

Summarised inspection findings

St Pius X RC Primary School

Dundee City Council

15 September 2026

Key contextual information

St Pius X Primary School is a denominational school serving the Douglas community within Dundee City Council. At the time of the inspection, the school roll was 151 children across seven classes. Approximately a third of children are recorded by school staff as requiring additional support with their learning. Almost all children live in Scottish Index Multiple Deprivation deciles 1 and 2. The acting headteacher has been in post since 2024 and is supported by an acting depute headteacher who has been in post since 2022.

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	

- Senior leaders and staff ensure the gospel values and the school vision of ‘be your best self’, are central features to supporting continuous improvement for all children. Staff have worked very well to ensure children understand their rights. Children articulate their rights well and explain how they are supported to uphold these during everyday life across the school. Staff and children are very proud of the national accreditation they have achieved for their work in this area. Almost all parents say their child likes being at school and that staff treat their child fairly and with respect.
- Children talk proudly of the school values of love, achieve and inspire. They share their enjoyment of discussing these daily and in assemblies. Children are developing well their understanding of key skills to support their learning such as communication and collaboration. All staff ensure that children’s voices support improved experiences for their peers through the work of ‘leading our learning’ groups. These groups have resulted in improvements in areas such as digital literacy, reading, sports and work on children’s rights. Most children are growing their confidence and responsibility for improving learning experiences which is creating a strong sense of belonging.
- Staff have worked effectively with children to support and promote positive behaviour and engagement in learning. Senior leaders and staff have created a helpful relationships policy, supported by the St Pius standards, which provides guidance and clear expectations across the school. Children benefit from access to cosy corners, fidget toys and calm kits in each classroom. This is helping most children well to manage their emotions. Most children use the school rules of ready, safe and respectful well to support them to be the best they can be. Most children are active in their learning and interact positively with their peers and staff. However, a few children across the school demonstrate dysregulated behaviour and disengage from their learning. This is having a negative impact on children’s learning. Staff should ensure that

they consistently apply the school's agreed approaches through sustained high expectations of behaviour to ensure all children fully engage in their learning.

- Senior leaders and staff have worked effectively to ensure clarity of expectations in relation to high quality learning and teaching. Together they have created a learning, teaching and assessment policy where expectations are effectively captured. In addition, they have created an exemplar of what constitutes a high-quality lesson. This has supported a consistent approach and structure to all lessons. Senior leaders and teachers need to continue to work together to ensure that all children experience high-quality learning and teaching.
- Teachers consistently share the purpose of the lesson and work with children to generate steps to success. This supports children very well to understand what they are learning and how they can be successful. Teachers use questioning well to check children's understanding. In the majority of lessons staff use questioning effectively to stimulate children's thinking and curiosity. Senior leaders should now ensure this practice is shared across the school. This should support staff to improve the consistency of learning and teaching.
- In most lessons, teachers provide well-planned tasks and activities that take account of children's interests. Teachers support children well to engage and make progress in their learning. Most children work well individually, in pairs and in groups. A few children are capable of making better progress in their learning. Teachers should now ensure that activities provide greater levels of challenge. They should also support children further to apply their knowledge in new ways.
- Teachers use interactive whiteboards effectively to support their teaching. All teachers plan, using progressive pathways to develop children's digital skills. All children have regular access to digital technology, such as tablets and laptops, across the week. Children develop their digital skills through activities such as word processing, research and coding. Teachers also provide children with opportunities to use digital technology to support and enhance other aspects of their learning. For example, children use technology to create presentations on topics, upload successful learning to the online platform and to play literacy and numeracy games. As a result, children's digital skills are progressing well. Staff and children are proud of their accreditation for their work on digital skills.
- Staff are at the early stages of providing opportunities for children to learn through play. As a next step, staff should engage with national practice guidance, visit other schools and engage with their colleagues in the nursery class. They should work together to develop greater understanding of how to develop play pedagogy across the early level. Staff should also focus on reviewing the use of learning spaces and how they can provide an improved balance of adult-initiated and child-led experiences.
- Senior leaders and staff have developed a helpful assessment calendar which outlines clearly the expectations for assessing children's learning. Teachers use a range of assessment activities across the year to gather information about children's progress and to inform their planning for children's learning. This is helping teachers to develop a better understanding of children's strengths and development needs in aspects of the curriculum. Teachers have engaged in formal and informal moderation activities both in school and with other schools. As

a result, teachers are increasingly confident when making judgements about levels of attainment.

- Teachers have recently introduced feedback Friday to provide children with opportunities to reflect on different aspects of their learning. They have supported children well to develop peer- and self-assessment skills. All teachers provide verbal feedback that aligns to agreed steps to success and against children's personal targets. Most children reflect regularly on their own learning and that of their peers aligned with their steps to success. As planned, teachers should continue to develop further their approaches to providing consistently high-quality written feedback.
- Teachers meet with senior leaders three times a year to discuss, review and evaluate planned learning. All teachers plan effectively across a range of time scales using local authority learning pathways for all areas of the curriculum. Teachers use assessment information appropriately to inform their planning. All teachers ensure cognisance is given to how they will assess children's learning at planning stages. This provides them with increased clarity across planning, learning and assessment of learning to support them to build on children's prior learning appropriately.
- Senior leaders and teachers meet regularly across the year using a new system to track children's progress across literacy, numeracy and children's wellbeing. During meetings, teachers and senior leaders review assessment evidence alongside a range of data to agree professional judgements about children's progress. This is supporting teachers to increase their confidence in analysing data and making professional judgements on children's attainment. Senior leaders and teachers identify interventions to support children who are not on track with their learning. In addition, senior leaders track the effectiveness of interventions for individual children to ensure these are having a positive impact on raising attainment. Senior leaders track effectively cohorts and groups such as gender and those impacted by poverty. Senior leaders should now support staff to identify children who are capable of achieving more and identify ways that they can make accelerated progress.

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

good

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Overall attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is good.
- Overall, most children achieve national expectations in listening and talking, reading and writing. Almost all children, at early level, achieve national expectations in numeracy. A majority of children at first and second level achieve national expectations in numeracy. Across the school, a minority of children are capable of making better progress and require further challenge in their learning, particularly in numeracy at first and second level.
- Children who require additional support with their learning make good progress against their individual learning targets.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Across all stages, children make good progress in literacy and English.

Listening and talking

- At early level, most children hear and say sounds and blends. They listen well to instructions to complete tasks. A few children would benefit from listening more to the views of others. At first level, most children listen to and respect the views of others in group discussions. They articulate clearly the differences between fact and opinion and share examples of these. At second level, most children show respect for the views of others during discussions. They describe techniques they use during debating opportunities. Across first and second level, a few children would benefit from learning how to use techniques when engaging in discussions with others in a group. For example, making better use of eye contact and body language to engage others in discussions.

Reading

- At early level, most children at early level, use their knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns to read simple words. They are developing their knowledge of sight vocabulary well to read tricky words. At first level, most children read fluently. They show an awareness of different authors and their writing styles. A minority of children need to learn the difference between fiction and non-fiction texts. At second level, most children use punctuation and sentence structure effectively to read with expression. They have a sound understanding of reading strategies to support them in analysing texts such as skimming and scanning and using

prediction. They would benefit from reading a greater variety of texts to support their knowledge of authors and their style.

Writing

- At early level, most children write from left to right. Most children use their phonics knowledge to attempt to spell simple familiar words. A few children need to remember to use finger spaces when writing a sentence. At first level, most children spell commonly used words accurately. They use conjunctions and time connectives effectively in their writing. A few children should ensure they check their writing to check if it makes sense. Most children at second level have a strong awareness of a variety of sophisticated punctuation and demonstrate how these could be used to support writing. They write using a variety of genres such as speeches and information reports. They would benefit from revisiting more frequently their writing skills across different genres such as poetry.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Across all stages, children make good progress from their prior levels of attainment in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, almost all children subtract within 20 and use learning strategies to support with addition and subtraction. At first level, almost all children round whole numbers to the nearest 10 and 100. The majority of children compare the size of fractions. Children are not yet confident in calculating the total spend in a shopping situation and calculating correct change. At second level, most children understand sizes of fractions, order and express fractions in their simplest form and calculate percentages. They are not yet confident at carrying out money calculations, including calculating profit and loss accurately.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, almost all children recognise basic two-dimensional (2D) shapes. Children would benefit from an increased use of mathematical language to describe properties of three-dimensional (3D) objects. At first level, most children use correct mathematical language to describe the properties of 2D shapes and 3D objects. They successfully identify right angles within 2D shapes. Children would benefit from consolidating their ability to use compass points to solve problems. At second level, the majority of children identify accurately radius and diameter. They would benefit from developing further their understanding of angles and accurately using mathematical language to identify these.

Information handling

- At early level, almost all children sort items based on colour, shape and size. They are not yet confident in interpreting simple pictorial displays. At first level, the majority children are confident in how to gather information from a survey to create charts. They would benefit from developing further their skills in constructing bar graphs accurately. At second level, the majority of children analyse and interpret data accurately to draw conclusions. They would benefit from developing further their graph drawing skills and use of accurate mathematical language to describe the features of graphs. At all levels children should develop further their digital skills to collect, organise and display data.

Attainment over time

- Overall attendance is 91.4% which is in line with the national average. Across all stages, 27% of children currently have an absence rate of 10% or more. Senior leaders share an overview of whole school attendance data and promote the importance of good attendance to families through the weekly newsletters. This has resulted in improvements to attendance over time.
- Senior leaders use tracking systems and regular meetings with staff to monitor the progress children make as they move through the school. Tracking attainment data identifies that children make consistently steady progress over time at P1, 4 and 7. Senior leaders and staff also use attainment data at all stages to identify the poverty related attainment gap. A range of well-considered universal and targeted interventions have been introduced to support attainment within literacy and numeracy. Children are making good progress within these interventions. Senior leaders use data well to identify children, cohorts and stages who require further support to progress. For example, senior leaders previously identified the need to improve attainment in writing. As a result of this focus and interventions, overall attainment in writing has improved. Senior leaders have also used data to correctly identify the need to improve attainment in numeracy at first and second level. This is currently a school improvement priority.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Staff work very well with children to develop a strong culture of achievement. Senior leaders celebrate children's achievements both within and outwith school through assemblies, weekly newsletters and online platforms. Achievements in learning are celebrated through star pupil awards. Children's achievements at clubs, groups and extra-curricular activities are also celebrated within the school community. This is supporting children well to develop resilience and to take increasing responsibility for their learning. As a result, children are becoming successful learners, confident individuals and effective contributors.
- All children have regular opportunities to engage in whole school and house events. This includes working within the community at the local care home and fundraising for charities. Almost all children are members of an improvement group through the schools 'Leading our Learning' approach. Children have worked within these groups to improve areas of the school and aspects of the school's work. They demonstrate the school values well through their involvement in these groups and activities. Children are developing very well important skills for learning, life and work. They articulate well the skills they are developing and how these support them further in their learning.
- Children develop new skills through a range of well-considered and effective activities. This is supported by very effective partnership working. Senior leaders track children's participation in activities both within and outwith school. They analyse this data well to identify children at risk of missing out, including those who face additional barriers to achievement. Senior leaders work very well with a range of partners to provide further opportunities for children, in line with their interests and development needs. For example, the introduction of a group designed to improve resilience and self-esteem delivered by active school staff. These opportunities are supporting targeted children to develop further their skills in collaboration, leading and communication within new activities and experiences.

Equity for all learners

- All staff have a very strong understanding of the socio-economic context of the school community. Senior leaders plan well their use of pupil equity funding to support improvements in attendance, attainment, developing more inclusive learning environments and ensuring that children are supported in emotional regulation and are ready to learn. Senior leaders use data and information very effectively to identify the poverty related attainment gap and plan effective interventions for identified children. Children's progress in interventions is tracked, and senior leaders carefully monitor the progress of targeted groups of children. Overall, almost all children are making good progress within targeted interventions and gaps in children's learning and attainment are closing.
- Staff work very well with partners and the community to effectively reduce any additional financial burden associated with attending school. All children have access to a free breakfast club, and they have access to food throughout the day, if required. Senior leaders use fundraising funds well to ensure the provision of experiences for all children, with limited or no cost to families. For example, children in P7 benefited from additional fundraising to reduce or remove any costs associated with their recent residential trip. All children and families have full access to a uniform and clothing swap shop, as well as learning resources. Senior leaders, staff and children also work closely with a local charity which supports a fully stocked foodbank, including household items, which all children and families can access. These very effective approaches ensure that all children have opportunities to engage fully in the life and work of the school.

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.
- All children receive their full entitlement to two hours of high-quality, well-planned and progressive physical education each week.
- Children do not currently receive their full entitlement to language learning. Senior leaders should review their approach to ensure that all children experience languages in line with Scottish Government's 1+2 policy.

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.