

Summarised inspection findings

Skene Square School

Aberdeen City Council

19 May 2026

Key contextual information

Skene Square School is a large urban, non-denominational primary school serving the Rosemount area of Aberdeen. The school has a nursery class. Across the school a few children reside in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 1 and 2. Just over half of children reside in deciles 3 to 6. The current school roll is 415 children across 15 classes, one of which is a composite class. Senior leaders report that 12% of children require additional support with their learning. Currently, 81% of children have English as an additional language. The school roll is fluid as families arrive and leave throughout the year due to overseas relocations for study or work.

The leadership team comprises the headteacher and two depute headteachers. The headteacher has been in post since 2018. The depute headteachers have taught in the school for over 20 years and have been in post since 2018. At the time of the inspection, there was a vacancy for a principal teacher.

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 provides strong, effective leadership with a clear focus on improving outcomes and raising aspirations for all children. She works well with the capable depute headteachers to deliver a shared, coherent vision. Together, they have established a highly positive and inclusive environment rooted in children’s rights. As a result, staff and children including those new to the school from a wider range of diverse backgrounds and those new to the country feel valued and demonstrate a strong sense of belonging to a diverse school community. Stakeholders consistently speak highly of the leadership team’s open, approachable manner. They appreciate the leadership team’s child-centred ethos and commitment to building positive relationships as the basis for improving outcomes.
- Senior leaders consulted widely with stakeholders when shaping the school’s values and have continued to refine the values to ensure they reflect the school’s evolving context. They have introduced supportive whole-school systems, including family groups, recognisable characters, and values awards. These structures actively engage children in understanding, discussing and applying the school’s values in real-life contexts. As a result, pupils demonstrate a strong, shared commitment to kindness, respect and responsibility. This approach has strengthened the school’s culture and fostered a clear sense of collective purpose.
- The headteacher plays a significant role in leading and directing school improvement and increasingly empowers staff to lead priority developments. She uses data effectively to identify

needs and targets actions that are leading to improve learners' outcomes. Effective collaboration has led to a refreshed RME programme, improved writing across the middle stages, and a strengthened Skene Square learning and teaching standard, improving consistency and practice across the school. The improvement plan is sharply focused, with clear priorities that raise attainment, strengthen learning and teaching, and support curriculum review. Senior leaders pace improvements well, enabling changes to embed and sustain impact.

- Senior leaders have enhanced approaches to monitoring and evaluating the school's work. They have successfully established an inclusive and supportive culture in which staff, children and parents feel increasingly confident in sharing their views and ideas. Improvement planning and quality assurance activities involve a range of stakeholders, and this collaborative approach is fostering a stronger culture of continuous improvement.
- A particular strength is the strategic leadership of improvements in writing. Senior leaders used accurate attainment data to identify the need for improvement. They focused their work on developing approaches to writing across the middle stages. Early evidence shows measurable improvements in children's outcomes. Teachers have engaged in targeted professional learning within and beyond the school, enhancing their understanding of effective pedagogy in writing. This has enabled them to plan and deliver more progressive and coherent learning experiences. Quality assurance, including classroom observations, professional dialogue and reviewing children's work, shows improved consistency and quality in writing. Staff articulate the improvement journey with confidence, and children are beginning to set ambitious, relevant targets, helping them recognise their growing skills as writers. Senior leaders should now reflect on the success of this work and consider how this approach could be replicated across other improvement priorities.
- The headteacher has cultivated a positive learning culture where staff feel increasingly empowered to lead aspects of improvement. Staff benefit from professional learning and collaboration, including the professional learning showcase Skene Square learning festival. Engagement with external partners broadens staff knowledge and expertise. A few staff lead small tests of change in areas such as learner profiles, 1+2 languages and dyslexia pathways. These contributions encourage reflective practice and professional growth. Senior leaders should ensure such initiatives clearly align with improvement priorities and that monitoring approaches allow staff to see how their actions lead to improved outcomes for children. Continued evaluation of professional learning will help ensure it supports school priorities and improves targeted areas of practice.
- Teachers have collaborated effectively to develop the Skene Square learning and teaching standard. This helpful framework sets clear expectations and supports staff to understand the characteristics of high-quality learning and teaching. Almost all staff increasingly engage in ongoing professional learning, enquiry and research which now more consistently underpins this work. Staff collaborate purposefully to share effective practice, engage in peer observations, contribute to a staff website, and present at the schools Skene Square learning festival. These opportunities help most staff reflect on and refine their practice.
- Staff engage meaningfully in annual professional review and development meetings with senior leaders. They value these opportunities to reflect on their practice and discuss professional needs. These meetings are beginning to help staff evaluate their work more

confidently against national standards and expectations and identify areas for improvement. Senior leaders should continue strengthening these processes to support staff in setting clear, measurable targets that help track progress and success.

- Most children enjoy contributing to the life and work of the school. They present confidently at assemblies. In the upper stages, a minority undertake formal leadership roles as family heads and deputies or through pupil voice groups. These opportunities help children feel responsible and valued. Children explain how they help organise events, influence improvement and gather peers' views. Children in pupil voice groups increasingly articulate how their ideas have shaped change. Examples include improving classroom inclusivity, organising a fun run and collaborating with neighbouring schools through the young creatives team. As planned, senior leaders should extend meaningful leadership opportunities so all children can contribute more fully to school improvement. Children across the school are ready to develop their participation and leadership skills further. This will help them take greater ownership of their ideas and reflect more deeply on their contributions. It will also support them to better understand the skills they gain through these experiences.
- Senior leaders deploy support for learning staff effectively to assist children who require additional help with their learning. Staff are skilled in planning and delivering targeted interventions that reduce barriers to learning and raise attainment for identified individuals.
- Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) is used well to support targeted literacy interventions, and children benefit from these focused approaches. The headteacher keeps staff and parents informed about PEF spending, both groups would now benefit from a more active role in decision-making. Senior leaders should continue refining how they report on the impact of PEF. This will lead to a clearer understanding of the impact of PEF on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

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

- Staff have established a welcoming, positive ethos based on strong, trusting relationships between adults and children. Senior leaders and staff know children very well and demonstrate a clear understanding of the school's unique context and diverse community. The school's values are firmly embedded in daily life. These are reflected in children's respectful interactions, positive attitudes to learning and strong sense of pride in their school. Children are confident, eager to learn and highly motivated.
- All children benefit from the culture of high expectations created by the headteacher and staff. Children believe that staff want the very best for them, and this contributes to consistently high standards of behaviour. Across the school, children show respect, kindness and a sustained commitment to learning.
- Teachers create calm, inclusive and purposeful learning environments that promote focus and motivation for most children. Most children use a range of effective help strategies independently, including class-based tools and bespoke help stations. They confidently seek support from peers and trusted adults when necessary. As a result, children work well both independently and cooperatively, sharing and building on the ideas of others respectfully. Universal support for learning and wellbeing is strong. Targeted resources such as wobble cushions, ear defenders and assistive digital technology, are readily available and used effectively for those requiring additional supports. These approaches support engagement, confidence and independence, particularly when children use technology for writing.
- Support staff enhance learning within and beyond the classroom very well. They work skilfully with individuals and groups in literacy and numeracy. They support children who need help with reading or comprehension and provide additional challenge in numeracy. Staff providing targeted support regularly review progress to ensure interventions are effective. As a result, almost all children requiring additional help make very good progress in their learning.
- In almost all lessons, teachers provide clear instructions and explanations that help learners engage with confidence and purpose. In almost all classes, children work individually, in pairs and in groups, demonstrating strong collaborative skills. Almost all children understand the purpose of their learning and know how to be successful. Most teachers make effective use of a range of approaches to help children identify their steps to success, modelling these well to support achievement.

- Most teachers plan learning experiences that build on prior learning and are well matched to the needs of almost all children. In a few lessons and targeted group sessions, staff provide a few children with high level of challenge that accelerates progress and increases motivation. Teachers now need to consider more carefully the needs of all children during whole-class instruction. Children who require greater challenge are ready to begin more demanding tasks more quickly. This should help to ensure these children experience appropriate challenge across all aspects of their learning.
- All teachers use questioning effectively to check understanding. Children benefit from opportunities to discuss questions with peers before responding. This builds confidence and deepens thinking. Teachers have correctly identified the need to strengthen their questioning further to extend learning, extend challenge across the curriculum and increase engagement for all learners.
- As planned senior leaders and staff should continue to review the Skene Square learning and teaching standard and continue to build on the good practice within the school. This will help to ensure all children access high quality learning and teaching across the school.
- In most lessons, teachers use interactive boards effectively to introduce and model concepts. Older children use technology well to extend their learning, regularly researching, organising information, sharing learning and developing digital skills, including coding. Across the school, digital technology supports learning in a variety of ways, for example, a few children use software programmes to support reading and writing. As planned teachers should continue to build on children's digital skills progressively as they move through the school.
- Staff have established play pedagogy at early level. Children increasingly play collaboratively, sharing ideas in structured role play areas. Children develop socially, explore their community and build early life skills through these experiences. Teachers have improved their use of open ended and continuous provision resources, creating more opportunities for child led, curiosity driven play. Staff should continue to expand opportunities for creative play to promote independence and responsibility for learning. Teachers should work with early level colleagues to develop further their observation skills to assess children's development through play and identify responsive next steps. As planned, staff should continue to extend play pedagogy in a more progressive way.
- Almost all staff provide specific and useful verbal feedback that helps children develop their learning further. This is particularly effective when linked closely to steps to success. Most teachers use formative assessment strategies well to support understanding during lessons. In almost all classes, children use self-assessment effectively to improve their writing. This allows them to recognise strengths, identify next steps and make meaningful improvements.
- Teachers create welcoming, language-rich classrooms where children new to the school feel supported and included. They use clear visuals, modelling and scaffolding well to provide support. This supports children with English as an Additional Language (EAL) well to take part fully alongside their peers. Teachers use initial assessments and ongoing checks to understand learners' starting points, monitor progress and identify any gaps in English skills. They respond with well-planned support focused on building vocabulary, speaking skills, reading and sentence building. Teachers plan lessons carefully to support language development across all

subjects, with core words and helpful supports built in as part of everyday practice. As a result, almost all learners with EAL make quick progress, becoming more confident, fluent and independent, and can work at the same level as their peers.

- Senior leaders have established clear and robust systems for assessment and the tracking and monitoring of children's progress. A well-planned assessment calendar and the use of a wide range of summative and standardised assessments support helpful dialogue about attainment. This enables teachers to identify children who require additional support or greater challenge. Termly tracking meetings strengthen this process and help most teachers plan responsive interventions that meet individual and group needs. To build on this positive practice, senior leaders should now develop a more standardised approach to the gathering and recording of assessment evidence for all children to help accelerate children's progress further.
- Teachers have begun to more actively seek the views, interests and prior knowledge of children to inform the planning of learning which links across different subjects. This is enabling greater personalisation and choice and supporting children to lead aspects of their learning. In a few examples children identify areas for enquiry and agree 'big questions' to explore together. When children are fully involved in planning how they will answer these questions and demonstrate their learning, they develop their creativity, curiosity and independence skills. Teachers should now extend this approach more consistently.
- Teachers benefit from supportive stage partner planning discussions. These provide robust opportunities to review achievement of a level and support teacher judgements. Senior leaders should now increase opportunities for moderation within and across schools to further develop teachers' confidence in making robust professional judgements.
- Teachers plan learning over different timescales, including through helpful annual overviews that ensure broad curriculum coverage. Across the school teachers are more consistently using shared planning frameworks. Senior leaders should continue to work with staff to adopt a more consistent and effective planning approach across the school. This should support teachers to plan together more effectively and show more clearly the progress children make across the curriculum as they move through the school.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Teachers use local authority progression pathways well to plan learning and teaching across almost all areas of the curriculum. These take account of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) experiences and outcomes. Teachers have newly developed an annual planning overview for learning which links different curricular areas. This supports children to experience learning which is closely linked to their interests and community. As planned senior leaders and teachers should ensure planning across the school is more consistent to ensure all children build on prior learning and make the best possible progress across the curriculum.
- Staff recognise and celebrate the many languages children speak within the school through assemblies, cultural celebrations and festivals and showcasing languages skills for example during national singing competitions. A few children support children new to the school to settle very well using their language skills to translate school activities. Teachers should now capitalise on this and increase the opportunities for more children to use their skills and knowledge of languages more creatively. Beyond their home languages all children from P1 learn French progressively. Across the school, children are beginning to learn Scots and Doric through literacy-based tasks in topic work to align to the delivery of the national 1+2 language expectation, staff should review further the approach to Scots, Doric and other language learning to ensure that all children receive their full entitlement to progressive language learning.
- All children receive their entitlement to two hours of quality progressive physical education each week. Children at second level undertake cycle training. They have developed their cycling skills and are more confident when riding their bikes.
- Most staff plan visits to the outdoor classroom to provide outdoor learning experiences. Children develop skills outdoors through a small range of motivating contexts, for example, developing fine motor skills through loose parts play. Children work with members of the community to improve outdoor spaces, such as, bulb planting. Staff should now maximise the use of the local environment to develop more creative, purposeful and progressive outdoor learning experiences for all children.
- Staff recognise and celebrate Christianity and other world religions well through school assemblies and displays. Staff adhere to national guidance to provide religious observance. Staff are reviewing the RME curriculum to further reflect the diverse cultures and have begun to make positive changes to children's learning in this area.
- Teachers have developed more creative teaching approaches and developed new planning approaches using big questions and enquiry. While children currently receive their entitlement to a broad and balanced RME curriculum. Senior leaders should keep this developing approach of big questions and enquiry under review to ensure all children continue to receive their full entitlement to a broad and balanced RME curriculum and that self-selecting big questions do not narrow children's learning offer. They should continue to ensure all children experience high-quality learning in all the cultures represented within the school. In doing so, they should work in partnership with local community groups. This will help staff and children to fully celebrate their unique school community.

- Children benefit greatly from local links within their community. Staff maximise opportunities to visit museums, businesses and local partners in and around Aberdeen. These experiences provide children with a wide range of expressive art experiences include singing and performing in national competitions and singing at local care homes. Children and staff are proud of these achievements and their role within the local community. Their recent success in a national competition has improved children's confidence and self-esteem.
- Teachers have strengthened their understanding of meta-skills and have begun to introduce these effectively to children. In a few lessons, children talk confidently about the meta-skills they are developing. To build on this progress, teachers should work together to establish a consistent, whole-school approach across all classes.
- Children benefit from an attractive school library, which they visit regularly. A few classes have also visited Aberdeen's local library for author visits. The school library is well resourced and includes a range of books which celebrate diversity. Children speak with enthusiasm about visiting the library and the wide range of texts they have access to. As a result, children are developing very well their enjoyment of reading.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Senior leaders have established a range of well-attended family engagement activities, including open afternoons and sharing the learning events. These provide valuable opportunities for families to spend time in class, learn about their child's progress and contribute their views. More formal parent meetings further support families to understand children's learning and wellbeing. Increasing parental feedback is helping senior leaders evaluate and improve their engagement strategies.
- Families who are new to the school and have English as an additional language report feeling well supported and included in the life of the school. They state the school works very well to reduced language barriers allowing them to participate more fully in whole school events.
- Parents greatly value the positive, values-based and inclusive ethos created by senior leaders and staff. Most find leaders visible, approachable and responsive, and feel confident raising concerns. Parents state that staff offer respectful support and signpost families effectively to wider services.
- Senior leaders use digital technology well to communicate with families. Regular website updates keep parents informed, and recent improvements have made information more accessible. A few families new to the school would welcome further support to navigate the site.
- The Parent Council is very supportive of the school's work. They play an active role in supporting a few school improvements and raising funds. Funds are used to contribute to events, trips and provide creative learning resources that benefit all children. Senior leaders should continue to strengthen parental involvement in evaluating the school's work. This will help parents understand how their contributions lead to improved outcomes for children.

2.1 Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

very 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 work very well together to support and promote children's wellbeing across the school. The school values underpin all interactions between children, their peers, and with staff. Across the school, children and families originate from over 40 countries and speak over 60 languages. Children celebrate more than six different religions. This rich diversity and children's kindness, inclusive behaviour and acceptance are an important strength of the school. Children and staff benefit from nurturing, respectful and highly positive relationships. This helps almost all children to feel safe and cared for. Almost all children know they have a trusted adult to talk to if they are upset. All staff know children very well as individuals. As a result, staff are able to sensitively support all children to have their wellbeing needs met effectively. This is enabling most children to feel able to share their views comfortably and confidently and to engage well in school.
- Staff maintain consistently high expectations for behaviour, creating a calm and supportive environment where almost all children behave very well. Children feel listened to and included, knowing adults will help them resolve concerns quickly. Staff use agreed approaches effectively to support children who become distressed, helping them regulate their emotions and return to learning. As a result, almost all children feel safe, trust adults, and re-engage positively with their learning.
- All staff support children very well to understand what wellbeing means and to know how they can improve their wellbeing. Children have a strong understanding of their wellbeing developed through assemblies and health and wellbeing lessons. Older children demonstrate a strong understanding of peer pressure and identify ways to respond when under pressure. Younger children know they need regular exercise to keep themselves healthy. Almost all children have a confident understanding of ways to improve their physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. Children know what constitutes bullying behaviour and are clear about what to do if they feel they are being bullied. Staff have clear guidance on how to support children who are being bullied. They record, monitor and follow-up appropriately on any alleged incidents. As a result, incidents of bullying are rare.
- Children confidently share how they feel through daily check-ins and wellbeing surveys. Teachers use this information effectively at termly tracking meetings. Children receive prompt support to improve their wellbeing when a concern is identified. They benefit from one-to-one wellbeing conversations, short-term social groups and well-considered partnership working as needed. Senior leaders review children's pastoral support regularly to ensure wellbeing needs are not a barrier to children's outcomes. As a result, almost all children are resilient, confident

and achieve success. Staff have a clear understanding of their statutory duties and of getting it right for every child. They ensure children are safeguarded effectively and their wellbeing needs are met. Staff are consistently well-prepared to identify concerns early and respond promptly through regular safeguarding training, monitored closely by senior leaders. As a result, children benefit from a safe, nurturing environment where their needs are recognised and acted upon when they arise.

- 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. Minor areas for improvement have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.
- Senior leaders and teachers have very effective processes in place to identify and plan support for children who need this. Staff work very well together to ensure support is based on individual children's needs and interests. Where possible, children are involved in planning their own strategies, helping them to feel valued and included. Families are involved appropriately in planning to meet children's needs. For a minority of children, staff develop helpful learner profiles which highlight particular strategies that work well for individual children. Staff develop more detailed plans for children who have additional support needs which require further planning. They plan clear and measurable short-term targets and record how these will be met. Staff review these to ensure children are making expected progress towards their targets. As a result, all children who require additional support make very good progress towards their agreed targets.
- Across the school, a few children benefit from the school's internally-resourced enhanced provision. This targeted support is provided exclusively by school staff and provides a calm, safe and inviting environment to meet children's needs very well. Children benefit from a wide range of supports, including access to a sensory room and learning across the curriculum. They also take part in social groups and develop life and digital technology skills. They have opportunities to engage with their class as appropriate and enjoy social times with peers. Staff are highly skilled in supporting children purposefully in this space. As a result, most children are supported very well to feel calm, engage purposefully in learning activities and make good or very good progress towards their own targets.
- Staff engage in helpful professional learning to meet children's needs well across the school. This includes training on inclusive classroom practice, understanding dyslexia and supporting neurodiversity in school. Staff participate in training on supporting children who are new to English. These impactful learning opportunities enable all staff to feel confident in meeting children's needs across the school. Staff are highly responsive and collegiate in their approaches to meeting needs across the school. They work collaboratively, sharing resources, training and specialist knowledge to strengthen practice. This collective approach is leading to consistent processes, a shared language, and increased staff confidence in meeting needs. As a result, children benefit from well-planned support which meets their needs very well.

- Staff place a high importance on promoting inclusion and celebrating difference. They model very well their 'Welcome, we've been expecting you' motto. Children are proud to show their map of the world representing all the different cultures and countries children in Skene Square come from. A few children have opportunities to be responsible in translator roles in their first language. They help new children who join the school who are new to English. This helps children to feel welcomed, included as a member of the school community and less anxious when they start school. Almost all staff are confident in meeting the needs of children who are new to English. They use technology appropriately to translate information or to support learning. Children benefit from dual language texts, skilled support staff, helpful word banks and peer support. As a result of these effective systems, almost all children who join the school make very good progress in language acquisition, in feeling included and in having their wellbeing needs met.
- Staff and children are rightly proud of their vibrant school community. They celebrate this well through events such as cultural fortnight. Children learn about different cultural traditions for example, a local group helps children learn about African dance and food.
- Children learn about difference, disability, gender, religion, race and discrimination. Most children understand that all individuals have different needs and require different support to meet their needs. Staff create attractive displays across the school to highlight learning in these areas. Staff should continue to provide children with rich opportunities to learn in more depth about all protected characteristics in an age-appropriate way.

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

- Senior leaders have a sound understanding of the reasons behind patterns and trends in whole school attainment data. The school roll fluctuates as families arrive and leave throughout the year due to overseas relocations for study or work. Senior leaders track individuals very well. Overall, individual children make very good progress during their time at the school.
- Most children at early level achieve nationally expected CfE levels in literacy and numeracy. At first level, most children achieve expected CfE levels in reading, and listening and talking, and the majority achieve in numeracy and writing. At second level, most children achieve expected CfE levels in numeracy and writing, and almost all in listening and talking and reading. Across the school a few children exceed expectations in aspects of literacy and numeracy.
- Children who receive additional support for their learning make very good progress from previous levels of attainment or towards their personal targets.

Attainment in literacy and English

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

Listening and talking

- Across the school, children are articulate and confident when engaging with others. Most children at early level listen and respond to others appropriately. They follow and give simple instructions. Most children at first level take turns and contribute at the appropriate time when engaging with others in a variety of contexts. Almost all children at second level contribute effectively a number of relevant ideas, information and opinions when engaging with others. They accurately recognise some techniques used to engage or influence the listener. Across the school, children would now benefit from building on their talking and listening skills through increased opportunity to present their work to a wider audience.

Reading

- At early level, most children confidently hear and say different single sounds made by letters. They know the difference between a letter, word and numeral. Most children accurately use their knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns to read words. At first level, most children select texts regularly for enjoyment. They explain confidently preferences for particular texts and authors. Almost all children at second level read with fluency, understanding and expression. They distinguish accurately between fact and opinion with appropriate

explanation. At first and second levels, children should continue to develop their understanding of inferential and evaluative questions.

Writing

- Most children at early level share feelings and ideas successfully in pictures and print. They use a capital letter and a full stop in at least one sentence. A few children do not yet form all lowercase letters legibly. The majority of children at first level make notes to help plan their writing and use them successfully to create new texts. They regularly check their writing to ensure it makes sense. They need to continue to develop their skills in creating a variety of texts, including poems and plays. A few children at first level need to improve their handwriting skills. Most children at second level write in a fluent and legible way. They make appropriate choices about layout, presentation, including in digital texts, to engage the reader. Children use headings, bullet points, graphics and captions well to enhance their writing.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

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

Number, money and measure

- Most children at early level count on and backwards within ten. They accurately add and subtract within ten. A few children do not yet form all numerals correctly. At first level, the majority of children use written addition and subtraction methods and share their strategy confidently. They use the correct unit of measurement when solving problems involving weight, length and liquid. They need to develop further their mental agility to solve mental problems. Most children at second level identify the value of a digit up to one million and round numbers within 1000 and 10,000. They confidently use the four operations and explain their strategy and justify their answer. They need to develop further their ability to correctly solve two step problems.

Shape, position and movement

- Most children at early level confidently identify and sort simple two-dimensional (2D) and three-dimensional (3D) objects. They name accurately 2D shapes. At first level the majority of children use positional language to describe successfully a journey. They recognise accurately symmetry within pictures. Most children at second level describe accurately 2D shapes and 3D objects using specific vocabulary. At second level most children classify and describe confidently a range of angles. They need to consolidate their understanding of the links between compass points and angles.

Information handling

- At early level, most children match and sort items well by colour, size, and shape. They answer questions about a simple bar graph accurately. At first level, most children answer questions related to a variety of data sets including charts, diagrams and bar graphs. Almost all children at second level, collect, organise and display data accurately in a variety of ways including bar graphs, line graphs, and simple pie charts. Across the school children should develop further their skills in information handling through the use of digital technology.

Attainment over time

- Over the last three years, the school's average attendance figure has continuously improved. Currently the overall attendance figure for the school is 93.8%. This is in line with the national

average. Senior leaders are proactive in encouraging attendance and punctuality through regular communication via the school website and in discussions with families. They monitor the absence and lateness of individual children rigorously. Senior leaders have a good understanding of the reasons for absences. These are varied. They follow local authority procedures in an attempt to improve attendance. If senior leaders have a concern about a child's attendance, they work in close partnership with parents, relevant staff or partner agencies. This helps to improve the attendance of identified children. At the time of the inspection there were no children on a part-time education.

- Senior leaders and staff collect literacy and numeracy attainment data for individual children over time. They use this information well to understand how children are achieving at different stages and to track individual progress. This gives them a clear and accurate picture of children's attainment, progress, and the impact of any support. Senior leaders, teaching and support staff use this information skilfully to plan and deliver highly effective, well-planned targeted interventions. This includes support for cohorts of children, such as those with English as an additional language. There is clear evidence of significant improvement in language acquisition for almost all of these children. Teachers also set ambitious stretch targets for attainment. Senior leaders analyse rigorously whole school attainment data, alongside other information to support their strategy for raising attainment. They recently identified a dip in writing attainment. They took prompt action to improve teaching approaches and children's learning experiences. This has ensured improved attainment in writing. They have accurately identified the need to raise attainment in numeracy and this features on their improvement plan.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Children's achievements are valued and recognised by staff across the school. Staff actively invite parents to share their children's out of school achievements. All staff and children are encouraged to identify and share children's achievements in a 'good news post-box'. Staff celebrate these achievements well through assemblies, a digital platform and a whole school wider achievements display. Almost all children believe that they have the opportunity to discuss their achievements outwith school with an adult in school who knows them well. Children are very proud of their achievements and success. This is developing their confidence and self-esteem.
- Almost all children have opportunities to take part in activities in school beyond the classroom. They participate in a wide range of after-school and lunchtime clubs, such as singing, wellbeing, football and science. Through participation in these clubs, children are developing their teamwork, communication and creativity skills. Staff, with support from partners, are responsive to children's needs and adapt the range of clubs on offer to reflect children's interests. All children in P4 have access to swimming, and children from P5 develop skills in cycling. Almost all children in P7 attend an outdoor residential experience. These experiences support children to become confident individuals and responsible citizens.
- Staff track effectively children's participation in wider achievements in and outwith school. Teachers have a sound understanding of individual circumstances and take steps to support children at risk of missing out on opportunities to experience success. As a next step, staff should support children to identify, share, and track the skills they are developing through participation in these activities.

Equity for all learners

- All staff know their children and families very well. Senior leaders and staff have a strong understanding of the school's socio-economic context. They use their knowledge well to inform plans to address inequity. Senior leaders consult parents in relation to the cost of school events and experiences. They use this information to create a helpful annual cost of the school day statement and calendar. This ensures staff consider all costs associated with activities and share this information with parents. Staff provide a pre-loved uniform bank, book swap and free toiletries. Additionally, they signpost families to available financial support. Staff work closely with the Parent Council to provide school trips at no cost to families, such as a trip to the pantomime. These initiatives help to ensure that all children have equal opportunities to participate fully and experience success in all the school has to offer.
- Senior leaders use data and contextual knowledge very well to inform PEF spending, including investing in additional staffing. Staff provide targeted support and well considered initiatives in reading and writing for children who face barriers to their learning. These initiatives are accelerating children's progress in both attainment and achievement. Senior leaders and staff review a wide range of data regularly to measure the impact of PEF on gaps in children's learning and attainment. They are making very good progress in their work to address the poverty related attainment gap.

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.