

Summarised inspection findings

Carronshore Primary School

Falkirk Council

8 September 2026

Key contextual information

Carronshore Primary School and Nursery Class is a non-denominational primary school, which is situated in the village of Carronshore, approximately three miles from the centre of Falkirk. There is an enhanced provision, known as the Base located within Carronshore Primary school. At the time of inspection, the roll was 248 children in the primary school. The senior leadership team consists of a headteacher, who has been in post for ten years, a depute headteacher and two principal teachers. In September 2024, over 50% of children resided in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Deciles 1 – 5. Fifty percent of children in P6 and P7 are registered for free school meals. According to school data, 67% of children require additional support with their learning.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	very good
This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are: - learning and engagement - quality of teaching - effective use of assessment - planning, tracking and monitoring	

- Children are enthusiastic, independent learners. They are polite, respectful and very well behaved. Almost all children show a strong understanding of children’s rights and talk confidently about how these apply in daily life. Children in all classes have worked together to develop ‘Class Charters’ based on their knowledge of rights. They are proud of the national award which they have received for their work in this area.
- Children learn in a very calm environment that is positive, supportive and inclusive. Teachers have skilfully developed classroom and open areas to promote creative approaches to learning. Children at all levels access engaging open spaces containing quality resources appropriate to their age and stage. Across the school, the high value staff place on children’s work is evident in the extensive attractive displays of work from across the curriculum. Visual symbols are displayed consistently across the school to support all learners to access learning activities.
- Almost all children are developing a strong love for learning as a result of the high-quality learning and teaching experiences teachers provide. Almost all learners engage enthusiastically in a wide range of creative and captivating learning that is well matched to their needs and interests. Teachers use a range of teaching approaches that engage children in learning very effectively. These include individualised and small group interventions, group teaching, whole class teaching, learning through play and enquiry-based learning based on children’s needs and interests. Staff provide highly effective provocations that allow children

to experience open-ended learning designed to develop curiosity, creativity and exploration. They experience appropriate choice and daily opportunities to lead their own learning.

- All teachers share the purpose of learning with children and how they can be successful in their learning. Almost all teachers provide children with very clear instructions and explanations. They use questioning skilfully to develop children's thinking skills. Almost all teachers observe learners closely and provide effective interventions to support learning. Across the school, almost all children experience learning at the correct level of pace and challenge. As a result, almost all children make the best possible progress in their learning.
- Staff across the school use very effectively the knowledge gained from high-quality professional learning on learning through play to enhance learning experiences for all children. Staff use national practice guidance very well to support their effective approach to learning through play. They have created an attractive, well-resourced environment which promotes independence, creativity, curiosity and engages children purposefully in play. Children experience a wide variety of engaging adult-led and child-initiated learning. Teachers at early and first level protect time to engage with children during play and carry out effective observations. They use these planned play observations to inform planning and to ensure play-based activities are well matched to the needs and interests of all children. Teachers use designated spaces effectively to showcase how children's learning has developed over time.
- Teachers at second level have used this effective practice to facilitate self-directed, enquiry based child-led learning. They have developed a 'do it yourself' (DIY) approach to engage children well in their learning. This approach supports innovation, independent learning and skills development. Children experience meaningful opportunities to consolidate and extend learning. Staff are rightly proud of their highly effective work in this area and have shared their approaches with colleagues from other schools.
- Across the school, children use digital technologies effectively to support their learning. All children in P5-7 have individual access to a digital device. They use them confidently on a daily basis to access learning, complete tasks and to record and share their learning. Children use matrix bar codes to access digital resources to support learning. They use web based games to develop and consolidate learning in numeracy and literacy. Children use digital technologies effectively to carry out research and create presentations to share their learning. Younger children investigate how to manoeuvre wireless digital devices using basic coding. As a result, children's digital skills are developing very well.
- Staff plan outdoor learning experiences across all areas of the curriculum that engage children effectively. For example children in P2 used the playground creatively to classify living and non-living things.
- Staff provide high-quality written and verbal feedback that supports children with their next steps in learning. Staff support children to develop their self and peer assessment skills in writing through the introduction of marking grids linked to steps for success. Children reflect on their learning and complete a 'what matters to me in my learning' sheet once a session.

Children are now well placed to identify individualised learning targets for their own learning as a next step.

- Senior leaders provide a helpful summative assessment overview for staff that outlines the range of assessments and when they should be completed. Senior leaders and staff use the results of these assessments to track children's progress and support professional judgements of attainment for all children in literacy and numeracy. This assessment information is used well to identify appropriate learning experiences for children who require additional challenge or support. Staff work collaboratively, both within school and with colleagues from other schools to develop shared standards of achievement of a level in writing through moderation of professional judgements.
- Senior leaders provide staff with a well thought out annual overview to support planning. Teachers plan collaboratively with stage partners. They plan learning for children over different timescales and across all curriculum areas. Staff use data well to identify appropriate learning experiences that support progression in children's learning. Teachers plan learning in a way that ensures children complete core literacy and numeracy tasks, well matched to their needs and then apply this learning in a range of different creative contexts. Staff involve children regularly in planning discussions. Children's voice is sought when planning enquiry-based child learning and learning across different curriculum areas. Teachers use curriculum pathways and Curriculum for Excellence(CfE) experiences and outcomes effectively to consistently plan highly engaging learning experiences that are fostering children's enthusiasm for learning.

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.

3.2 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

- Overall, attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is very good. Almost all children across the school have achieved nationally expected levels of attainment in numeracy and literacy. This includes almost all children who require additional support with their learning. A few children in P7 exceed national expectations and benefit from increased challenge.

Attainment in literacy

- Across the school, almost all children make very good progress from prior levels of attainment in reading, writing and listening and talking.

Listening and talking

- Across the school, almost all children are articulate and speak in detail about their learning experiences. At early level, children communicate and share stories in different ways, for example, in imaginative play. They share ideas with a wider audience, for example, their group or class. At first level, almost all children communicate clearly and audibly when engaging with others for a range of purposes. They listen and respond appropriately to others in a respectful way. At second level, almost all children share their opinions confidently and enthusiastically. They show respect for the views of others where they contribute and build on their ideas well. Children at first and second level would benefit from accessing spoken texts regularly for enjoyment or to find information for a specific purpose.

Reading

- At early level, almost all children hear and say single sounds made by letters. They hear and say blends and sounds made by a combination of letters. At first level, children read aloud a familiar piece of text and show understanding. They use punctuation and grammar well to read with understanding and expression. Children at first level would benefit from more access to non-fiction texts. At second level, children distinguish between fact and opinion with appropriate explanation. They apply a range of reading skills and strategies to read and understand texts, for example predicting, clarifying or summarising. Children at second level would benefit from increasing their knowledge of a wider range of authors and their styles of writing material.

Writing

- At early level, almost all children write words from left to right and leave a space accurately between words when writing. They use a capital letter and a full stop in at least one sentence. At first level, almost all children create a variety of texts for different purposes. When

writing creatively, they create texts with evidence of structure and recognisable features of genre. At second level, most children create a range of short and extended texts regularly for different purposes. They write most sentences in a grammatically correct way and use paragraphs appropriately to separate thoughts and ideas. Children at first and second level would benefit from improving the presentation of their written work.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Across the school, almost all children are making very good progress and a few children are making accelerated progress in numeracy and mathematics

Number, money and measure

- At early level, children are developing their knowledge of number bonds to 10 and are beginning to order numbers to twenty. A few children are ready and able to embrace more challenging learning across number, money and measure. At first level, children have a sound understanding of place value and read and write numbers up to and beyond 1000. Children use their knowledge of place value well to perform calculations and recall multiplication facts. They measure length and weight accurately and apply this knowledge in real contexts. By second level, children are confident with all four number processes. Most children mentally calculate answers quickly and confidently talk about their thinking process. Children should continue to be encouraged to use a range of methods to undertake mental calculations. They are building their knowledge to be able to solve a range of algebraic equations. Children confidently talk about the links between fractions, decimals and percentages.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, children confidently recognise two-dimensional (2D) shapes. At first level, most children describe properties of a few 2D shapes and identify lines of symmetry. They confidently name simple three-dimensional objects such as cube, cuboid, sphere, and cone. Children use their knowledge of compass points to support their understanding of directional language. Children should continue to build their understanding and confidence in calculating perimeter and area of basic shapes. At second level, children confidently use appropriate mathematical language including acute, obtuse, straight and reflex to describe and classify angles. Most children use appropriate mathematical language to calculate perimeter and area of compound shapes.

Information handling

- There are a range of meaningful opportunities across the curriculum for children to gather and analyse different types of information. Children at early level should be provided with more regular opportunities to explore data and information handling. At first level, children confidently use tally marks to gather information and display information in Carroll Diagrams and pictographs. At second level, most children have a knowledge of a range of graphs and charts and their uses. They extract relevant information from them accurately.

Attainment over time

- Children demonstrate sustained high levels of attainment over time, including children who require additional support with their learning. Senior leaders and staff make very effective use of data to support children to make the best possible progress over time. They employ a robust tracking system that uses data from a wide range of assessments to monitor the progress of all children in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Senior leaders are at

the early stages of tracking children's progress in all other curricular areas and, as planned, should continue to develop this.

- Senior leaders promote a holistic approach to supporting children to achieve and attain. As part of their approach, teachers plan to develop children's skills and include fully their interests and talents. Central to this is the strategic approach to planning learning experiences where staff focus extensively on developing children's sense of self-efficacy. Teachers plan and provide multiple and wide-ranging opportunities for children to achieve success in learning. Staff work together very effectively to mitigate barriers and provide timely interventions. The impact of interventions is tracked closely and robustly evaluated. As a result, children see themselves as capable, confident learners who are unafraid to challenge themselves to achieve and attain at their individual highest levels.
- Attendance is in line with the national average. This has been sustained over recent years and current data shows there has been a steady improvement this session. Identified staff monitor children's attendance regularly and take proactive steps to provide support and interventions for the few children whose attendance is less than 90%. They identify children who have challenges in sustaining regular attendance and work closely with families to find potential solutions to address underlying causes of absence. Senior leaders monitor closely the attendance and progress of specific groups and cohorts of children as part of this successful approach. There are no children attending the mainstream school on a part-time basis.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- All children benefit from a wide variety of rich learning experiences, in and out of school. These meaningful opportunities are skilfully woven into children's life in school. This is allowing them to develop a range of skills successfully. Children are proud of what they achieve and enjoy sharing their successes and achievements during school assemblies. These celebrations reflect the school motto which encourages children to 'Bee the Best You can Bee'. Children engage enthusiastically in a variety of activities which create opportunities for them to engage in new experiences, build confidence, learn a new skill and experience success. These include cooking, sports, art, dance, rollerblading, and coding.
- Staff are proud of and regularly celebrate children's positive attitudes, enthusiasm and good behaviour. Children are awarded 'Carronshore coins' when they have gone 'above and beyond' or have achieved something special in school. These can be saved and used in the school reward shop to trade for a prize or reward. This has had a positive impact on motivation and behaviour for almost all children.
- Children participate in a range of clubs and activities during and after school. These include football, dance, and cycling. Staff track and monitor children's engagement in achievement opportunities and take steps to address gaps and children not engaging.
- Pupil voice is enhanced through involvement in a range of leadership groups across the school. These include leaders of learning, digital leaders, hedgehog ambassadors, reading leaders, sports leaders and planet protectors. Through talking circles, children collaborate well to share ideas about improving their school. This includes the recently developed school library and 'Taskmasters' helping to design future plans for the playground. These varied opportunities help children to develop confidently important skills for learning, life and work.

Equity for all learners

- All staff have a clear understanding of the socio-economic background of all children and families. The headteacher has developed a clear and effective plan for Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). This aims to ensure that specific groups of children, such as those who require additional support with their learning and those whose families face financial constraints, are supported in their learning. There is a wide variety of carefully planned supportive interventions provided through both universal and targeted approaches. Senior leaders use PEF effectively to provide additional staffing. Identified staff lead literacy and numeracy interventions skilfully for individuals and cohorts of children. Senior leaders and staff track and evaluate robustly which targeted interventions are having the greatest impact on accelerating the attainment of individuals and groups of children. This is helping to close gaps in children's attainment in literacy and numeracy and supporting children to remain engaged and ready to learn.

Context

The enhanced provision, known as the Base, is located within Carronshore Primary School. It consists of one multi-stage class. There are currently 22 children in the provision, ranging from P1 to P7. The learning environment consists of a large open plan space, a small playroom, a cosy corner and two secure outdoor play areas. All children are allocated places in the Base through the local authority staged intervention process. All children attending the Base have a range and complexity of additional support needs. Most children join mainstream classes and attend whole school events with their peers as appropriate to their needs.

The headteacher has the overall responsibility for the Base. A principal teacher, two teachers and a number of support for learning staff meet the needs of all children in the Base.

- Staff know children very well. They have developed highly respectful and positive relationships with children. Children are settled and display a sense of feeling safe and understood in their interaction with staff. Children's transition to the Base is very well supported through 'What matters to me' and Form 4 reports, including information from partners. This approach to transition supports staff to have a clear understanding of children's individual needs. In a few examples, these profiles include important strategies to support children in their learning and to reduce barriers to participation. Staff understand clearly what support children need for their learning and wellbeing.
- Staff have developed well a range of motivating and relevant learning provocations both indoors and outdoors. These take good account of most children's interests and engage them well in their learning. Almost all children have the correct level of daily opportunities to engage in child-led, adult-initiated and adult-led learning and play. They work on group tasks and activities well and take part in more structured one-to-one and small group teacher directed lessons across the day. Staff are responsive to the needs of almost all children and provide well timed support to engage, and at times, re-engage children in their learning. A few children who display lower levels of attention on tasks and fleeting interactions should have increased opportunities to work with staff to develop these important skills.
- All children can display a range of disengaged and at times challenging behaviours as a result of their additional support needs. Staff intervene skilfully if required which allows children to feel supported and understood. Often this leads to children settling quickly back on task. Staff redirect children to participate in tasks and activities designed to reduce their anxieties and barriers such as taking part in movement breaks, engaging with sensory activities or playing with preferred toys.
- Teachers use strategies such as modelling, guidance and commentary to help children understand their learning, making effective use of spaces and resources. Staff are developing as skilled communication partners. Through recent professional learning, they are using a wider range of approaches, including visuals, objects, signing and interactions, to support communication well. This enables almost all children to share ideas and make choices. A few children need more support to engage, while others require greater challenge. Staff should continue to provide appropriately challenging tasks and sustained engagement to ensure all children make the best possible progress.

- Staff make effective use of the 'go to wall' to support predictability, helping children to understanding the structure of the school day. Teachers and staff establish a clear routine, which provides consistency and helps children feel secure and prepared for what comes next. Staff use 'now and next' boards to reinforce learners' expectations. This ensures that tasks are consistently well structured and calm, allowing children to focus on their learning.
- Most children use a range of digital tools such as cameras, computers and tablets with increasing confidence. They play games, take photographs and access information using matrix bar codes. A few children would benefit from developing their skill in using digital technologies. This would support them to be more independent in their learning, such as writing and reading programmes to reduce barriers to literacy and help develop their independence further.
- Staff use a small range of summative assessments in literacy and numeracy and targets set against personal goals. These provide evidence of how successfully planned learning is reducing barriers to learning and helping children make progress in their learning. Staff are beginning to use assessment information more reliably to plan next steps in learning. Senior leaders and teachers should strengthen approaches to assessment in key areas of children's learning to help track more accurately the holistic progress children are making. These include communication, independence skills and emotional regulation. Tracking meetings with the headteacher are helping to improve teachers' confidence in understanding Milestones and national Benchmarks within and across milestones and CfE early and first levels. Records of child's personal meetings, updates of personal action plans and annual reports support teachers at set points in the year. These highlight the progress children are making in key areas of learning based on additional support planning targets. Senior leaders should review approaches to assessment and planning to ensure that the progress all children are making in their holistic wellbeing, development and learning is clear and in line with their expected stages of holistic development. This will help them identify how much progress all children are making, who is making more accelerated progress and who required more help with their learning.
- Teachers plan individualised learning well over different time scales through Child's Plans. These are focused on key areas of communication, regulation, social interactions, literacy, numeracy and skills for life. They make use of annual overviews, and 'big idea' contexts for learning to plan the experiences and outcomes of CFE in all areas of the curriculum. Children's learning targets are displayed prominently in the Base. Teachers review Child's Plans and context planning termly. Senior leaders should continue to support staff to ensure that all targets are specific and measurable in Child's Plans. This will help to ensure that children are making clear progress and new targets build progressively on prior learning.

Raising attainment and achievement

Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy

- Overall, most children make good progress, and a few children are making very good progress from prior levels of attainment in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. A few children could make better progress with their learning.

Literacy

- In literacy, most children are attaining and working well within the appropriate milestones, early and first levels as appropriate to their learning needs. Almost all children are developing their communication skills well. They use objects, symbols, signing and meaningful vocabulary to communicate and engage in appropriate interactions and conversations. Children recognise symbols, environmental print, letters and words. They use these skills to develop their reading, with a few able to read more fluently and developing well their understanding of the texts they read. Most children enjoy opportunities to use tools for writing and mark-make, and convey meaning using pictures, words and sentences to convey their ideas. A few learners at first level would benefit from further opportunities to extend their writing skills across a range of texts. Staff increasingly capture children's voice in review meetings. Most children would benefit from more meaningful opportunities to contribute to discussions. This should help them to develop an understanding of how their communication and views influence their lives. A few children at milestones who are non-verbal need more frequent support to develop their attention and interaction skills.

Numeracy

- Children are attaining and working well within the appropriate milestones and early and first levels as appropriate to their learning needs. Children use a range of helpful practical materials to explore and develop important mathematical concepts. Children use objects, pictures and symbols to follow visual timetables and use 'now and next' boards to support transitions from one activity to another. Most children recognise and write numbers and add and subtract using concrete materials. Most children know a range of colours and sort items into groups. They are developing their understanding of measure and shape. At first level, children are developing their understanding of time and interpreting simple data. Children at early and first level would benefit from developing their mathematical skills in real life contexts, for example, using real money to pay for items.

Attendance

- Most children experience positive patterns of high attendance. Senior leaders and staff monitor attendance closely, understand absence patterns well, and take effective action with partners when needed. If concerns arise, senior leaders and staff work effectively with colleagues and external agencies. This has helped to improve the attendance of a few children. At the time of the inspection, there were a few children on part-time timetables. Senior leaders and staff should continue to support these children to increase their time in programmes of learning and holistic development to improve their attendance further. This should help them develop important skills for learning and life.

Attainment over time

- Almost all pupils in the Base make steady progress across learning, life skills and their holistic development, with improving attainment over time. Senior leaders and staff communicate progress over time through comments in individualised learning plans, progress meetings minutes and records of children's meetings. From their start points, most children move beyond milestones into early level and a few into first level during their time in the Base. New planning and tracking systems are strengthening how progress is understood. Progression pathways in literacy and numeracy are supporting teacher professional judgements as children work within and across a level. Senior leaders and staff should develop more consistent approaches to assessment and tracking to show progress and next steps more clearly. Targets

should better reflect the level of support required, helping staff identify and build on the small steps children make as they develop and consolidate their learning.

Quality of Learner Achievements

- Children experience a range of personal achievements appropriate to their needs which are celebrated regularly across the Base and school. Staff recognise well the successes and the effort of children as they participate in their learning. These achievements are celebrated in class through immediate praise and at whole school assemblies. Achievements show well children's success in progressing their learning, developing their citizenship and communication and development of important life skills. Teachers track achievements well using individual profiles. They should now create a clearer overview to improve consistency in tracking participation and skills. This should help staff better understand progress and plan next steps to ensure all children benefit from relevant, progressive and engaging opportunities. This should help children make the best possible personal development.

Equity

- Senior leaders and staff understand the needs and backgrounds of children and their families very well. They use this information effectively to build strong relationships and remove socio and financial barriers so all children can take part fully in the life of the base and where appropriate the wider school. As a result, children are fully included, well supported, and able to engage positively in their learning.

Other relevant evidence

- 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.
- A specialist teacher from the associated high school provides children with their full entitlement to two hours of high-quality learning experiences in physical education.
- All children receive their entitlement to religious education and religious observance. There is a planned programme of assemblies and visiting speakers. This includes appropriate learning around important events and religious festivals.
- Across the school, almost all children learn Spanish progressively as the second language and are confident in using common words and phrases. Senior leaders allocate additional funding to support children to learn Gaelic (Learners) as their third language. Senior leaders should continue to monitor children's experiences to meet their full entitlement to Language Learning in Scotland 1+2.
- Staff have recently developed a welcoming and attractive library area to support the promotion of a positive reading culture across the school.
- Stakeholders are informed about how PEF monies are allocated.

Practice worth sharing more widely

The school's approach to play and enquiry based learning

Staff across the school use the knowledge gained from high-quality professional learning on play and enquiry-based pedagogy over a sustained period to enhance learning experiences for all children. They have created an attractive, well-resourced environment which promotes independence, creativity, curiosity and engages children purposefully in self-directed enquiry-based learning. Staff provide highly effective provocations that allow children to experience open-ended learning designed to develop curiosity, creativity and exploration. Children experience appropriate choice and daily opportunities to lead their own learning. Teachers at early and first level protect time to engage with children during play and carry out highly effective observations. They use these planned play interventions to inform planning and to ensure play-based activities are well matched to the needs and interests of all children. Teachers use attractive and carefully designed spaces effectively to showcase how children's learning has developed over time.

Children at first and second level have regular opportunities to develop wider interests through creative broad educational experiences 'BEE'. They reflect on what they have learned and the skills they develop through this approach. Teachers at second level continue this effective practice to facilitate further self-directed, enquiry-based child-led learning. They have developed a 'do it yourself' approach to engage children in their learning. This approach supports innovation, independent learning, skills development and makes strong use of children's interests and opportunities to consolidate and extend learning. Staff are rightly proud of their highly effective work in this area and have shared their approaches with colleagues from other schools.

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.