

Summarised inspection findings

Newmains Primary School

North Lanarkshire Council

18 August 2026

Key contextual information

Newmains Primary School is a non-denominational school situated in Wishaw, North Lanarkshire. At the time of inspection, the school had a roll of 186 children organised across eight classes. The school moved to a new community hub site in February 2023. This community hub is shared with another primary school and an Early Learning and Childcare Setting. The school shares a variety of spaces with these other settings.

The newly appointed headteacher has been in post since April 2026. She is supported by a full-time principal teacher. Prior to the headteacher’s appointment to the school, the substantive principal teacher held the post of acting headteacher for a period of approximately eight months.

Approximately 40% of children require additional support with their learning. Almost all children live in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles 1 to 4.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	satisfactory
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	

- Staff create a warm, welcoming, safe and inclusive learning environment. As a result, children are proud of their school and enthusiastically participate in their learning. They are polite and respectful. Relationships across the school are very positive and reflect well the school values and children’s rights. Most children feel nurtured and cared for in their school and speak positively about how their teachers help them to learn.
- Teachers and support staff use nurturing approaches well to help a few children self-regulate. Where children need support to manage their emotions, staff sensitively offer a range of strategies and interventions. This results in a purposeful environment that is conducive to learning. Staff have adapted the learning environment well to meet the needs of children. Children access helpful supports, such as headphones and visual aids. These adaptations help children to regulate their emotions and ensure they are ready to learn. Skilled pupil support assistants provide well-timed and bespoke support for children, often outwith the classroom. As a result of staff’s consistent approaches, almost all children are very well behaved and engage positively in their learning.
- Throughout the school, teachers create colourful learning displays. Children find these helpful and use these to support them with aspects of their learning. This includes wordbanks which, support them in their writing and numeracy. A few children are proud when teachers share examples of their work on walls and at assemblies. However, staff do not make effective use of

displays to actively showcase children's ongoing learning. Staff, in collaboration with children, should create more engaging, interactive displays which showcase children's current learning.

- The majority of children interact confidently with one another and enjoy working together in groups, during inquiry-based learning and learning which links different curricular areas. Children use both outdoor and indoor spaces well for different activities. For example, they enjoy learning about minibeasts and how to manage risk in a local forest. Children interact positively with staff and enjoy working independently on tasks that are creative and interesting. However, this experience is not yet consistent across all stages. A few children successfully set their own learning targets. All teachers should ensure that children take more of a lead in their learning.
- Almost all children have a few opportunities to learn through interesting and varied real-life contexts which stimulate their interest. For example, children in P7 were motivated deconstructing and designing footwear. In a few classes, children articulate how they are developing meta-skills and why they are important. Teaching staff should continue to encourage children to talk about the skills they are developing in all aspects of their learning.
- Senior leaders and staff have correctly identified the need to improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment. They should, as planned, revisit the existing learning, teaching and assessment policy. This should support all staff to develop a shared understanding of high-quality learning, teaching and assessment.
- All teachers make effective use of the information and strategies provided to support children who require additional support. Teachers understand children's needs, and the majority of children experience tasks and activities that are appropriately matched to their skills and abilities. At times, learning is too teacher-led, and a few children disengage with learning as a result. Almost all children would benefit from a brisker pace of learning. They are ready for more complex activities and increased opportunities to apply their learning in less familiar contexts.
- Almost all teachers share the purpose of learning consistently with children. However, this is not always fully understood by all children. In a few lessons, explanations are overly detailed and not sufficiently aligned with the intended learning. As a result, a few children are not sure what they are learning, or what they need to do to be successful.
- Teachers have focused on improving questioning techniques as part of their ongoing professional learning, and most use questioning appropriately to check for understanding. A few teachers use questioning effectively to extend children's thinking. This practice is not yet consistently effective in ensuring that all children develop higher-order thinking skills. As a result, a minority of children lack confidence when talking about their learning. Senior leaders and staff correctly recognise that this is an area that still requires further development.
- Children at early level are learning well through play. Most sustain concentration during play-based activities and cooperate well together. Teachers ensure that there is an appropriate balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. They encourage children to reflect on their play, what they are learning and the skills they are developing.

- All children regularly access digital technology to enhance and support their learning. This includes tablets, online programmes and accessibility tools to develop their skills in writing, research tasks and in creating digital presentations. Children use matrix barcodes and online tools effectively to share their learning, and teachers scaffold research tasks well for children. This enables children to develop their digital skills well across a range of curricular areas.
- Children assess their own and their peers' work regularly, and staff provide useful feedback on learning. This includes written feedback in jotters, digital feedback through online tools and responsive feedback during lessons. For a minority of children, this helps to deepen and extend their thinking. Staff are well placed to enhance the impact of feedback by making next steps clearer and more individualised. This should help more children to understand how to improve and make progress.
- Senior leaders have developed a useful annual assessment calendar which includes the use of a range of summative, diagnostic and standardised assessments. Teachers and senior leaders use this assessment information well to inform their professional judgement of a level. Teachers use formative assessment strategies well in most lessons to support their judgements of children's progress in their learning.
- All teachers engage in regular and well-planned moderation activities with colleagues in school and with cluster schools. They work together well to develop a shared understanding of national standards. This has increased staff confidence in assessment approaches, ensuring their professional judgements of children's attainment are increasingly reliable.
- All teachers use a range of medium-term and short-term plans well to plan children's learning. They make good use of local authority progression pathways linked to Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Benchmarks. Children contribute to planning which links learning across different curricular areas. For example, children in P7 chose their World Cup topic. Teachers should now ensure that children are more fully involved in planning across all aspects of their learning.
- Teachers track and monitor children's progress in literacy and numeracy robustly. They meet with senior leaders three times a year to discuss class, group and individual children's progress. They use this information well to plan appropriate interventions for identified groups of children. As a result, identified children are better supported and most make good progress in their learning. Senior leaders have rightly identified the need for teachers to monitor closely the progress of different cohorts of children, such as those impacted by poverty, care experienced or with low levels of attendance.

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.

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, attainment is satisfactory. Across the school, most children achieve expected CfE levels in listening and talking. The majority of children achieve expected CfE levels in reading, writing and numeracy. A significant minority of children at every stage are capable of achieving more in their learning.
- Children who receive additional support for their learning make good progress from previous levels of attainment or towards their personal targets.

Attainment in literacy and English

- The majority of children make good progress in literacy and English.

Listening and talking

- At early level, most children listen well when working directly with the teacher. They are developing further their skills in talking and listening during free play. Children need to develop their skills in taking turns when listening and talking in a variety of contexts. At first level, most children contribute a number of relevant ideas, information and opinion when engaging with others. They understand differences between fact and opinion. At second level, most children listen well to instructions and respond to the ideas of others appropriately. Across first and second level, children need to develop further their confidence and skills in presenting their work to a wider audience.

Reading

- The majority of children at early level, recognise initial sounds and are beginning to blend sounds together to read simple words. They should continue to practise recognising familiar words in their environment. At first level, the majority of children answer questions well, demonstrating their understanding of the text. They read aloud with fluency and expression. At second level, most children answer different types of questions about texts. They confidently recognise techniques used to influence the reader, for example, word choice and emotive language. A few children are less confident explaining their preference for particular texts or authors. Across the school, children need to access and use a wider variety of texts to develop their reading skills further.

Writing

- The majority of children at early level, make an attempt to use a capital letter and a full stop in at least one sentence. They leave a space between words when writing. A few children do not yet form all lowercase letters legibly. At first level, the majority of children understand how to improve their writing, for example by using adjectives and interesting vocabulary. They use appropriate punctuation confidently and link sentences accurately using common conjunctions, for example and, but or so. At second level, the majority of children describe well their thoughts and feelings about an experience, organising and presenting information in a logical way. They are confident in using paragraphs to separate thoughts and ideas. At first and second level, children need to create extended texts regularly for a range of purposes and audiences selecting appropriate genre, form, structure and style.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Across the school, most children make good progress in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, most children confidently add and subtract numbers within 20. At first level, most children understand well the place value of numbers and successfully add and subtract three-digit numbers. At second level, the majority of children successfully recognise times in both 12 and 24-hour clocks and are developing well their understanding of fractions. They now need to develop a greater awareness of linking fractions, decimals and percentages. Across the school, children need to develop a greater understanding of money.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, the majority of children describe two-dimensional (2D) shapes and use correctly the language of position and direction, including in front, behind, above and below. They are less confident following instructions involving left and right. At first level, most children recognise right angles in the environment and lines of symmetry. At second level, most children have a good awareness of different angles and symmetry. Across the school, children need to gain experience in using digital technology and mathematical instruments to draw 2D shapes and make representations of three-dimensional objects.

Information handling

- At early level, most children match and sort items in a variety of different ways according to shape, colour, size and other relevant factors. At first level, most children are developing their accuracy in collecting and displaying data in a variety of ways such as pictograms, tally marks and bar charts. At second level, the majority of children use the language of probability accurately to describe the likelihood of simple events occurring. Children across the school should develop skills in collecting, organising and displaying data, in a variety of ways including using digital technologies, appropriate to their stage.

Attainment over time

- Staff have a very good understanding of the factors which influence children's attainment outcomes, such as poor attendance, poverty and additional support needs. Staff have clearly added value to children's attainment over time through providing a range of effective interventions. Overall, the majority of children make good progress in literacy and most make good progress in numeracy over time. Staff use a robust tracking system to monitor the progress of individuals, cohorts and groups in literacy and numeracy. They make effective use of national Benchmarks and a range of assessment information to evidence children's

attainment. Senior leaders analyse summative data, including National Standardised Assessments for Scotland, and use this effectively in discussions with teachers about children's progress and next steps. Staff focus on raising attainment and have introduced improvements to support this work. For example, a whole-school approach to reading has contributed to improved outcomes in reading across most stages. Staff should continue to focus on raising attainment in literacy and numeracy for all children.

- Staff ensure that improving attendance remains a school priority. They work closely with cluster colleagues and other agencies to support improvement. Senior leaders track and monitor children's attendance and late-coming rigorously. As a result, they have a strong awareness of the attendance of children and the reasons for poor attendance. These reasons for absence are wide and varied and include both authorised and unauthorised absences, including family holidays. Senior leaders follow local authority guidance to maximise attendance. They implement helpful procedures to support children and families, where attendance is below appropriate levels. This has had an impact on the attendance of a few identified children. Staff celebrate this success with children and families.
- Attendance has shown a gradual improvement over the past three years and currently stands at 88.7%. While this remains below the national average, staff are proactive in addressing barriers to attendance. Staff implement a range of strategies to highlight the importance of good attendance to families. This includes information displays at parents' night and increased communication to staff and parents around the impact of attendance on attainment. Despite these efforts, a minority of children have attendance below 90% and a few children are regularly late to school. Staff should continue with their relentless focus to raise attendance and reduce the number of children arriving late. This should support them to make the best possible progress in their learning.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Senior leaders track and monitor well the achievements of children across the school. These include those from both within and outwith the school. Most children value the opportunities to become involved in a wide range of activities including supporting the understanding of children's rights and creating a more sustainable environment across the school. Through these roles children from P1 to P7 are developing a greater understanding of influencing change within their school and community. They are developing their confidence to support others. The majority of older children develop communication, teamwork and problem-solving skills through taking on meaningful roles such as buddies, house captains and leading committees.
- Staff regularly and routinely recognise and celebrate children's achievements in class, at school assemblies and through newsletters. Children value this recognition and welcome the opportunities to showcase their talents in, for example dance or sporting competitions, outwith school. This helps foster a positive ethos and motivates other children to take part. Recently, children took part in the local area primary school qualifiers and competed nationally at handball against schools from across Scotland. This supported children to be confident when representing their school and developed well their resilience. Staff are not yet tracking the skills that children are developing through these activities. They should continue with plans to develop all children's ability to discuss their skills, strengths and achievements across a range of contexts.

- Staff are aware of the children who may be missing out from these valuable experiences. As planned, they should use this information to provide identified children with opportunities to develop their skills through wider achievements.

Equity for all learners

- Almost all staff demonstrate a very good understanding of the socio-economic context and barriers to learning experienced by children across the school. This helps inform responsive approaches to learning and support, promote equity, and improve outcomes for identified groups of children.
- Senior leaders use Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) appropriately to provide additional staffing to deliver specific targeted interventions aimed at reducing the poverty-related attainment gap. Specific literacy supports help identified children make progress in their learning. For example, a few children have improved their reading accuracy and comprehension as a result of these interventions. As a result, staff have made progress in closing the poverty-related attainment gap. Senior leaders should continue to develop staffs' use of data to ensure that the attainment of more groups and cohorts of children is tracked well.
- Senior leaders use PEF to provide specific resources and experiences which help create a sense of belonging and to increase attendance at school. This includes funding transition projects to support children move successfully to secondary school or trips to the theatre. Through these opportunities children gain experiences they may not otherwise have. Staff maintain a uniform carousel to ensure that high-quality pre-loved uniform is available discreetly and free of charge to families. Senior leaders also support families with the cost of living by supporting confidential referrals to the Financial Inclusion Team which supports attendance at school for a few children.

Other relevant evidence

- Children across the school learn French progressively. In addition, children in P4–7 learn Spanish. This approach ensures that all children receive their entitlement to the 1+2 languages programme. Children enjoy using their new languages throughout the school and in other curricular areas.
- Children across the school experience a broad and balanced religious and moral education curriculum. Children engage in religious observance during assemblies, with support from local ministers.
- All children receive their full entitlement to two hours of quality progressive physical education (PE) each week. Children access PE indoors and outdoors.
- Staff, parents and children are consulted effectively in determining how best to invest PEF in order to deliver positive outcomes for children.
- 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.

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.