all staff should now engage with national practice

guidance and seek professional learning opportunities to develop a consistent approach to play. In doing so, they should ensure that their observations of children's play allow them to plan future opportunities which build on prior learning. They should also ensure a better balance of child-initiated, adult-initiated and adult-led experiences, ensuring that environments and play experiences are engaging and inspiring. They should provide experiences to enhance children's progress and support children to develop further their problem-solving, independence and social skills.

- The headteacher has created a useful assessment calendar which highlights when assessments should be completed throughout the year. Teachers adhere well to this to implement a range of summative and standardised assessments to track children's progress in literacy and numeracy. They analyse with increasing confidence assessment results to establish gaps in learning and to plan for children's next steps. Staff record effectively assessment data. The headteacher and teachers should now ensure they involve children more meaningfully in creating and evaluating their own learning targets. They should support children to select examples of work to include in learning profiles that evidence progression towards these targets. They should ensure that children understand better what they are doing well, what they need to improve and support children to become more independent learners.
- All teachers engage well in moderation activities. They moderate writing regularly with cluster colleagues and more recently within school. This is supporting them purposefully to develop increasing confidence in their professional judgements relating to children's progress. Teachers engage successfully in peer observations and provide effective feedback linking well to the Aberlour Primary School Standard. This is beginning to establish consistency in aspects of teaching and learning across the school. As planned, teachers should continue to moderate children's work and assessments in literacy and numeracy. They should focus on developing further their understanding and confidence of the national Benchmarks and progression pathways to ensure all professional judgements are accurate.
- The headteacher and staff have worked well together recently to enhance their planning approaches. All teachers plan effectively over the long, medium and short term, and meet regularly with stage partners to plan learning contexts across the curriculum. They involve children successfully in discussions about what they'd like to learn. Teachers should now ensure that all planning is underpinned by clear progression pathways. Teachers should use these to plan learning which builds on children's experiences, skills and knowledge and is appropriately challenging for all children.
- All teachers track and monitor children's progress carefully in literacy and numeracy. The headteacher meets with all teachers on a termly basis to discuss children's progress and barriers that prevent children from experiencing success. This is supporting staff well to identify children who may require additional support in their learning or who may benefit from literacy or numeracy interventions. The headteacher should continue to support staff to develop confidence in using the information they gather about children's learning to improve children's attainment further.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Teachers use progression pathways well to plan learning and track children's progress in PE and digital technologies. In all other curricular areas teachers use Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes. Currently, this does not give enough support to enable all teachers to plan effective progression. They should now use progression pathways to plan learning and track children's progress more robustly in all curricular areas. Senior leaders should ensure that teachers plan learning which builds more consistently on children's prior knowledge and is appropriately challenging.
- The headteacher and staff have embedded very effectively the language of meta-skills across the school. Almost all children speak confidently about the skills they are developing through their learning and wider opportunities. In almost all lessons, teachers support children very well to reflect on the skills they are developing. Older children are developing confidence in reflecting on their skills development by adding to their meta-skills profiles.
- All children have access to two hours of quality PE each week. Almost all children feel that staff provide them with regular opportunities to be active and develop a range of skills in PE lessons.
- All children receive their entitlement to the 1+2 modern language curriculum. Children at all stages learn French and children at second level also learn German.
- Teachers provide children with a broad and balanced religious and moral education, with opportunities for religious observance. The local minister visits assemblies regularly and children attend a church service each term. Staff worked well with members of the local church and local university to plan a thought-provoking project on slavery. A minority of children learned about the impact of slavery in the local area and are able to explain why it is important to recognise everyone's contribution and value. Children are proud of the tapestry that they created as part of this work, which is now displayed in the church.
- Children benefit from class libraries and an attractive well-resourced school library. Additionally, children access books written in dyslexia friendly fonts and enjoy access to audio books. This is enhancing successfully children's enjoyment of reading.
- Teachers provide opportunities for children to explore experiences and outcomes through meaningful contexts for learning. They involve children in shaping aspects of this by asking them what they would like to know and how they would like to learn. As a result, children are benefitting from access to a relevant and exciting curriculum. This includes the outdoor learning lessons. Children particularly value time spent in the school and community gardens where they plant, grow and harvest fruit and vegetables. This is supported very well by volunteers and partners. Children learn about biodiversity, life cycles and nature and almost all children engage fully when in the attractive garden environment.
- Staff provide all children with opportunities to experience enjoyment and to develop skills through annual performances. For example, older children benefit from an annual input from a performing arts partner and then perform in the local church. Additionally, all children participate in a Christmas performance. These experiences support children very well to develop their creativity, confidence and drama skills.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- The headteacher shares helpful information regularly about school events through newsletters and social media. This includes, for example, the recent well-attended World Book Day open afternoon and science week learning together events. Parents also have opportunities to attend information sessions about neurodiversity. Staff share leaflets to help parents know how they can support children at home with writing and numeracy.
- The Parent Council is very supportive of the work of the school. They fundraise regularly to provide valuable classroom and outdoor learning resources, digital technology and P7 sweatshirts. A few parents believe the Parent Council could do more to share their work and engage a wider group of parents in their activities. Senior leaders should continue to work with the Parent Council and wider parent body to involve parents more fully in planning and reviewing school improvement priorities.
- Most parents report they believe the school is well led and would recommend the school to others.

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.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- All staff have developed positive, nurturing relationships with children across the school. There is a climate of mutual respect between children and staff and staff model positive relationships very well for children. Most children believe they have a trusted adult to speak to if they are upset and know that staff in school look after them and keep them safe. Almost all children interact well and show care and consideration for each other. For example, helping other children to feel included in lessons and offering a kind word when someone is upset. This positive and welcoming ethos is supporting most children to feel calm, settled and ready to learn.
- Led effectively by the headteacher, all staff have a clear focus on the importance of children's wellbeing to enable children to achieve success in school. Almost all staff know children and families well and sensitively support children throughout the school day. This includes guiding a few children to use spaces, resources and adult support when they need it. Across the school, children and staff have developed clear class and playground charters to agree how they will interact and respect each other in school. Children speak positively about how their rights are met within school and about adults who listen to and act on their views.
- The headteacher plans assemblies which have a well-considered focus on aspects of wellbeing. These include how to stay safe online or how to keep your body and mind healthy. All teachers plan class lessons and daily opportunities well to enable children to 'check in' with teachers about how they are feeling. These approaches support children effectively to learn the importance of good emotional, physical and mental wellbeing. Teachers and support staff engaged in meaningful training about supporting emotions. They teach children about a wide range of feelings. This is helping children to understand well about many different emotions and what they can do to help if they are upset or angry. As a result, most children have a confident understanding of the wellbeing indicators.
- Children learn successfully about food hygiene, and the importance of water and healthy eating through health and wellbeing lessons. Staff promote healthy lifestyles and encourage all children to eat and drink healthily. For example, they provide fruit and healthy snacks for any children who need this. Staff ensure all children have opportunities to grow fruit and vegetables in the school garden to reinforce the promotion of healthy eating. Children enjoy tasting the produce they have grown.
- 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.

- Children's wellbeing is a priority for all staff. They monitor children's wellbeing formally three times a year using wellbeing webs. Class teachers review these and staff act sensitively to address any concerns which are raised. As a result, a few identified children benefit from well-considered interventions to support friendships, change and loss and mental wellbeing. Teachers know children and families very well. They work with families, partners and other staff to provide appropriate and timely support for children when it is needed.
- All staff engage in purposeful professional learning on supporting children's behaviour using restorative approaches, regulation strategies and visual aids. Most staff use consistent language and agreed approaches to ensure children understand the expectations of behaviour. This supports the positive interactions between staff and children around the school. Inclusion underpins daily school life and interactions and is valued and promoted by almost all staff and children. Most children understand that everyone is an individual and is different, with different needs. Most children show care and sensitivity to others when they become upset or dysregulated. As a result, where children become upset or dysregulated, they are supported very well to re-engage with learning.
- Staff have developed effective partnership working with many local partners to support effectively children's emotional and physical wellbeing, outdoor learning and community links. This includes regular visits to the Glebe Community Garden, which is owned by the Parish Church. Staff work collaboratively with health professionals, nursery partners, Moray food group, active schools, developing the workforce (DYW) colleagues and local community groups. Partnership working is an important strength of the school. Staff collaborate well with partners to provide impactful wellbeing interventions for groups of children where this is needed. This includes for example, nurture groups to explore emotions, resilience building and skills groups. Staff review these supports regularly and adjust as required to best meet children's needs. As a result of this effective partnership working, children have high-quality experiences beyond the classroom. They develop skills well in managing their emotions, enabling them to engage better with learning.
- All staff know and understand well their statutory duties for safeguarding and getting it right for every child (GIRFEC). They engage in regular professional training to keep-up-to-date with new legislation or guidance. This helps all staff to feel confident in ensuring children are safe and procedures are followed. Senior leaders have an overview of children's needs across the school and use child's planning meetings to co-ordinate, monitor and record support for identified children. They engage well with partners and families to plan how they will meet the needs of children across the school. As a result, most children who require additional support with learning are making positive progress towards their identified targets. Staff should now review the progress of a few children with additional support needs who are not always engaged during lessons. They should work together to ensure planning meets their needs more effectively.
- Most teachers attend purposeful training on supporting children's needs, for example, supporting dyslexia. The principal teacher supports staff well in their understanding of

children's additional support needs across the school. As a result, staff work well to support dyslexic learners across the school. They evidence the positive impact for children who access support and use assistive technology to support them in writing. An assembly helped to raise awareness for all children about dyslexia. Dyslexic learners are now more confident to speak with their peers about what they find difficult in school and what helps them. Teachers plan events to share helpful information about neurodiversity, anxiety and dyslexia with parents, in collaboration with partners. This is helping to build a shared understanding of children's needs across the school community. A few parents highly appreciate this guidance, and the signposting to partners and agencies. Senior leaders, as planned, should now re-start parent groups to support children and families across the school.

- Support staff engage in appropriate professional learning to understand how best to meet children's needs, this includes training on de-escalation and trauma informed practice. Support staff work very well with children across the school. They provide effective wellbeing and learning interventions which enable most children to achieve positive outcomes. This includes children engaging more effectively in learning through the use of technology. Senior leaders and teachers monitor the impact of interventions and make adaptations to support for individual children. Children, parents and staff comment on the positive support for most children who require additional help with learning across the school.
- Children benefit from effective transitions at all stages. Teachers provide children joining P1 with opportunities to visit the school, and staff visit children in their nursery setting prior to them starting. Older children act as buddies for new P1 children and invite them to a teddy bear's picnic. Teachers participate in helpful transition meetings to share information relating to children's progress. Children transitioning to S1 benefit from visits to their new school and from regular opportunities to attend a P7 youth club. These approaches are supporting children well to move into their new stages with confidence.
- Teachers have developed a helpful learning and teaching tool to support them to teach children about equality and diversity. Children learn about inclusion, difference and equality through weekly assemblies and health and wellbeing and religious and moral education lessons. Teachers should now ensure all children have more regular opportunities to learn about different cultures, different families, equality and discrimination. As part of this work, they should ensure library resources exemplify a wider range of society and culture. Staff should support all children to feel more confident to challenge discrimination and bias.

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

- Attainment in literacy and numeracy is good. At early level, most children achieve expected CfE levels in literacy and numeracy. At first level, most children achieve expected CfE levels in literacy and the majority achieve in numeracy. At second level, most children achieve expected CfE levels in reading, writing and numeracy, and almost all achieve in listening and talking. Across the school, a few children exceed expectations in numeracy and in aspects of literacy.
- Almost all children who receive additional support with their learning make good progress towards their individual targets.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Most children make good progress in literacy and English. A few children make very good progress at all stages.

Listening and talking

- At early level, most children retell a story they have heard accurately, sharing what they liked about the story. They take turns telling each other a fact about themselves and most listen well as others share their information. They need to continue to develop their knowledge of rhyme. At first level, most children share confidently the skills needed to present a talk. They need to develop further their skills in note-taking. At second level, almost all children articulately share their views and discuss, build on and respectfully challenge the views of others with confidence. On occasion, a few children at second level need to ensure everyone has a chance to share their views and be listened to.

Reading

- At early level, most children use their knowledge of phonics to read sounds, simple words and sentences. They share what they think will happen next in a story they are reading. They should continue to read and share a range of books and stories. At first level, most children know the key features of fiction and non-fiction texts. They are developing their vocabulary appropriately, using dictionaries and reading clues when they find new words. They need to read a wider range of texts and genres to keep them excited and engaged in reading activities. At second level, most children read fluently with expression. They summarise accurately texts read and predict what might happen next, based on their understanding of the text. They

would benefit from looking at different writer's styles and how they influence and engage a reader.

Writing

- At early level, most children write their name. They are developing their pencil control as they attempt to write short sounds, words and sentences. They need more opportunities to write throughout the day through both play and structured tasks to build their confidence. At first level, most children use helpful check-lists to self-mark their writing. They enjoy the regular writing lessons but would like more opportunities to write about their own topics. They should continue to use spelling strategies to check over their work. At second level, most children write in a range of styles. They understand how to use figurative language, such as metaphors and personification to improve their writing. They need to continue to develop skills in spelling.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Most children make good progress and a few children at all stages make very good progress in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, most children check effectively their estimates by counting, using one-to-one correspondence. They double numbers within ten mentally and add and subtract successfully within ten. A majority of children should develop further their counting backwards from 20. At first level, the majority of children solve accurately addition and subtraction problems with three-digit numbers. Most children explain successfully the role of the numerator and denominator and compare accurately the size of fractions. A minority of children should build their skills at money calculations. At second level, most children read and order sets of decimal fractions to three decimal places and use knowledge of equivalent fractions to solve problems. A minority of children should develop further their confidence and accuracy in rounding decimal fractions to one and two decimal places.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, most children recognise and sort common two-dimensional (2D) shapes. They understand the language of position and direction. A minority of children should develop their ability to name and describe properties of three-dimensional (3D) objects. At first level, most children identify and classify a range of simple 2D shapes and 3D objects and describe successfully the properties of these. A minority of children should develop further their ability to follow and record directions using directional language. At second level, most children use mathematical language to describe and classify a range of angles accurately. A minority of children should develop confidence in calculating the radius or diameter of a circle.

Information handling

- At early level, most children answer questions well based on data presented in a bar graph. They use successfully knowledge of colour, shape and size to match and sort items in a variety of ways. Children at early level would benefit from further opportunities to collect and gather data for a specific purpose. At first level, most children ask and answer questions to extract key information from graphs and diagrams. At second level, most children analyse, interpret and draw conclusions from a variety of data. Children at first and second levels should develop their skill in using digital technology to display data appropriately.

Attainment over time

- Attendance is currently 95.7% and has been in line with the national average for the last three years. A minority of children have attendance which is below 90%. The headteacher monitors effectively attendance for all children. The headteacher has recognised that the greatest impact on attendance is family holidays taken during term-time. She shares clearly the impact of family holidays on children's learning in newsletters and in discussions with parents. She works closely with parents and partners to improve attendance for a few individuals. A few children are on part-time timetables, in discussion with parents and in line with local authority guidance. The school should now seek to ensure all children receive their full entitlement to education as soon as possible.
- The headteacher tracks effectively the attainment of all children in literacy and numeracy over time. Most children make good progress in literacy and numeracy as they move through the school. There is a dip in children's attainment in literacy and numeracy as children near the end of first level. This improves as children move up the school. The headteacher rightly recognises that teachers' lack of confidence in their professional judgements has had an impact on the reliability of attainment data over time. As planned, teachers should continue to develop their confidence in this area to ensure that all attainment data is reliable. This should support a more robust analysis of attainment trends over time. The headteacher and staff should also address the dip in attainment as children come to the end of first level. In doing so, they should support all children to maximise their progress in literacy and numeracy.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Staff celebrate very effectively children's achievements in and out of school. Children speak with excitement about receiving OSCAR awards at assembly for being successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. Children are proud to highlight their achievements. As a result, children are developing well their confidence and self-esteem.
- All children benefit from a range of activities which develop important skills and enable them to experience success. Older children have many opportunities to take on leadership roles, such as play leaders, leading lunchtime clubs for younger children and being part of pupil leadership groups. This is supporting them to become more responsible and to develop their leadership skills effectively. Children's and staff's work in these areas have been recognised through their achievement of several national and local awards. For example, the skills group has won the 'Moray DYW Big Build Challenge' on two occasions. Children develop well skills in resilience and creativity through these experiences.
- Almost all children across the school benefit from attending a variety of clubs in and out of school. All children in P6 and P7 have an opportunity to attend an annual skiing residential experience. Children speak confidently about the skills they develop through these opportunities. The headteacher and staff track effectively children's involvement in these opportunities and identify successfully children who are missing out on opportunities to experience success. As planned, staff should target more effectively the few children who do not currently attend any clubs to enable all children to experience success.

Equity for all learners

- All staff understand barriers that families and children may face, including socio-economic disadvantage and rural poverty. The headteacher, supported by the Parent Council, works

effectively to reduce costs associated with the school day. This includes a well-stocked, pre-loved uniform bank and access to free swimming lessons for all children. These approaches are helping to ensure that all children are fully included in all the opportunities the school has to offer.

- The headteacher uses PEF to provide additional support for identified individuals in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. She tracks effectively the progress targeted individuals make and can evidence the impact that interventions are having on improving outcomes for these children. Most children in these groups are making good progress towards their individual targets.

Context

The Rainbow Room is a unit in the school which supports five children with a range of additional support needs. Most children are operating at pre-early level in Curriculum for Excellence. The unit comprises two large classrooms, a kitchen, a sensory and soft playroom and changing rooms. A secure playground is available for the sole use of children attending the Rainbow Room. The unit is led by the headteacher and an acting principal teacher. A further five pupil support assistants complete the staffing for the Rainbow Room.

Leadership of change

- The headteacher leads the work of the unit effectively. She is supported well by the acting principal teacher. Together they have a clear vision for the unit which supports children to be included fully in the school. Staff are currently reviewing the school's vision, values and aims which are shared with the Rainbow Room. This helps ensure staff, parents and children from the Rainbow Room know they are valued members of the school community.
- The headteacher and acting principal teacher have developed a culture where staff are confident to initiate change. They support staff well to bring forward ideas and try new ways of working. The leadership team is skilled in identifying individual staff members skills and interests. They actively encourage staff to take lead roles in developing these within the school. As result, all staff take lead roles in improving the work of the unit.
- Staff reflect on their practice regularly. They support each other well when discussing potential new improvement priorities in the unit. The acting principal teacher has undertaken a range of professional learning relevant to the Rainbow Room's context. For example, in subjects such as trauma informed practice and neurodiversity. She shares this learning with staff effectively to support them to develop their skills in how best they can meet children's needs. Support staff also engage in professional learning and development, for example in supporting change and loss. Senior leaders should continue to support staff to access training events appropriate to their individual needs.

Learning, teaching and assessment

- All staff develop positive caring relationships and strong bonds of trust with all children. This supports children to engage well in their learning. Most children's experiences build effectively on their interests. As a result, children enjoy learning in the Rainbow Room. Children are supported well to access mainstream classes. They enjoy the opportunities this presents for them to develop their skills alongside their mainstream peers. Children are most able to exercise choice in what resources they will use when they are learning and during choosing time. This helps children to maintain their focus and engage effectively in their learning.
- The school's values are evident in classroom practice. Staff model these values well. For example, when showing kindness or praising children's achievements. Staff use a range of spaces well throughout the school campus and wider community to enrich children's learning. For example, children enjoy planting seeds in the school garden or swimming at the local swimming pool. Staff should consider how they can use digital technologies more to enrich

children's learning. In the few instances where children become dysregulated staff are adept at calming children and reengaging them quickly in their learning. Staff use visual aids appropriately to help them communicate with children. They should continue to develop their skills in their use of visual aids to help children develop their communication skills further.

- Each child's needs are assessed by the headteacher and local authority representatives prior to attending the Rainbow Room. Thereafter, the acting principal teacher will visit each child's current educational placement to gain further insight into their individual skills, abilities and needs. This supports staff to have a good understanding of each child prior to them attending the school. The acting principal teacher plans an enhanced transition process which ensures each child settles quickly into their new placement. Staff assess each child's needs appropriately on an ongoing basis through their daily observations. The acting principal teacher holds termly reviews where each child's progress and attainment are discussed. She uses information gathered from staff's observations and at termly reviews well to plan each child's learning. This supports children effectively to build their skills on what they can already do.
- The acting principal teacher plans children's learning over a range of timescales. Formal reviews of children's progress help her to plan each child's individual programme termly. She plans each child's weekly programme to ensure they access a range of relevant and interesting learning experiences. Weekly plans are used to record how well each child has engaged and made progress in their learning. The acting principal teacher uses the information gathered from meetings and weekly reviews well to track and monitor children's progress. Staff are building their skills in using a new tool to record information on children's progress. The leadership team should continue to support staff to develop their skills in using this tool to ensure that information gathered is valid and reliable.

Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

- The strong nurturing culture in the Rainbow Room supports children to feel valued and cared for. Staff's good understanding of each child's individual needs supports them well to help children develop their wellbeing. All staff are highly attentive to each child's needs. They show each child high levels of consideration and care. As a result, children are seen to be safe, nurtured and respected.
- Staff have an appropriate understanding of national guidance and statutory duties. They include parents fully when planning to meet children's needs. Children's plans take good account of their physical, emotional and developmental needs. Children's individual educational programmes, child's plans and where appropriate coordinated support plans capture each child's needs well. Targets within each plan accurately reflect important developmental milestones for each child. Children's plans are reviewed within national expected timescales.
- All children spend some time learning or playing alongside their mainstream peers. This supports children in the Rainbow Room to feel included as valuable members of the school community. The sense of community across the school supports parents and partners to feel respected and valued by the school. Staff value parents and partners' contributions greatly which help them meet children's needs as best possible.

- At the time of the inspection, the acting principal teacher's teaching time in the Rainbow Room was reduced. This action was part of a plan estimated to last for approximately six weeks. The headteacher, with the support of the local authority, should ensure all children receive access to high quality learning and teaching throughout the week.
- The headteacher, with the support of the local authority, need to ensure children who attend school on a part-time basis receive their full entitlement to education.

Raising attainment and achievement

- Children's attainment over time is evaluated against the curriculum for excellence milestones or early level benchmarks and targets in their individual education programmes. Overall, most children are making good progress in their learning.
- Most children listen attentively when listening to stories or adult instructions. They communicate their needs and wants well through gestures or visual cues. A few children use simple words or sentences to express themselves. Most children respond well when shown signs or symbols. Staff support most children well to develop their early writing skills through mark making. Most children are developing their understanding of number through sorting or counting shapes. A few children name simple 2D shapes and 3D objects.
- All children participate in a range of personal achievement activities. Planting seeds in the school garden and taking part in curling supports them well to develop their fine motor skills and to experience new smells or textures. Swimming in the local pool helps children to build their confidence around water. The headteacher tracks children's participation in achievement activities. They should now consider how they can track and monitor the skills children are developing through their wider achievements. Staff share children's achievements with parents well through an online platform. This supports parents effectively to know what their child has learned each day. Staff celebrate children's achievements well through school awards. Children are proud of their achievements and enjoy being praised for them.
- Staff ensure that cost is not a barrier to children participating in all school events. The Parent Council supports this through fundraising. For example, the Parent Council have helped fund a new cooker and a range of play equipment within the Rainbow Room.

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.