

Summarised inspection findings

Easter Carmuir Primary School

Falkirk Council

17 March 2026

Key contextual information

Easter Carmuirs Primary School is a non-denominational school situated in Camelon, Falkirk. It serves the community of Camelon west. The school roll is 175 children arranged across eight classes. As part of this, the school has two specialist provisions known as the Enrichment Department. There are 28 children supported within the Enrichment Department. The headteacher has been in post for five years and is supported by a depute headteacher and two principal teachers.

Almost all children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles 1 to 4. The school reports that 56% of children require additional support with their learning. Approximately 31% of children in P6 and P7 are registered for free school meals and 11% of children have English as an additional language.

Easter Carmuirs Primary School nursery class was inspected by the Care Inspectorate within the past 18 months, therefore, the local authority and headteacher had the option to include the nursery class as part of this inspection. We have agreed with the local authority and school that the nursery class is not part of this inspection. The findings set out below are for the primary school stages.

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	

- Across the school, all staff have positive, caring relationships with children which are underpinned by the school values and children's rights. They have created an inclusive and nurturing environment where children feel valued, respected, and supported. All staff benefit from professional learning to promote positive relationships and behaviour. They are developing their understanding of nurturing approaches, attachment theory and trauma-informed practice. All staff contribute well to a culture that prioritises wellbeing and positive relationships.
- All classes have charters which reflect well children's understanding of their rights and what is important to them. Staff and children have a clear commitment to children's rights, which is demonstrated through the school ethos and class charters. The school has received silver accreditation for its work in this area. Staff should continue to highlight children's rights and school values across the curriculum to ensure all children understand how their rights impact upon their learning and wellbeing.

- All teachers have audited the learning environments and adapted classrooms to ensure they are nurturing and inclusive. As a result, children have easy access to quiet, calm spaces to regulate behaviour or complete work. Staff are sensitive to the specific needs of individual children who require additional support. In most lessons, learning activities are appropriately matched to most children's needs. This is helping children stay focused during learning and behave well. However, where learning is overly teacher-led a few children become disengaged and this can result in low level disruptive behaviour. For example, shouting out during lessons. Teachers should work together to ensure greater pace in lessons. This should support all children to engage well in learning.
- Senior leaders and staff worked together well to agree a whole school approach to learning and teaching. They have created the 'What a very good lesson looks like at Easter Carmuir's'. This is raising expectations of what children can achieve and is beginning to establish consistency across classes. Senior leaders have rightly identified that there remains a need for further work on this to ensure all children experience high-quality learning and teaching. This includes further work on higher order questioning.
- In almost all lessons, teachers provide clear instructions and explanations. Staff regularly refer to and build on children's prior learning. In almost all lessons, teachers explain the purpose of learning meaningfully and children can discuss how they will be successful in their learning. Staff should ensure that in all lessons, the purpose of learning links clearly to the steps to success. Teachers should now create steps to success with the children's input. In most lessons, teachers provide feedback both verbally and in written form, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Across the school, children are developing well self and peer evaluation skills. Senior leaders and teachers should now work collaboratively to develop more consistent approaches to providing children with high-quality feedback. This should help children understand better the progress they are making and their next steps in learning.
- In almost all lessons, teachers use questioning well to check understanding and to seek children's views and ideas. In a few lessons, teachers use effective open-ended questioning and build on children's responses to deepen their understanding of concepts. Children have opportunities to make choices about their learning. For example, teachers use the 'what we already know, big questions and small questions' approach in learning across the curriculum. Staff should now ensure children have more opportunities to make choices and to lead their own learning.
- In most lessons, children regularly have opportunities to work independently, in pairs and in small groups and are respectful and supportive of each other. Teachers assess children's needs and provide appropriate support for all children in their classes, including those with additional needs. Support for learning teachers and support assistants provide a range of well planned interventions for children. This includes successful writing interventions at second level. A few children who are exceeding expected levels of attainment participate in mathematics projects that provide challenge and build resilience.
- Senior leaders have allocated additional staffing to P1 to support the development of play. Children apply and consolidate their learning successfully in appropriate 'must do' activities. Teachers should look to provide a greater balance of adult-initiated and child-led experiences

as they develop play further. They should continue to engage with national guidance. This should support them to develop the role of the adult in using observations to gather evidence of children's learning.

- Staff provide opportunities for children at P1 and P2 to play indoors and outdoors. All children experience an annual 'outdoor classroom day'. As planned, senior leaders should now work with staff to develop approaches to learning outdoors across the school. This will enable all children to benefit from regular, progressive opportunities to learn in the outdoor environment.
- Most teachers use digital technology effectively to support and motivate children in most lessons. Children enjoy using digital devices to research topics and practise literacy and numeracy skills using games. Children who require additional support in their learning benefit from assistive technology. In P6 and P7 children have their own digital device in school which they use confidently for a range of purposes, including re-drafting their writing and recording their learning. As planned, senior leaders and staff should now develop a digital skills pathway to identify the skills children develop through these opportunities, across different stages.
- The headteacher and staff have created a whole school assessment calendar. They use a wide range of standardised and diagnostic assessments effectively over the course of the school session. As a result, teachers gather appropriate information about children's progress in literacy and numeracy. Staff use assessment evidence well to identify children who require support with their learning. Teachers should now plan regular high-quality assessments across the curriculum. These should allow children to demonstrate specific knowledge and understanding in new and unfamiliar contexts.
- Teachers have engaged in moderation activities within the school, for example in writing. As planned, the headteacher should now re-establish work with colleagues from neighbouring schools. This has the potential to inform moderation and improve teachers' shared understanding and judgement of a level.
- Staff work collegiately to produce an annual overview of learning at the start of the school session. In addition, they prepare termly plans, and short-term responsive planning. They use local authority skills progression pathways appropriately for literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and social studies. Teachers use these pathways to help develop a clear understanding of the progress children should make at each Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) level. Staff take appropriate account of the context of the school when planning learning.
- Senior leaders and teachers meet termly to monitor children's progress. They use these meetings well to identify and plan interventions that further support children's progress. Building on this, staff need to now ensure they monitor and track children's progress across all areas of the curriculum. This will provide clear information to plan next steps for all 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, young people. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

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, children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is good. At P1 and P7 most children achieve expected CfE levels in literacy and numeracy. At P4, the majority of children achieve expected levels in reading, writing and listening and talking and most children achieve expected levels in numeracy.
- Across the school a few children are working beyond national expectations in numeracy and literacy.
- Most children who require additional support for their learning are making good progress towards their individual learning targets.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, most children are making good progress in literacy and English.

Listening and talking

- At early level, children are developing appropriately their skills in listening to others and taking turns. At first level, most children understand the skills needed to present to a group, such as making eye contact and speaking clearly. At first level, children would benefit from more opportunities to develop their presentation skills. At second level, most children show respect for the views of others during discussions. Across the school, a few children require support to listen to the ideas of others and take turns appropriately.

Reading

- At early level, most children use their knowledge of letters and sounds to read simple words and sentences confidently. At first level, the majority of children read confidently, with increasing fluency and expression. They decode unfamiliar words by locating and pronouncing familiar letter patterns and blends. They are less confident in distinguishing features between fiction and non-fiction texts. At second level, most children apply a range of reading skills, such as skimming and scanning, to help them read and understand unfamiliar texts. They recognise different techniques that an author uses to engage the reader and can describe these. Across the school, all children need support to develop a greater enjoyment and love of reading.

Writing

- At early level, most children are learning to write initial sounds and simple words well. Most children try to use a capital letter and full stop in their sentences. All children would benefit from more play experiences to help develop their independent writing skills. At first level, the majority of children include relevant information and use different openers to make their writing interesting. Children at first level need to increase their independence when writing. They need further opportunities to write at length regularly. At second level, children use techniques to engage or influence the reader, such as persuasive language. Children write for a range of purposes including recounts, imaginative stories and explanation. Children should now apply their knowledge of figurative language to their writing to engage the reader.
- There is a need to improve the quality and consistency of the presentation of written work across the school.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, most children make good progress from prior levels of attainment in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, most children identify and order numbers from 0-20. They accurately add two numbers within 10. Children now need to develop their understanding of subtraction within 20. At first level, most children successfully round numbers to the nearest 10 or 100 and are confident with place value within 1,000. They use analogue and digital clocks to tell the time using half past, quarter past and quarter to correctly. Children are less confident in their understanding of fractions. At second level, most children understand the relationship between fractions, percentages and decimals. At first and second level, children should now strengthen their ability to solve word problems through the application of their numeracy skills.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, most children identify two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional (3D) objects correctly. At first level, most children name and describe simple 3D objects and their properties accurately. Children at first level are less confident with their knowledge and identification of right angles. At second level, most children confidently recognise acute, obtuse and reflex angles. They recognise the link between angles and compass points and use appropriate vocabulary to describe directions. They are less confident in identifying properties of a circle.

Information handling

- At early level, most children sort items with accuracy based on their own criteria. They would benefit from opportunities to interpret simple information from graphs. At first level, most children discuss how to gather data using tally marks and interpret information from bar graphs, tables and charts. They would benefit from greater opportunities to use digital technology to display information. At second level, most children know how to collate information in a variety of ways and label graphs accurately. They confidently use digital

technologies to collect, organise and display information. At second level, children should develop their understanding of mean, median and mode.

Attainment over time

- Senior leaders have implemented effective systems to track and monitor children's attainment levels over time. They analyse data well to consider patterns in children's progress. Staff plan a range of effective interventions for specific children to address barriers to learning. This is impacting positively on raising children's attainment and achievements. Attainment data shows children's CfE attainment levels at P1, P4 and P7 have fluctuated over time. Most children maintain expected national standards of attainment at early level. At second level there are improvements in literacy and numeracy. However, there is a dip in literacy and numeracy at first level. Senior leaders and staff should continue to focus on raising attainment in writing. Senior leaders should continue to plan regular high-quality moderation activities, including working with local schools, to increase teachers' confidence in making judgements about children's progress in writing.
- The headteacher monitors children's attendance effectively. This includes working closely with the inclusion support team to analyse data to identify children who show a pattern of absence. For session 2024-25 the attendance rate was 89.56%. The attendance rate from August 2025 to January 2026 was 88.56%. This is below the national average. Currently, a minority of children have attendance below 90%. Term-time family holidays impact negatively on the school's overall attendance figures. Staff work well with partners to provide a range of interventions to support children who have patterns of absence. As a result, attendance and engagement in learning has increased for a few children. As planned, senior leaders should continue to prioritise maximising attendance for all children.
- Part-time timetables are not a common feature within the school. Where required, senior leaders use this in a considered and well-managed way in line with national guidance.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- All children have regular opportunities to share their achievements from in and out of school. Staff celebrate children's achievements in school 'get togethers', displays and an online platform. Children are proud to have achieved a range of local and national accreditations, including awards for children's rights and sports. Children participate and engage in a range of clubs which include football, art and basketball. Children's participation in these clubs helps them to develop well their teamwork, communication skills and sense of achievement.
- Children at all stages participate in a range of leadership and pupil groups. For example, pupil council and sports leaders. These groups have been recently introduced. Children are beginning to recognise the valuable leadership skills they are developing because of the roles and responsibilities they experience. Children play an active role in leading and promoting whole school community initiatives. For example, the local community arts project. This is building children's confidence and sense of belonging.
- Senior leaders and staff plan and deliver a range of effective opportunities for older children to achieve. This includes a range of national award schemes and a cycle scheme. Children's resilience, engagement and problem-solving skills are increasing as a result of participating

in these experiences. Staff track children's achievements and participation in clubs and activities. They analyse this participation data to identify children at risk of missing out. As planned, staff should now track the skills children are gaining from their achievements and link these to skills for learning, life and work.

Equity for all learners

- All staff are very aware of the socio-economic circumstances of children and families. They have a strong understanding of any barriers to participation and learning. Staff take positive and effective action to address the cost of the school day. They ensure family circumstances are not a barrier to any child's participation in learning or achievement opportunities. Families benefit from a range of sensitive and discreet approaches offered to them. The headteacher ensures trips incur no cost and provides school uniform support. Staff have well-established connections with a range of partners to help support the needs of families. As a result, all children can participate in and are included fully in all aspects of school life.
- The headteacher uses Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) well to provide interventions for identified children and enhance universal support across the school. This includes a breakfast for all scheme. Senior leaders and teachers monitor closely the progress of individuals and groups of identified children. This includes children who require additional support or face poverty-related barriers to their learning. As a result, most children are making good progress in their learning. As a next step, the headteacher should now use consistent and clearly defined measures to evidence the impact of interventions on children's progress. This should support all staff to make an informed evaluation of how well targeted approaches accelerate the progress of children.

Quality of provision of Special Unit

Context

Easter Carmuir's Enrichment Department is an additional support centre, supporting children from across the Falkirk area, who require significant additional support with their learning. There are 28 children across four classes within the department. A few children attend lessons with their mainstream peers.

Learning, teaching and assessment

- Staff within the department are caring, nurturing and responsive. They provide learning experiences that align well with children's developmental stages, strengths and interests. Teachers create well organised and attractive learning environments, with specially designed furniture for sensory feedback, sensitive lighting and quiet reflection spaces.
- Staff check-in with learners sensitively to understand their needs and preferences. This nurturing approach motivates children and supports participation effectively. Staff display children's work, personal targets and communication preferences clearly on walls, enabling them to refer regularly to individual learning goals. Each child follows an individualised timetable. Staff work well with children to engage them in timetabled activities. This gives children a strong sense of predictability and routine. As a result, almost all children understand what will happen next. This gives them the confidence and security to engage well in learning.
- Teachers devise interesting activities that promote independence, positive communication and self-regulation. Staff use intensive interaction techniques and personalised approaches well, including mirroring movement and sounds and responding effectively to body language and facial expressions. Staff support children positively to access new and comfortable learning and sensory experiences.
- A few children demonstrate dysregulated behaviour, which directly impacts on their ability to participate and maintain focus in their learning. Staff have effective plans in place, including possible triggers to avoid, and unambiguous de-escalation strategies. Senior leaders have created a range of helpful policies to support positive engagement and wellbeing. For example, they recently produced a policy on early intervention and de-escalation which outlines a comprehensive range of strategies for working with children who experience highly dysregulated behaviour. These strategies are aligned with national guidance and the strong value-base of the staff within the department.
- Children benefit from support from allied health partners, including speech and language therapists, whose input enhances equity of access to specialist communication support. Staff use sign, pictorial symbols and objects of reference to help children express their preferences. Staff should continue to expand children's access to assistive technology, including new tools and approaches.
- Most staff undertake high-quality observations and use sound professional judgement to assess children's needs and plan next steps. Staff use personalised formative, summative and

diagnostic assessments to capture progress in literacy, numeracy, social communication and emotional regulation. Teachers track improvements effectively and can demonstrate incremental progress for most children over time.

- Staff identify small but significant gains in early mark making, symbol recognition and children's ability to indicate preferences. They identify successfully when children are moving from and between early level milestones and CfE outcomes and experiences. This is supporting children to access well-structured experiences successfully. Senior leaders have adapted effectively standardised local authority planning and tracking formats to design a 'soft tracker'. This helps staff identify children's next steps more clearly. This system is beginning to provide clearer measures of attainment and achievement for almost all children.

Raising attainment and achievement

- Most children make good progress in literacy. Around half are working on pre-early level milestones in reading. A minority are working at early or first level and a few at second level in reading. Almost all children have significant communication needs. Those at preverbal stages make steady progress through early milestones, communicating purposefully through gestures, signs, symbols and pictures. As they move through the school, most improve their literacy skills, demonstrating more intentional communication and a wider range of ways to express preferences and needs.
- Children at early and first levels use visual supports effectively, increasing their independence. Those at second level read alongside mainstream peers, engaging with a range of texts and exploring genres. Most children apply literacy skills confidently across contexts.
- Most children make good progress in numeracy. The majority are working on pre-early level milestones, with a minority working at early level and a few accessing aspects of first level. Children working at pre-early level develop foundational, sensory and prenumber skills, including early number recognition, sorting and spatial awareness. A few count to 20 and are ready to progress to early level CfE outcomes.
- Senior leaders are strengthening how they evidence children's progress over time. Children show sustained improvement in emotional regulation, communication and their ability to manage changes and transitions. Almost all learners demonstrate growing independence over time, making choices using personalised communication tools and completing familiar routines with reduced support.
- Children display valuable social and life skills during structured and unstructured experiences. For example, in the playground and during outdoor learning, children show increased emotional regulation, social interaction and attention. A minority learn alongside mainstream peers and show increasing resilience as they progress. Senior leaders should continue to expand these interactions and increase opportunities for children to take part in leadership roles and community learning. This should help them build confidence in social situations and become more familiar with their local area.
- The school's breakfast initiative helps children begin the day regulated and ready to learn, supporting attendance and wellbeing. Average attendance within the department is 89.26%,

with a minority of children below 90%. Senior leaders track attendance closely, identify reasons for absence and work effectively with families to address avoidable absence.

- Senior leaders work effectively with local authority partners to ensure children receive timely, well-coordinated support. Enhanced early transition planning with the local secondary school helps children settle well, with secondary colleagues understanding children's communication and sensory needs from the outset. Staff should now develop earlier and stronger transition arrangements with other secondary provisions to support smooth, well planned transitions for all children.
- Senior leaders use PEF to fund a range of initiatives that benefit most children, including access to digital devices and improvements to the playground. They should now track the impact of PEF more robustly to evaluate how well it is helping to close attainment gaps. They should also monitor how effectively children access wider opportunities, such as trips and residential experiences funded through PEF.

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.
- Children receive their entitlement to learn modern languages in line with the national '1+2' initiative. Children learn Spanish from P1 to P7 in a planned and progressive approach as they move through the school. Children learn French and Spanish from P5 to P7 in line with national expectations.
- Children receive their entitlement to religious and moral Education and religious observance, in line with national expectations.
- All children receive their full entitlement to two hours of high-quality physical education each week.

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.