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

Summarised inspection findings

Howwood Primary School

Renfrewshire Council

17 November 2026

Key contextual information

Howwood Primary School is a non-denominational school located in the village of Howwood in Renfrewshire. The headteacher has been in post for ten years. She is supported by a principal teacher, who has a class commitment of two days per week.

There are six classes across the school, with a total roll of 118 children. The majority of children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles 6 to 8, with a few children living in deciles 2 to 5 and 9. In September 2026, 24.5% of children were recorded by the school as requiring 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

- Senior leaders and staff have established a positive, inclusive and nurturing learning culture. They promote respectful relationships, and a strong commitment to children's rights underpins daily practice. Children learn in a very calm environment and almost all children behave very well. Children report feeling safe, valued and included, contributing to high levels of wellbeing, participation and a strong sense of belonging. Positive relationships are a key strength of the school and are recognised by both children and families as supporting engagement and success in learning. As a result, almost all children participate confidently in school life and demonstrate positive attitudes towards learning.

- Children across the school confidently share their views. They have meaningful opportunities to influence aspects of their learning and contribute to the wider life of the school. For example, staff and children have worked together effectively to enhance learning environments, creating spaces which promote a calm, welcoming and inclusive ethos. Across the school, the high value staff place on children’s work is evident in extensive displays of work from across the curriculum. Children are proud of their school and their learning.

- Ably led by the headteacher, teachers and support staff work very effectively together to meet the needs of children. Support staff assist children very well in class and are highly effective when working with individuals, groups and families. All staff know children well as individuals and use this to provide learning experiences which are relevant, engaging and appropriately matched to learners' needs and interests. Almost all children are highly motivated and engaged in their learning. The successful embedding of growth mindset approaches is developing resilient, motivated learners who are increasingly confident to embrace challenge and strive for success.

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- Children benefit from consistently high-quality learning and teaching. In almost all lessons, teachers' explanations and instructions are clear. Almost all children talk confidently about the purpose of their learning and steps to be successful. Children participate confidently in discussions and work well in pairs, groups and individually. Teachers use written and oral feedback effectively to help children identify strengths and next steps. Additionally, children at all stages use individual literacy targets to identify and work towards their next steps in learning. Senior leaders and staff refresh the learning, teaching and assessment strategy annually. This contributes towards shared expectations of high-quality teaching, learning and assessment across the school.

- Through a planned and collaborative approach, staff have introduced meta-skills. Across all classes, there is a focus on teaching meta-skills regularly. This is leading to a shared common language of skills across the school. As a result, almost all children confidently name skills and discuss their application in learning activities. Senior leaders and staff should now build on this to embed teaching meta-skills across all curricular areas in a planned and progressive way. This will support children to apply their skills meaningfully across a range of learning contexts.

- Teachers provide creative and engaging learning experiences which motivate children and encourage curiosity, independence and deeper thinking. Effective play-based approaches in the early stages motivate children to learn while developing their literacy, numeracy, creativity and collaborative skills. Across the school, teachers make effective use of digital technologies to challenge and support children. Teachers encourage children to ask questions to extend and deepen their understanding. In almost all lessons, teachers use questions effectively to challenge children's thinking. As a result, children are active participants in lessons and are motivated to achieve their best.

- Children are given choices about their learning in a range of ways and explain clearly how this is helping them to develop skills, knowledge and attributes. All teachers ask children what they already know. They use children's views on what and how they would like to learn when planning learning across the curriculum. For example, through topics such as 'The Farm' and 'World War II', they include opportunities for children to choose areas of interest to explore further. This strengthens personalisation and increases children's choice. Learning journeys and floor books record pupil voice and responsive planning. Most children are well placed to take increasing responsibility for their learning and develop as independent learners. As identified by senior leaders and staff through whole school self-evaluation, they should now continue to build on children's readiness to lead their own learning. Staff should provide greater opportunities for children to demonstrate independence and take greater ownership of learning across the curriculum.

- All teachers plan effectively across all curricular areas to support their short, medium and long-term planning. As staff build further on responsive planning with children, they should continue to develop planning approaches. This will ensure that children's learning is captured effectively and progression in learning over time. The school is meeting the requirements of the 1+2 languages policy through a consistent and progressive approach to French, supported by a well-structured progression framework. Children at second level, broadening their language learning experiences and cultural awareness through a second modern language.

- Teachers use a range of formative and summative assessment approaches to assess children's knowledge and understanding in literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders and teachers discuss children's progress at termly tracking meetings. Teachers have regular opportunities to work

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together within the school and learning community to moderate learning, teaching and assessment. This is leading to a shared understanding of children's progress in key areas. Senior leaders should continue to develop robust approaches to planning learning, assessment and tracking progress across the curriculum. This will support staff to identify strengths, and next steps more accurately, ensuring improved outcomes for children.

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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.

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3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	very good

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

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

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- The overall quality of attainment is very good. At early level, almost all children attain expected Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels in literacy and numeracy. At first level, almost all children attain in talking and listening, and reading, and most achieve in writing and numeracy. At second level, all children achieve expected levels in literacy, and almost all achieve expected levels in numeracy. Across the school, a minority of children are working beyond expected levels of achievement in reading, writing and numeracy.

- Most children who require additional support with their learning make good progress towards their individual targets. A few children make very good progress.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, almost all children make good progress in literacy and English. A minority of children make very good progress in reading and writing.

- Almost all children are articulate and speak with confidence to adults and their peers. Almost all children are confident to share their opinions, and older children demonstrate these skills in leading whole-school assemblies. Senior leaders and staff should now consider how they can support children to work beyond expected levels in listening and talking. Across the school, children confidently read a wide variety of fiction and non-fiction books. This approach is supporting improved attainment in reading. Senior leaders and staff have implemented a whole-school approach to writing which is increasing children's motivation in this area. By second level, children are writing extended pieces using a range of literary techniques such as alliteration and personification. Children would benefit from increased opportunities to write across a wider range of genres. This will help them to recognise and apply the key features of each genre in their own writing.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, almost all children make good progress in numeracy. A minority of children make very good progress.

- Almost all children participate enthusiastically in a range of motivating and meaningful learning experiences. These help them develop confidence and competence in applying numeracy and mathematical concepts in real-life contexts. They collaborate effectively with their peers to discuss strategies, solve problems and explain their thinking. Children apply their knowledge and skills confidently in new and unfamiliar situations and are developing important

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skills for learning, life and work. A few children are capable of greater challenge in numeracy and mathematics.

- At the early stages, children experience high-quality play-based learning experiences which develop their understanding of mathematical concepts, including measuring, sorting and comparing. At the upper stages, children demonstrate deepening number knowledge and apply this effectively in increasingly complex learning contexts.

Attainment over time

- Overall, high levels of attainment are sustained over time. Senior leaders and teachers gather and analyse attainment information about literacy and numeracy over time to track children's progress. They track children's emotional wellbeing through regular surveys. Senior leaders and teachers identify gaps in children's learning and, together with the skilled support staff, provide targeted interventions and support. For example, specific spelling interventions have led to an increase in spelling ages for identified children. They also identify children who are exceeding to ensure additional challenge is provided, particularly in reading and writing. Senior leaders and staff should now strengthen their approach to tracking and monitoring progress. This will enable them to demonstrate more clearly the progress the impact of interventions and support over time. Senior leaders and staff should now consider how they track progress across other curricular areas.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- All children from P2-P7 participate in a committee such as digital leaders, nurture group and pupil council. Additionally, all children in P7 have a leadership role such as a buddy, house captain or vice-captain. Children express clearly the important skills, such as collaboration, communication and citizenship that they develop through these opportunities. Through these experiences, most children feel that the staff value and listen to their views.

- Children across the school participate in learning experiences within the local community, contributing effectively to the school's aim of 'creating great citizens'. Most children demonstrate the skills, confidence and responsibility required to contribute positively to the school and wider community. Children have opportunities to attend local community groups, for example, 'Winter Warmers', and participate in litter picking within the village. Children have a strong sense of belonging and pride in their school and local area.

- Children across the school participate in a wide range of sporting opportunities such as dance, netball and running. Children regularly achieve success in local competitions. All children in P6 develop important skills for safe cycling through an accredited training programme. Senior leaders and staff track participation at clubs to promote equitable access to activities within school. As a result, most children engage in at least one club and value the range of opportunities available to develop their interests and talents.

Equity for all learners

- Senior leaders use Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) to provide additional staffing. This is used to target learning clubs before and after school for individuals and groups of children. This approach, alongside universal and targeted approaches during class time, is having a positive impact on progress. There is clear evidence children, including those impacted by poverty, are making positive progress in their learning of literacy. Senior leaders gather regular feedback from children, parents and staff on the impact of interventions. As a result, children demonstrate increased confidence, achievement and success in the identified areas. This is

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particularly strong in relation to literacy. Senior leaders and staff have identified that a similar focus could be used to close the poverty-related attainment gap in numeracy.

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Other relevant evidence

- Overall attendance for academic session 2025-26 was 95.6%. This is above the national average. This has been consistent over recent years.
- The rate of persistent absence (attendance below 90%) is 8%. This has been consistent over the past years and is below the national average of 21.1%. The headteacher monitors attendance and late coming closely. The headteacher reports that the main area for absence is self-certified parental holidays. She acts promptly when children's attendance dips, working closely with families to understand the reasons for these dips.

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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.

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