

Summarised inspection findings

Glencoats Primary School

Renfrewshire Council

16 December 2025

Key contextual information

Glencoats Primary is a non-denominational school that serves the area of Ferguslie Park in Paisley. There are 174 children on the roll taught over eight classes. Almost 90% of children live within Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles 1 and 2. Currently, 46% of children in P6 and P7 are registered for free school meals. In October 2025, 42% of the school roll is recorded as having additional support needs which is significantly higher than the national average. There is a 'Flexible Learning Resource' within the school. This special education provision supports children from across the local authority through a split placement with their mainstream schools.

The school's senior leadership team comprises of the headteacher, depute headteacher, two principal teachers and an acting principal teacher. There had been several changes in leadership before the headteacher was appointed four years ago.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

excellent

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

- The headteacher and staff have developed and provide outstanding inclusive and nurturing practice that places strong positive relationships at the centre of all children's experiences. They are sharing expertise and supporting practice in other schools. All staff, children and families feel welcome and valued. Staff provide very high-quality, creative and supportive learning environments across all classrooms, shared spaces and outdoors. These learning environments support all children very well to sustain high levels of interest and engagement in their learning. Children are keen and enthusiastic to learn across the curriculum. Staff provide stimulating challenges and meaningful real-life contexts which children enjoy and that capture their interest. Teachers often include an exciting opener in lessons to inspire and promote thinking, such as puppets or media clips. The headteacher and staff use their deep professional knowledge of children's needs and the school context to make innovative changes to the school day and approaches to learning. This enables them to deliver transformative learning experiences that support engagement and achievement for all children.
- Staff and children clearly demonstrate the school's 'STARS' values in all aspects of learning and school life. Children are confident, polite and respectful. They behave very well in lessons and across the day. Children work well individually and collaborate effectively with peers in pairs, groups and as a class. Staff embed a rights-based approach to their practice, putting the needs, aspirations and successes of children at the heart of their work. They work closely with children to share and sustain high standards, such as discussing class charters and the school's learning characters regularly.
- Across the school, teachers employ a well-planned range of high-quality activities and experiences. These learning experiences empower children to direct their own learning and challenge themselves in different ways. In all classes, children have daily opportunities to make

meaningful decisions. They are becoming increasingly skilled and independent in supporting and extending their own learning. For example, children access and use a wide range of supports during lessons, such as digital technologies, 'help desks', 'working' walls as well as referring to examples of successful work or vocabulary displays. This consistent, school-wide approach helps all children to develop and extend their problem-solving skills, build resilience and to have greater independence in their learning.

- Highly inclusive approaches to learning and teaching are an outstanding strength of the school. Modelled by the headteacher, all staff have high aspirations and expectations for every child's progress and attainment. They ensure that any barriers to learning are minimised. Staff know and respond very well to the individual needs of children. They make very effective use of professional learning, partnership working, resources and technology to meet a diverse range of needs. They are highly skilled in planning and delivering lessons, tasks and activities at the right level of challenge. Teachers use observation and questioning effectively to make responsive, well-timed adjustments during lessons. Children understand mistakes are an essential part of their learning and feel very well-supported.
- All support staff, including key workers and early years officers, are highly skilled. They suggest and lead initiatives that have a significant positive impact on children's learning and outcomes. They assist children very well in class and are highly effective when working with individuals, groups and families. Support staff are sensitive and highly responsive to each child's wellbeing and learning needs. Across the school, they provide valuable universal and targeted interventions. These interventions support children to build key knowledge, develop and practise transferable skills and experience success in their learning. Children talk articulately about how their relationships with support staff and the experiences they provide benefit their lives. They believe this has reduced their anxieties, improved their confidence and self-esteem, and helped them to see themselves as successful learners.
- Teachers support children very well to understand the purpose of their learning. In all lessons, they involve children meaningfully in identifying what success will look like. Teachers make effective use of introductions and plenaries to link lessons with skills for life, learning and work. Children identify and talk about the skills they are developing. Teachers praise and encourage all children. They provide regular verbal and written feedback that supports children well to understand their progress. Teachers are using new approaches in writing lessons to share high-quality written feedback for children on key areas of focus. Senior leaders and teachers should continue to enhance this approach and explore innovative methods of feedback in other areas of learning. Children discuss their strengths and next steps with teachers regularly. As a result, most children are confident talking about their learning targets and progress in reading, writing and numeracy.
- Outdoor and real life experiences are integral to the school's approach to learning and teaching. Teachers and support staff make very effective use of the playground, natural environments and the local community to support and enhance children's learning. They plan and develop high-quality spaces and experiences, such as the garden play area. Children also greatly benefit from working with a wide range of partners and organisations from the local area. This supports them to apply their knowledge and skills in literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing in new contexts and settings.
- Staff and children use digital technologies very well to enhance learning across the curriculum. Teachers use digital tools effectively to motivate and engage children. Across the school, children use technologies regularly for relevant and purposeful activities. Younger children record and upload evidence of their learning independently to a digital platform to share with their family. Children explore robotic and programmable toys which supports further their skills

in mathematics. Older children use technologies confidently to support their communication and understand personal responsibility for digital safety. Senior leaders are using technologies in innovative ways to enhance targeted personalised support, such as assessing and measuring children's progress in reading.

- Across the school, children learn very well in creative ways which promote enjoyment, engagement and achievement. Senior leaders and staff have developed highly effective approaches to promote and extend children's learning through play and open-ended challenges. This includes integrating science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) learning to support children's critical thinking, problem-solving and creativity. Across the school, staff use dedicated spaces, resources and new experiences, such as circus skills, to involve all children in playful learning. They use classroom zones, the 'sunshine' room and family learning sessions to build very well on the interests of younger children. Senior leaders and staff working at early and first levels demonstrate a deep understanding of national guidance on play. They continue to refine and enhance their practice using research and professional learning. Their skilful interactions extend young children's thinking. Staff demonstrate highly effective approaches to planning, assessment and observation within play and the skills programme. They share their practice with other schools.
- The headteacher has been highly effective in empowering teachers to reflect on and extend their professional knowledge and skills in learning, teaching and assessment. Senior leaders provide clear guidance and frameworks for key areas of practice that staff find helpful. Teachers deliver very high-quality learning and teaching consistently across the school. Staff are innovative and creative in their approaches. Teaching and support staff discuss and share their practice regularly. For example, teachers are using knowledge and skills gained from recent professional learning to extend further their use and range of questioning. This should help to develop further children's critical thinking skills across the curriculum.
- Senior leaders and staff have developed and embedded highly effective approaches to assessment. This includes evaluating children's knowledge and skills across the curriculum and in different contexts. All teachers make meaningful use of formative assessment during lessons to check children's understanding and provide the right support and challenge. In younger classes, teachers also use digital technologies, floor books and observations very well to assess learning and progress. Senior leaders and staff analyse assessment information and use this knowledge very well to inform and plan next steps in learning. This skilful use of assessment is raising attainment for individual children, groups and cohorts.
- Senior leaders and teachers have worked very well together to develop a strong understanding of expected standards across literacy and numeracy. The headteacher ensures teachers have opportunities to moderate different aspects of the learning and teaching cycle together. Senior leaders and staff also work with colleagues from a range of schools on literacy and numeracy moderation activities regularly. As a result, teachers make robust and reliable professional judgements on children's progress and achievement of a level.
- Across the school, teachers plan very well across the curriculum, making effective use of school and local authority pathways, and national guidance. They involve children actively in planning, taking into account their views. Recently, staff have developed a collaborative planning approach for cross-curricular learning. They work together to plan engaging 'turbo' topics across the school. Themes have included equalities, wellbeing, STEAM and financial education. This approach supports children to develop and build on their skills over time through relevant and meaningful contexts. Staff report that this collaborative planning approach is also helping to reduce their workload.

- Senior leaders have developed well-considered and systematic processes to track and monitor all children's progress across literacy and numeracy. They are highly skilled in the analysis of this data and evidence. They discuss the progress of classes, groups and individuals with teachers regularly. Senior leaders, teachers and support staff identify and address any gaps in children's knowledge or skills. They plan and deliver highly effective interventions and targeted support that ensures all children make strong progress and experience success.

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- 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

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- A significant number of children start P1 at the beginning of early level in literacy and English, and numeracy and mathematics. As children move through Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels, high-quality learning and teaching supports them very well to make strong progress. The school adds value and considerably raises children's attainment from prior levels. Overall, by the end of second level the majority of children are attaining and achieving national CfE levels in literacy and numeracy. Increasingly, a significant number of children are exceeding expectations as they move through the school.
- Almost all children, who require additional support with their learning, make very good progress against their individual targets and milestones in literacy and numeracy.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Most children are making very good progress in literacy and English. A robust range of data shows increasing numbers of children at first and second level are performing above expected levels for their age and stage in reading and writing.

Listening and talking

- At early level, almost all children listen to and participate in songs, rhymes and stories with enthusiasm. They communicate well when sharing feelings or ideas and when recounting experiences from their lives. Children should continue to explore new vocabulary. At first level, most children are confident sharing their opinions with their group and class, and ask thoughtful questions. They listen carefully to peers and adults during discussions and explanations. At second level, most children justify their views clearly and build well on the responses of others. They are becoming increasingly confident with a range of specialist vocabulary and should continue to extend this in different contexts.

Reading

- At early level, children are developing well their knowledge of letters and sounds. Most children are starting to understand how these work together to help them read short, simple words. They enjoy selecting books and should continue to explore a range of new texts. At first level, most children demonstrate growing fluency when reading aloud, making thoughtful use of tone and expression. They apply their literacy knowledge well to help them pronounce and understand less familiar words. They answer literal and evaluative questions very well and should continue to build their skills with inferential questions. At second level, most children read less familiar or new texts with increasing fluency, understanding and expression. They scan texts to find key information quickly and accurately.

Writing

- At early level, children are practising how to form lowercase letters correctly. Most children draw pictures with increasing detail that express their ideas and experiences, and write words or phrases with support. They should continue to write regularly to share information in different ways and contexts. At first level, most children include a thoughtful variety of connectives, punctuation and openers in their texts. They write well for different purposes and audiences. They should continue to practice using their phonics and spelling strategies when attempting less familiar words. At second level, most children create a range of creative and interesting texts successfully, such as reports and poetry. They use increasingly sophisticated punctuation and vocabulary accurately to enhance their writing. Most children are becoming more confident creating and including figurative language in their texts to engage the reader. For example, they make considered use of simile, metaphor, personification and onomatopoeia. Older children should continue to practice reviewing and editing their own work, including thinking about layout and presentation choices.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Most children make very good progress in numeracy and mathematics. A minority of children at early level and the majority at second level perform above expected levels for their age and stage.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, most children are confident counting forwards and backwards in rhymes and class counting. They are becoming more accurate with one-to-one correspondence when counting objects. At first level, most children demonstrate a sound understanding of place value and rounding numbers. They use known strategies for addition and subtraction with confidence. This helps them to solve problems quickly and accurately. Most children calculate simple fractions of whole numbers correctly. At second level, most children select from and use a range of strategies to solve addition, subtraction, multiplication and division problems. They share their thinking and discuss solutions. They demonstrate an increasing understanding of links between fractions, decimals and percentages. Across the school, children should continue to consolidate and apply their knowledge and skills within meaningful contexts.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, children use positional language well in games and activities. At first level, almost all children identify lines of symmetry within simple shapes accurately. They have a sound understanding of compass points and use words associated with angles and turns appropriately when providing or following directions. At second level, most children name and classify a variety of angles and quadrilaterals correctly. They should continue to develop and apply their understanding of shape, including exploring different types of triangles.

Information handling

- At early level, almost all children understand simple data represented visually and physically. For example, they vote for a class story using counters and identify the most popular choice. At first and second levels, almost all children understand simple graphs and charts well and interpret key information. At second level, almost all children collect data using an increasing range of methods and analyse this information effectively. Across the school, children should continue to extend their skills through meaningful contexts. This could include exploring further digital technologies to help collect, organise and display information as appropriate to their age and stage.

Attainment over time

- Across the curriculum, attainment has improved consistently over recent years. The headteacher has established rigorous processes to monitor and analyse children's attainment and progress in literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders, teaching and support staff use this information skilfully to plan and deliver highly effective, well-planned universal and targeted interventions. They also set ambitious stretch targets for attainment. As a result, there has been a significant increase in the number of children achieving nationally expected CfE levels. This is particularly marked in reading and writing, and for all areas of literacy and numeracy at P7. Data shows the school now performs very well against national comparators. There is also clear evidence of significant improvement in standardised assessment results and of an accelerated pace of progress for children across the school. This session, robust tracking data shows a predicted further increase in attainment in both literacy and numeracy at almost every level. All staff remain focused on sustaining improvements and raising attainment further for all children.
- Over the last three years, the school's average attendance figure has continuously improved. In June 2025 the school's average was 89.7% which is slightly below the national average. The headteacher monitors and analyses children's attendance rigorously. This includes working closely with primary and secondary colleagues across cluster schools. Currently, a few children have attendance below 90%. Reasons for absence include term-time holidays, illness and family circumstances. Senior leaders work very well with staff and partners to support children who show a pattern of absence. They plan and provide personalised and universal interventions. These effective and collaborative approaches are supporting children and families very well and have a positive impact on attendance. Occasionally when required, staff use part-time timetables in a well-managed way in line with national guidance.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- The experiences and achievements of all children are of a very high quality and is a major strength of the school's work. Senior leaders and staff track children's participation and achievements in and out of school. They use this information to design and deliver a highly effective school-wide 'super skills' programme and targeted 'skills academy' intervention. Staff also plan further personalised support that ensures individuals who may be at risk of missing out achieve meaningful successes. For example, children are supported to take on leading roles in school life or to learn to swim. As a result of the school's approach, all children practise and demonstrate their skills and attributes across a wide range of purposeful and challenging experiences.
- Children are confident identifying and talking about the skills for life, learning and work they gain through their achievements. Staff value and celebrate children's successes and qualities in meaningful and creative ways, such as the 'PAWS' and 'Kind Kids' approach. Across all stages, children exercise responsibilities thoughtfully and play key roles in school life and their local community. Children are rightly very proud of how well they work together and with staff, partners and families to achieve nationally accredited awards for their school. For example, they have achieved recognition for rights-based learning, digital skills, nurturing approaches and reading.

Equity for all learners

- Equity of success and achievement for all children is a significant strength of the school's work. Senior leaders and staff demonstrate a deep professional understanding of the school and community context. They make highly effective use of funding and resources in creative, innovative ways to remove barriers to learning and ensure equity for all. Staff respond very well

to children's individual needs and circumstances, such as those arising from interrupted learning, additional support needs, health or disability, or socio-economic issues. Teachers, support staff, early years officers and key workers plan and deliver valuable targeted interventions that support children and their families very well. There is clear evidence of positive impact on children's confidence, wellbeing and readiness to learn. The school's very well-designed approaches to equity and inclusion are ensuring all children attain and achieve.

- Staff work very effectively with partners within the local community to support children and their families. They provide valuable support for those for whom the cost of the school day can be challenging. Parents greatly appreciate the discretion and compassion of all school staff. All children benefit from the work of the Parent Council. Last session, fundraising supported staff to subsidise the cost of excursions and buy sports kits and woodwork equipment. Strong partnerships are ensuring that there are no financial barriers to children's participation in school life.

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 and in the Flexible Learning Resource. Minor areas for improvement have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.
- The headteacher provides information on the spending rationale for Pupil Equity Funding and shares the impact this has on children's progress and attainment annually. Senior leaders survey parents' opinions and seek feedback on proposals and decisions. Staff should continue to explore meaningful ways to involve children and parents in making decisions about spending.
- All children receive two hours of high-quality physical education (PE) each week. They also engage in regular physical activities in school and beyond. For example, children attend sports clubs and sessions run by partners and specialist coaches. They also compete in competitions and tournaments with other schools regularly, such as football, netball and dodgeball. Older children take part in a short taught local authority swimming programme and key workers build on this by delivering additional sessions. This improves children's confidence and ability.
- Children at all stages benefit from learning and practising French. They understand teachers' simple instructions and speak French with growing confidence during classroom routines, such as the date and counting. Older children also learn Spanish as a third language. They understand and practise a range of useful vocabulary. Across the school, children enjoy listening to and exploring Scots language through songs, rhymes and poems. Last session, a few children represented the school and achieved recognition in the regional and national Robert Burns World Federation schools competition.
- Staff and children work very well together to promote and develop a school culture of reading for enjoyment. They have created high-quality school and class libraries. Children spend time in these spaces choosing and reading a wide range of texts. Early years officers deliver a family programme that is supporting and developing children's literacy skills. Teachers have a strong effective partnership with local library staff and plan regular shared events and campaigns. Working together, staff and children have achieved gold accreditation in a national reading award programme.

Context

The Flexible Learning Resource (FLR) is a local authority special provision located in the heart of the school. It caters for primary-aged children who require specialist input as a result of their significant additional support needs. Children access the FLR from primary schools across Renfrewshire Council and are on a split placement, attending for a maximum of two days per week. Almost all children attend their home mainstream school for the remainder of the school week. There are currently seven children on the roll. The FLR is run by a principal teacher, and the staff team includes a teacher and two support assistants. All children also access the support of key workers in the school. The primary purpose of the FLR is to support children to develop the skills and attributes needed to access mainstream education on a full-time basis.

QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

- Staff have established a very caring and nurturing culture within the FLR. There are very positive relationships between staff and children. Staff understand and are highly responsive to children's social and emotional needs. They access a wide range of valuable professional learning to help support the increasingly diverse needs of children accessing the FLR. Children feel safe, cared for and able to seek support when required, as a result. All children experience instances where they become anxious or dysregulated. Staff have created a range of productive strategies to support each child with their emotional needs. When a child demonstrates anxiety, distress or challenging behaviour, staff intervene quickly and sensitively to offer support. They ably help children to re-engage successfully with their learning. At times, children recognise that they need 'time out' and successfully regulate their own behaviour and emotions.
- The FLR is a welcoming and comfortable space for children. Teachers have created an environment which is conducive to learning. They provide clear and consistent routines, supporting children effectively with transitions over the school day. Children settle quickly upon arrival and are enthusiastic learners throughout the day. Teachers provide a variety of high-quality learning experiences. They incorporate well the use of child-led learning, collaborative tasks, concrete resources and digital technology into learning. Children are thriving in the FLR and are highly motivated and engaged to participate in their learning. Children particularly enjoy participating in sensory-based activities. Teachers are ably supported by key workers and support assistants. Collectively, they work very effectively as a team. A few children would benefit from more challenging learning activities, at times.
- Upon a child starting a placement in the FLR, teachers, supported by the team around the child (TAC), engage in a range of assessment approaches to provide a baseline for children's needs. Teachers use this assessment period effectively to identify and adopt learning programmes to meet children's literacy, numeracy and wellbeing needs. They use a variety of formative and summative assessments well to monitor and review systematically children's progress and attainment. Teachers should now engage in further moderation activities with colleagues in similar settings to help ensure accurate shared professional judgements on children's attainment. The headteacher should support staff by providing dedicated time with others to share effective practice and consider further approaches to meet the emerging needs of children accessing the FLR.
- Teachers plan extensively to meet the individual needs of children. All children have a range of appropriate targets in place. Staff plan and adopt a wide range of strategies to help children with their learning needs, particularly their wellbeing. Resulting plans can be over-extensive with too many strategies, some of which are not personalised to the individual child. Staff should streamline these plans with increased focus on shared strategies which are

individualised for each child and, where possible, clearly understood by staff, children and parents.

- Teachers in the FLR plan alongside each child's teacher from their home mainstream school. This works particularly successfully for children who attend Glencoats Primary School as well as the FLR. Teachers should aim to build on this practice to strengthen further joint planning with colleagues from other schools.

QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

- All children access the FLR for two days per week. Therefore, their progress in the FLR only forms part of their overall attainment and achievement.
- When attending the FLR, most children are making very good progress with their literacy and numeracy. When starting a placement at the FLR, all children have significant gaps in their learning in literacy and numeracy. Staff are highly adept at identifying these gaps and supporting children to re-engage successfully with their learning. Children are accelerating their progress in literacy and numeracy, as a result.
- All children are achieving very well across the FLR. Through engaging in a range of individualised activities and adopting simple but effective strategies, children are making very strong progress with their personal achievements. Children are building skills in communication, resilience, self-regulation and social interactions, as a result. They are very proud of their achievements. Staff should continue to support children to demonstrate these skills in unfamiliar and more challenging settings.
- All children achieve high levels of attendance and engagement when accessing the FLR for their two-day placements.
- Staff have a detailed understanding of the additional support needs and socio-economic circumstances of children and their families. Staff provide targeted, equitable support to help alleviate any challenges faced by children and families. Parents speak very highly of the work of the staff in the FLR and the positive impact they are having on their child.

Other relevant evidence

Upon completing a placement at the FLR, the majority of children who move back to mainstream education on a full-time basis achieve success. This is not yet a consistent feature for all children. The FLR team, including the outreach service, should aim to strengthen their transition approaches in partnership with mainstream colleagues and the TAC. A more comprehensive, structured, timed transition programme could support all children to transition more smoothly into full-time mainstream education. In taking this forward, FLR staff, supported by local authority colleagues, should consider setting clear criteria for when a child is well placed to begin their transition back into full-time mainstream education.

Practice worth sharing more widely

Outstanding practice in nurturing positive relationships that ensure all children learn and thrive.

Very strong creative approaches to develop and celebrate children's skills and achievements.

Highly successful strategies that raise children's attainment and increase the rate of their progress across the curriculum.

Planning and delivery of very high-quality learning, teaching and assessment.

Skilful and impactful inclusive practice and personalised support.

Innovative approaches to equity that ensure all children attain and achieve.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland 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.