HMIE | His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education in Scotland
Luchd-sgrùdaidh an Rìgh airson Foghlam ann an Alba

Summarised inspection findings

Milnathort Primary School

Perth and Kinross Council

3 November 2026

Key contextual information

Milnathort Primary School is a non-denominational school which serves the village of Milnathort and surrounding areas in Perth and Kinross. Milnathort Nursery is situated within the school grounds. The headteacher has overall responsibility for the school and nursery.

At the time of the inspection, there were 223 children attending the school, ranging from P1 to P7. Children are taught across 10 classes. In September 2025, 19% of children were registered for free school meals, which is below the national average. Almost all of the school roll live within Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation data zones 7 to 10. The school reports that just over a third of the children require additional support with their learning. The headteacher and depute headteacher serve as the school's senior leadership team.

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 create and sustain calm, settled learning environments across the school. Children and staff work together well to develop useful classroom charters which help children understand their rights and the rights of others. Children benefit from their interactions with staff who all model high expectations of behaviour. Staff support children to live and demonstrate the school values of kindness, effort, inclusion and integrity. As a result, children behave very well, are supportive of their peers and engage positively with their learning.

- Teachers and children work together to carefully review and consider the layout of classrooms to ensure they are well-organised, welcoming and nurturing. For example, they ensure each classroom has an inviting reading area. Children access resources and spaces independently to support their engagement and learning. Teachers have implemented a standard set of universal supports within classrooms that children value and use responsibly to achieve success in their learning. This includes resources to reduce children's anxiety, self-regulate and promote learning. These approaches are helping children to take increasing responsibility for their learning and engage positively in activities.

- Senior leaders have led effectively the development of the 'Milnathort Learning and Teaching Framework' in collaboration with staff. Senior leaders have supported staff well through high-quality professional learning to implement the new framework in their daily practice. This is helping to improve consistency in aspects of teaching and learning, across the school, such as sharing the purpose of learning. Senior leaders and teachers should now reflect upon the impact of these improvements and continue to fully embed all aspects of the framework,

 © Crown Copyright

including the effective use of plenaries. This should help ensure greater consistency in high-quality learning and teaching across the school.

- In most lessons learning is planned well and children are appropriately challenged. In most lessons children work independently, in pairs and in groups effectively. However, in a minority of lessons, teachers spend too long on whole class explanation of tasks. This results in children becoming passive and disengaging in their learning. Teachers should ensure all lessons are appropriately paced and set at the right level of difficulty. This includes managing the teaching of group tasks well to ensure children spend their time on task.

- In almost all lessons, teachers' explanations and instructions are clear. In a majority of lessons teachers refer to the specific skills children apply within activities. Teachers have developed a clear four-part structure in lessons and plan tasks which link well to the purpose of the lesson. In almost all lessons, teachers share the purpose of learning clearly and support children to know how to be successful. In a few lessons children and teachers collaborate to agree measures of success together. This supports children effectively to understand how to be successful in their learning. Teachers use a variety of questioning techniques well in almost all lessons to seek information and check for understanding. They should continue to develop the range of questioning techniques used in lessons. This should provide children with more regular opportunities to deepen their understanding and develop higher order thinking skills.

- Children in the digital leaders' group, along with teachers, have led successfully, improvements in the use of digital technology to enhance learning and teaching. Children use laptop computers and tablets well to consolidate learning. They extend their learning using computer games, code programable toys and use bar matrix codes to access real life resources such as train timetables. This is supporting children positively to develop and apply a range of important digital skills. A few children across the school access effectively, a variety of assistive technology including speech to text and immersive reader applications. This is enhancing children's ability to access the curriculum very well.

- In most lessons, teachers provide children with effective verbal feedback which supports their learning. Most teachers use a consistent approach to written feedback in children's writing jotters. This is helping children to understand better what they are doing well and how to improve further.

- Senior leaders have supported teachers well to improve how they assess children's learning and progress. They have developed a clear and detailed collegiate calendar to plan assessments across the year. Consequently, teachers understanding of when assessments should be planned and used to inform learning and teaching has improved. Teachers use a range of baseline, end-of-unit, diagnostic and standardised assessments well to make judgements about children's progress in literacy and numeracy. They use data gathered in National Standardised Assessments and school produced data packs well to identify gaps in children's learning. Teachers use national Benchmarks effectively to support their professional judgments of children's progress. Senior leaders and teachers use these approaches effectively to plan useful learning experiences and interventions for groups and individual learners. This includes children who benefit from additional support in their learning.

- Staff have undertaken helpful moderation activities to develop a shared understanding of national standards. Most recently they have focused on moderating aspects of writing and

 © Crown Copyright

maths. Teachers' application of national standards and expectations when judging children's progress has strengthened as a result. Senior leaders should now support teachers to extend this approach to promote greater consistency in teachers' professional judgments across all curricular areas.

- Senior leaders have begun to take positive action to strengthen planning, tracking and monitoring arrangements. Staff have recently developed shared planning approaches across all curricular areas using Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes. This is promoting greater consistency in planning for children's learning across the school. Senior leaders should support teachers to embed further the new planning approaches. This should strengthen a shared understanding of progression in children's learning among staff and help ensure that children experience appropriate challenge in their learning. Teachers plan effectively, activities that link children's learning across the curriculum. They ask children what and how they want to learn. This supports teachers to plan lessons successfully, incorporating children's interests, which improves motivation and engagement. Across the school, children develop their knowledge of the French language through a progressive programme of learning. In P5-P7 they also learn Mandarin with support from partners from the nearby Confucius Hub. This is in line with the Scottish Government's 1 + 2 modern language initiative.

- Senior leaders and teachers track all children's progress and achievement in literacy, numeracy and wellbeing effectively. This includes cohorts of children who may be facing additional challenges, for example, those with additional support needs, young carers or children from families facing financial hardship**.** As a result, staff provide effective universal support. Senior leaders meet with teachers four times across the year to monitor attainment and address any factors that may impact on children's progress and achievement. Staff take timely and effective action to plan appropriate interventions to enhance children's progress, learning and wellbeing. They discuss relevant assessments, consider children's views and evaluate support provided, including reviewing work recorded in children's online learning journals. This helps ensure that children's needs are being identified accurately and planned for effectively.

© Crown Copyright

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.

© Crown Copyright

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	good

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

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- Senior leaders have led a very clear focus on supporting and improving children's wellbeing across the school. Together with staff, they ensure positive relationships across the school support a warm, nurturing environment which helps children to feel safe and secure. Almost all children know who to talk to if they have any worries or concerns. Children treat others with respect and dignity and display positive behaviour across the school. This is underpinned by the school community's understanding of and commitment to the shared school values. Almost all staff and children are proud of being part of the school and local community. Children are friendly, articulate and well-mannered.

- Children and staff work together to continually audit the learning environments, ensuring they are welcoming, inclusive, and supportive. A recent change was the introduction of break out areas within classrooms and shared spaces. Children use these spaces effectively to self-regulate their emotions. As a result, children feel well supported and re-engage promptly in their learning. These inclusive strategies, including in-class universal supports, ensure almost all children across the school are supported effectively in their learning.

- Almost all children understand wellbeing very well and what it means for them. Staff work regularly with children to help them understand how they can improve their wellbeing. This can include discussions on the benefits of increased physical activity or reducing time spent on electronic devices. Staff use effectively a wide range of assessment tools such as surveys and daily and online check-ins to gather important information relating to children's wellbeing. This is ensuring that children feel their concerns are listened to, and they are engaging more in their learning. It is also helping them to feel confident that their wellbeing is supported. Senior leaders use this information effectively to identify and address issues at whole school or class level. For example, the pupil inclusion ambassadors worked with staff to create friendship boxes for the playground to help ensure all children have the opportunity to join in and play together. As a result, children feel more included during break and lunchtimes.

- Staff support children well through restorative conversations and to explore and resolve issues or concerns. Most children use taught strategies successfully to regulate their behaviour and emotions. Children are increasingly developing their ability to express their feelings, manage their emotions and build resilience as a result.

- Most children feel that their school teaches them to lead a healthy lifestyle. Almost all children feel the school provides them with a variety of options for regular exercise. Staff work effectively with partners to ensure a wide range of activities are available at lunchtime and

© Crown Copyright

after school. These include netball, football, judo and athletics. This is helping children to develop their physical fitness, resilience and confidence. Senior staff should now consider how pupil participation could be tracked more effectively to ensure all children have the opportunity to take part in activities outside the classroom.

- Senior leaders follow local authority and national guidelines for managing and recording incidents of bullying. Children's participation in 'anti-bullying week', assemblies and wellbeing lessons helps them to understand the importance of treating others with respect. Staff use a range of contexts to support children to explore their thoughts and feelings in relation to bullying concerns. While most children feel confident in the school's approach to dealing with incidents of bullying, a few children feel that they could have further support. As planned, staff should continue to develop children, staff and parents shared understanding of bullying and how concerns are addressed.

- Almost all staff have a very good understanding of their responsibilities and statutory duties related to safeguarding, wellbeing, equality and inclusion. They know how to protect children and meet the needs of learners. Senior leaders and staff know children and their families very well and recognise individual challenges and potential barriers to learning. Children with additional support needs who require personalised support have appropriate plans in place. These plans are developed collaboratively by staff, children, families and partners. Staff use a range of creative approaches to ensure the child's voice effectively informs the planning and review process. Senior staff should now ensure all support plans have clear, measurable and time focused targets. This will help staff to further monitor the impact of planned interventions on children's progress in learning, wellbeing and achievement.

- Senior leaders and staff work very effectively with partner agencies to support children in their wellbeing and development. Staff collaborate well with partner agencies to support children and families and address identified issues. For example, the Active Schools outdoor learning programme supported a few children to improve their attendance and better regulate their behaviour. Partners such as, the educational psychologist, outreach teachers and the family learning practitioner provide helpful professional learning for staff as well as supportive interventions for children and families. This is helping staff to plan learning that meets well the needs of children who require additional support.

- Senior leaders and staff provide well-considered care and support for children during periods of change and transition. This ensures continuity and progression for all children, including those requiring enhanced transitions. As children move from nursery to P1 and P7 to S1, they take part in a range of well-managed activities, including support from partners and peers. Parents and staff report that this approach supports very positive transitions and settled starts for almost all children. A few children benefit from carefully considered enhanced transition programmes. This helps to build children's confidence when transitioning into primary and secondary school.

- Pupil support assistants (PSAs) work effectively in collaboration with teachers and senior leaders. They deliver a range of helpful, targeted interventions to support inclusion, increase children's engagement and raise attainment. The professional learning PSAs have undertaken enables them to deliver relevant, impactful support strategies with increasing confidence and consistency. This supports positively, children's engagement, learning and ensures they are included effectively in the life and work of the school.

 © Crown Copyright

- Most children feel that staff listen to their views about a wide range of aspects of school life and a majority feel that their views are taken into account. Senior leaders and teachers should continue to develop and strengthen children's understanding of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. They should develop further the positive practice of linking rights to learning experiences and highlighting how children's views help inform improvements within the school. This will help children feel even more included and involved in decision making in the school.

- The inclusion ambassadors and pupil council have worked well with teachers to deliver focused learning experiences to help children across the school understand better and celebrate diversity. This includes helpful presentations at assembly to raise children's awareness and understanding of additional support needs such as dyslexia and autism. Consequently, children are now more aware of the strategies used by staff and the school community to promote inclusion, participation and achievement. This helps children to contribute positively to a fair, kind and inclusive learning environment and develop as responsible citizens.

- Staff have taken positive steps to develop the curriculum to ensure that children explore diversity, multi-faith issues and equality in an increasingly planned and progressive way. This includes, for example, providing children with a focus on 'Show Racism the Red Card' and 'awareness raising of online bullying'. This has helped to support children's understanding of how to challenge discrimination, intolerance and celebrate diversity. Senior leaders and staff, should now, as planned, strengthen how children learn about equalities, diversity and protected characteristics across the curriculum. This should support children to develop further their understanding of their place in the world as global citizens.

- The school submitted information relating to compliance with the revised Nutritional Regulations 2020 and key duties as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007. The Health and Nutrition Inspector (HNI) discussed this information with relevant staff and children. In addition, the HNI examined documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole school approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of children through food in school. A few areas for improvement have been agreed with the school.

© Crown Copyright

Other relevant evidence

- The headteacher implements thorough procedures for monitoring attendance using local authority guidance. She communicates the importance of school attendance with parents regularly. The headteacher considers patterns of absence and works closely with children and families to discuss and address any issues. Personalised packages of support are designed for children with low attendance. In June 2026, the school's overall attendance average was 94.4%, which is in line with the national average. The average figure has remained stable over time. The rate of persistent absence (attendance below 90%) is 13.6%, which is well below the national average.

© Crown Copyright

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.

© Crown Copyright