

Summarised inspection findings

St Anthony's Primary School

South Lanarkshire Council

4 February 2025

Key contextual information

St Anthony's Primary School is a denominational school situated in the Springhall area of Rutherglen, South Lanarkshire. The catchment includes Springhall, Whitlawburn, Cathkin and Burnside. At the time of inspection, the roll was 137 pupils across 6 classes. The school was rebuilt in 2010 as part of the South Lanarkshire Council School Modernisation programme. Children have access to a large playground and multi-use games area. The school shares a campus with a non-denominational primary school.

The headteacher was appointed in January 2024 and is supported by an acting principal teacher who was appointed in February 2024. There are three full-time and eight part-time teaching staff. The school is supported by five full-time and one part-time school support assistants. Last session there were a significant number of staff absences. Since August 2024, staffing has stabilised.

Just over half of pupils live within Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles 1 and 2, with a fifth of pupils in receipt of free school meals. Nine percent of children have English as an additional language. Just under a third of pupils require support with their learning or wellbeing.

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	

- As a result of the headteacher's very strong leadership, staff have transformed the culture and ethos across the school. Senior leaders have supported staff very well to establish consistent and highly effective strategies to improve the behaviour of a minority of children. Overall, children behave well and are improving their ability to sustain their concentration with their learning. Relationships between staff, children and families are highly positive. Together staff, children and parents developed a new vision and set of values that reflect very well the context and needs of the school. This shared focus has improved children's and staff's sense of belonging and understanding about what it means to be a pupil at the school. All staff are very responsive and nurturing towards children. They are strong role models, placing children's needs at the centre of their practice. They demonstrate the values of 'kindness, honesty, creativity, resilience and bravery' in their interactions with children and each other. These values reflect very well the school's strong Catholic ethos built upon the Gospel values. Children are proud to be part of the St Anthony's family, are welcoming to visitors and supportive of their peers.
- Staff work very well together. They engage in professional learning and draw upon educational partners to develop their thinking and improve their practice to meet the needs of children. They share practice, such as approaches to teaching mathematics, which is helping all teachers improve the quality of learning experiences for children. The headteacher supports staff very well to develop frameworks and guidance which is improving the consistency and

quality of learning and teaching across the school. Senior leaders should continue to support teachers to develop a learning and teaching policy that sets out clearly the pedagogy expected for all curricular areas. This should help teachers provide, more consistently, high-quality learning across the curriculum.

- Staff have developed calm, settled classrooms with consistent routines. All staff use positive interactions and daily check-ins very effectively to ensure children are ready for learning. They use well-considered language to reinforce expectations for learning. Staff have improved the quality of spaces and resources. Areas such as the spa and gym, provide children who require it, space to practise strategies to support their emotional and physical development. Staff use visual prompts, timetables and work programmes effectively to provide clear direction and expectations for class learning. Support staff provide skilful and well-timed support for children who require it. They provide prompts, commentary and modelling for children who require additional support. This support is having a very positive impact on children's readiness to learn, engagement and motivation to learn. Staff's inclusive approach to ensuring all children are valued and included in the life of the school is a strength.
- Most children enjoy learning and work well independently and in pairs when tasks are focused. Teachers are very well-organised and plan activities and resources thoroughly. They plan an appropriate balance of independent, paired and group work. Most children listen well to adult instruction and direction. They carry out tasks with increasing independence and are improving well their concentration by sustaining focus for longer periods of time. Younger children use shoulder partners very well to discuss their learning and think of ideas they want to share with the class. As children's ability to sustain their concentration improves, teachers should begin to support them to take increasing responsibility for their learning. This will allow teachers to plan sharper introductions and reduce the need for whole class teaching. When teachers plan direct teaching to small groups and individuals, this meets children's needs very well.
- In all lessons, teachers share the purpose of learning. In the majority of lessons, they encourage children to identify what successful learning should look like. This is helping children in these lessons to develop their language of learning. In almost all lessons, teachers' instructions and explanations are clear. They use direct teaching effectively to help children understand new concepts. Importantly, most teachers use subject specific vocabulary in explanations, direct teaching and during plenaries to reinforce learning with children. This is at the early stages of widening children's vocabulary to explain their thinking. In the majority of lessons, teachers link learning to the skills children will need in life. This helps children understand the relevance of their learning. In literacy lessons, teachers match well activities to children's abilities. They should extend this approach across the curriculum to ensure all learning experiences are sufficiently challenging for all children.
- All teachers use closed questions effectively to check children's understanding during whole class introductions. In literacy and numeracy lessons, teachers use open questions very effectively when working with small groups. This helps to extend children's learning. Teachers should continue to develop their questioning to provide increased opportunities for children to talk about their learning and provide supporting detail for their answers. For example, older children accurately answer mental maths questions but currently require support to explain the strategies they use to solve different calculations.
- Teachers provide written feedback in jotters and verbal feedback during lessons. Written feedback is often praise-based and does not always support children to know how to improve. Teachers should review their approaches to improve the consistency and quality of feedback across the school. A focus on high-quality verbal feedback could support children to explain what they have learned as a result of tasks and experiences.

- Teachers plan well the use of digital technologies to support children's learning. Children are developing important skills in research and note taking through the use of these devices. Teachers use online platforms effectively to share learning and direct children to appropriate websites. Children who require support with their learning use apps and software to enable them to access the curriculum. Children show confidence and independence when using devices. For example, younger children use devices to listen for common words and scan for them in the text. Teachers should continue to use progression pathways to plan for a wider range of skills children could develop through digital approaches across the curriculum.
- Teachers at the early stages engage well with professional learning and national guidance to inform their approach to play. They are highly-reflective and adapt their approach to meet the needs of different cohorts. Teachers plan blocks of time for classes to experience free play. They use their time effectively to model and coach children during their play. They support children well to share their play with others to help children who find free choice more challenging. Children are learning important social and communication skills during these sessions. Teachers should consider with senior leaders how children can be supported to develop their skills further with support to play more regularly in small groups.
- Senior leaders have refined the school's assessment calendar to ensure there is a consistent approach to assessment. Teachers now use a range of assessment tools effectively to gather important information about what children can do after blocks of learning. They work closely with senior leaders to make judgements about children's progress. As a result of these thorough discussions, assessment evidence is becoming more reliable and robust. Teachers are now in a strong position to plan high-quality assessments to gather evidence of how children apply skills across the curriculum.
- Staff have introduced children's passports to provide a helpful overview of children's strengths, support needs and the strategies that support identified children well. This effective tool helps children experience appropriate and consistently high-quality care and support. As a result, transitions for children are smooth and well-supported. The acting principal teacher helps staff very well to develop plans for children who require support with their learning. These plans identify strategies and interventions to help children to meet their targets. In the best examples, targets are clear and measurable. Staff should continue to ensure all plans have clear and measurable targets to show accurately the progress children make after a period of support. This should help staff identify clearly the interventions that have the greatest impact on children's engagement and progress.
- Teachers use local authority progression planners to plan learning for all curricular areas. The introduction of a consistent approach to planning is helping children experience continuity in their learning. Teachers' use of the skills progression and national Benchmarks is increasing further the accuracy and consistency of teacher professional judgment. Senior leaders should support teachers to further refine and streamline planning and tracking systems to ensure they remain manageable. This would also support staff to track children's progress more easily. The staff team are in a very strong place to continue to improve learning experiences and outcomes for all children across the curriculum.

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

satisfactory

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, the majority of children in P1, P4 and P7 achieve nationally expected levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy. At all stages there are children with gaps in their learning. Children have limited ability to explain their thinking and learning with others. Senior leaders and staff have already begun to address this as a priority by improving the planning and assessment cycle. All staff should continue to work together to increase children's progress and ensure learning is consistently at the right level of difficulty.
- All children who require support with their learning now receive well-considered and high-quality support. As a result, most children who require support make good progress against their individual targets.

Literacy and English

- Overall, the majority of children are making satisfactory progress in literacy and English.

Listening and talking

- At early level, the majority of children listen well for short bursts of time. They are developing their ability to take turns and listen to contributions from their peers. At first level, the majority of children listen to adults and their peers for information and instructions. They answer questions with relevant information and discuss their favourite authors. At second level, most children listen attentively to adults and their peers. They share their ideas and opinions and discuss a few skills they need for different activities such as presentations. Children now need to develop their listening and talking skills progressively, applying them to a wider range of contexts.

Reading

- At early level, the majority of children use their knowledge of letters to identify the initial sound in given words. They are developing fast recall of a few common words to help them read aloud simple sentences. At first level, the majority of children read aloud with fluency and increasing expression. They name a range of strategies they use when reading an unfamiliar text. The majority of children provide reasons for their answers and justify their responses using clues from the text. At second level, the majority of children read fluently with expression. They do not always confidently read aloud in different contexts. The majority of children answer inferential questions accurately yet require support to explain their thinking.

Writing

- At early level, the majority of children are learning to form letters with correct sizing and shape. They copy tricky words and make an attempt to write simple words. At first level, the

majority of children write texts for a range of genres. They include simple punctuation and interesting vocabulary relevant to the genre. Most children require support to present their ideas logically with a clear beginning, middle and end to the story. At second level, the majority of children write extended texts using the features of the genre to structure their writing. Children at second level now need to apply these skills across the curriculum.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, the majority of children are making satisfactory progress in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure

- Children who have achieved early level solve simple addition and subtraction problems successfully. At first level, the majority of children read, write, add and subtract numbers to 1,000 and round to the nearest 100 and 1,000 accurately. Most calculate the total spent and identify the best value in a shopping situation. They require support to use pictorial representations and other models to show their understanding of simple equivalent fractions. At second level, the majority of children round whole numbers to the nearest 10,000 accurately. They round decimals to two decimal places and are confident in addition and subtraction of whole numbers and decimals. Most solve two-step problems involving money and apply mental agility to calculate the total spent and profit or loss. The presentation of work at all stages, though particularly at second level, is to a very high standard.

Shape, position and movement

- Children who have achieved early level, name accurately simple two-dimensional (2D) shapes. At first level, most children use a few mathematical terms to describe the properties of a range of common 2D shapes and three-dimensional (3D) objects. They would benefit from extending their knowledge of properties and use of vocabulary such as edge, vertex and base. At second level, almost all children draw correct representations of 3D objects, understanding that not all parts of the 3D object can be seen. They would benefit from revisiting mathematical terms such as acute, obtuse, straight and reflex to describe angles.

Information handling

- Children who have achieved early level collect and organise information for a specific purpose and interpret simple bar graphs. At first level, all children extract key information from a variety of data sets including charts, bar graphs and tables. They state the most appropriate way to gather and sort data for a given purpose, for example, using tally marks. At second level, most children used the language of probability accurately to describe the likelihood of simple events occurring. Children need to work with increasingly complex data sets and learn to justify their choice for how they display information.

Attainment over time

- Senior leaders monitor attendance and late coming as part of their quality assurance activity. They use South Lanarkshire's attendance policy effectively. In addition, they provide a breakfast club and wellbeing groups to support families and children's attendance. Attendance over time has significantly improved and the poverty related attendance gap has reduced. Attendance is now above local and national averages.
- The school's attainment over time data shows that levels of children's attainment in literacy and numeracy has fluctuated over several years. Staff recognise that previous professional judgements were not always based on reliable assessment evidence. The introduction of a clear assessment calendar is supporting teachers well to plan regular and consistent assessments. This helps them build an accurate picture of children's progress and attainment. Since their appointment, senior leaders have correctly identified the need to work

with teachers to improve the robustness of attainment information in literacy and numeracy. Teachers now regularly moderate children's work informally. Senior leaders have also reestablished effective moderation opportunities within the learning community. This is helping teachers improve their shared understanding about progress within and beyond a level. Senior leaders conduct termly tracking meetings with teachers to analyse children's progress and attainment. Senior leaders should continue to provide this support and challenge for staff to strengthen professional judgements. This should help ensure that the school's attainment data will become more valid, accurate and robust.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Staff celebrate children's achievements within and outwith school in a variety of ways. For example, children's achievements are celebrated on the proud wall, at weekly assemblies and with whole school achievement tokens. This helps children have a strong sense of belonging to their school community.
- Staff and children benefit from a strong partnership with the local parish. Staff work closely with the parish priest to plan activities and events where children can contribute as global citizens. For example, the school's Mini Vinnies are responsible citizens and develop their peer's understanding of the needs of others. They show care and support by raising funds and donating items to the local foodbank. Children effectively contribute by taking on the role of altar servers.
- Across the school children are beginning to develop important skills by engaging in a wide range of additional roles. These include digital leaders, pupil council and sustainability leads. Children are improving their sporting skills through a variety of activities such as football, fitness and netball as well as representing their school at different events within the community. Staff have plans to gather and analyse participation and achievement data to ensure all children have the opportunity to take part in these valuable experiences.

Equity for all learners

- Senior leaders and teachers plan targeted interventions for children and have a strong understanding of the range of barriers to learning children may face. The headteacher uses Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) to fund additional staffing to support literacy, numeracy and wellbeing interventions for individuals and targeted groups. PEF has also been targeted at providing professional learning for teachers to develop pedagogy and to provide the resources to implement learning and teaching approaches. Staff have now established an important baseline of children's attainment. They should ensure they monitor and gather robust evidence about the impact of interventions on children's attainment. This will help better inform their awareness of how they are reducing the poverty related attainment gap.
- Staff have an in-depth understanding of the social and economic background of children and families. They are sensitive to the challenges that may face some families in their community. The school provides a range of supports, provided through the use of PEF. For example, they subsidise the residential experience and attendance at educational or sporting experiences to ensure no child is at risk of missing out.

Other relevant evidence

- Children experience their entitlement to two hours of high-quality physical education (PE) weekly. Teachers use local authority progression planners and guidance well to plan blocks of learning in PE.
- The school enjoys strong links with the local parish. Children experience regular religious observance at the church and benefit from the strong partnership with the local priest who visits the school regularly. Teachers use the Religious Education (RE) in Catholic schools planners to plan learning effectively in RE.
- The headteacher uses a participatory budgeting approach to consult children, parents and staff on the use of PEF. She clearly explains the use of this funding is to close attainment gaps and asks for feedback on how this can be used. The headteacher links very well with the newly reformed Parent Partnership to share this work in more detail. Parents are highly supportive of the work of the school and appreciate the clear communication from the headteacher and Parent Partnership.
- Children have regular access to texts for personal reading through the school and class libraries. This helps to build a culture of reading in the school. The Parent Partnership invest funding in enhancing texts to read for pleasure.

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.