

Summarised inspection findings

St Patrick's Primary School

North Lanarkshire Council

3 March 2026

Key contextual information

St Patrick's Primary School is a denominational school located in central Coatbridge. The number of children attending the school is 265. The headteacher and depute headteacher have been in post for 11 years. At the time of the inspection approximately one third of teachers were new to the school on temporary contracts. There are 36% of children registered as having an additional support need. Data shows 26% of children reside in deciles 1 and 2 in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.

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

- Senior leaders and staff foster a welcoming, caring culture that supports and encourages all children to achieve their best. All staff demonstrate a strong commitment to Gospel Values, diversity and children's rights. Children experience a very nurturing and inclusive ethos underpinned by the school values of trust, honesty, respect and kindness. The positive relationships between staff and children create a respectful environment where children are eager to learn. Across the school community, staff encourage children to express their views and opinions. Children's supportive relationships with all adults in the school helps build their confidence and wellbeing. Almost all children behave well. They treat adults and each other with high levels of respect. Children are courteous and friendly. They interact well with each other when working in pairs and groups.
- In almost all lessons, teachers share the purpose of learning with children effectively. They link children's lessons well to prior learning. This leads to most children being clear about what they are learning. Teachers offer clear explanations and instructions appropriate to the age and stage of children. In most lessons, teachers match learning experiences to children's needs well. This ensures most children experience appropriate pace and challenge in their learning. This is not yet consistent across all lessons. Senior leaders and teachers should continue to work together to ensure tasks and activities provide the appropriate level of challenge for all children. In a few classes, teachers give children opportunities to lead their learning. Teachers should now consider how they can plan and deliver lessons which support children to take greater ownership of their learning.
- Teachers use a range of relevant and meaningful contexts which support children to engage very well in their learning. For example, they link reading texts well to current events. Across

the school, most teachers use a range of learning and teaching approaches effectively. They support children to work well individually, in pairs, and groups. Teachers include a focus on the skills children will need for their future learning, life, and work. Children are beginning to develop their understanding of how these skills will support them in the future.

- Children in P1 experience a range of regular opportunities to learn through play, both indoors and outdoors. Staff have worked together to develop their understanding of play pedagogy taking good account of national guidance. They use this learning well to create an appropriate blend of adult-initiated and child-led learning experiences. This is supporting children in P1 to learn effectively through experiential play. As a result, children are developing their curiosity and creativity. Teachers are beginning to develop play-based approaches in P2 and P3. This is helping to enhance children's enjoyment in their learning.
- All teachers use a range of digital technologies, such as interactive screens and tablets, effectively to support children's learning. Children use digital devices confidently to undertake research and to demonstrate and record their learning. Children develop their understanding of digital thinking and coding effectively using programmable devices and software. A few children use assistive tools well to access the curriculum and have appropriate support as they learn.
- All teachers use questioning effectively to check children's understanding of their learning. In a few classes, teachers use questioning skilfully to extend children's learning or support them to develop higher order thinking skills. Teachers should now continue to develop their use of high-quality questioning to support children's thinking.
- Most teachers give verbal feedback which supports children to develop their learning further. In most classes, teachers support children effectively to use self and peer feedback to help them understand their own learning. The quality of teachers' written feedback to children across curricular areas is variable. Teachers should now develop this approach further to provide greater consistency in written feedback across all classes and curricular areas.
- Staff support children requiring additional support well using visual prompts, quiet spaces, trusting relationships and appropriate individualised learning tasks. Support assistants engage very well and respond effectively to children's wellbeing and learning needs. This helps children requiring additional support access and make good progress in their learning.
- Senior leaders and teachers planned targeted interventions have impacted positively in overall attainment across the school for all children. For example, teachers and children discuss a range of useful strategies to support children to solve calculations. They use a helpful concrete, pictorial and abstract approach to teaching key mathematics concepts. Staff in the early years have made positive developments in play. This has increased children's engagement and motivation in numeracy tasks. Consequently, attainment in numeracy and mathematics has increased at all stages across the school.
- Senior leaders and teachers have recently developed assessment calendars which are carefully matched to each primary stage. This helps ensure a consistency of approach in assessing children's learning. Teachers use data from summative and standardised assessments

increasingly well to inform planning and to help identify children's next steps in their learning. This includes national standardised assessments. Teachers are developing the use of project-based tasks to assess how well children demonstrate their knowledge and skills from different subject areas to real world contexts. Children are increasingly able to demonstrate the breadth and application of their learning effectively. Most children across the school have regular opportunities to self-assess their work. This helps them to understand better how successful they have been in their learning and what they need to improve on. Teachers should develop their use of formative assessment approaches during lessons. This should help them to provide real-time, specific feedback to support children's deeper understanding of their learning.

- Teachers have successfully strengthened their approaches to evaluating the quality of children's learning. They take part in effective moderation activities with colleagues in their own school. They use national Benchmarks and discuss and review children's work. For example, teachers across the school have moderated children's writing. This has helped them form increasingly reliable professional judgments of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels against national standards. Teachers value the opportunities they have to work with colleagues to evaluate the quality of children's work. Teachers should now use the moderation cycle to consider wider aspects of learning and teaching, including moderating across a greater range of curriculum areas. In addition, they should work with colleagues from outwith their own school setting to moderate children's learning. This should strengthen teachers understanding of national standards and further support them in making decisions on children's' progress. Teachers use helpful 'snapshot jotters' to share children's progress in learning with parents at three key points across the year. This helps parents understand the progress their children make in learning.
- Teachers collaborate with stage partners to plan effectively to meet the needs of learners across all areas of the curriculum. They use local authority and school produced curriculum pathways and formats well to plan for children's learning and assessment. Children contribute meaningfully to the planning process by providing their ideas on what and how they learn. Senior leaders and staff use helpful local authority 'GIRFme' plans to identify and provide targeted support to individual children, which supports them to make good progress in their learning. Teachers meet with senior leaders and peers at regular intervals in the year to discuss their plans. This allows senior leaders to have an overview of what is being taught at each stage. This supports senior leaders to ensure teachers plan for appropriate breadth and progression in children's learning experiences.
- Senior leaders and teachers meet termly to discuss and track the attainment and progress of all children in wellbeing, literacy and numeracy. They discuss barriers or gaps in learning and use a helpful colour coding system to identify accurately those children who require specific, additional support. This leads to timely and effective interventions being put into place to raise attainment and improve children's outcomes. For example, staff have provided targeted support for children to improve their knowledge of letter sounds in reading and mental agility in numeracy. This supports children requiring additional support to make good progress with their literacy and numeracy skills. As planned, senior leaders and teachers should now develop their approaches to track children's progress in all curricular areas.

2.1 Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, young people. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

good

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

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

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Overall, attainment in literacy and numeracy is good. In June 2025, most children in P1, P4 and P7 achieved expected CfE levels in listening and talking and numeracy. Most children in P1 and P4 and almost all children in P7 achieved expected CfE levels in reading. Most children at P1, the majority at P4 and almost all children at P7 achieved expected CfE levels in writing. A minority of children exceed national expectations in literacy and numeracy.
- Most children who require additional support make good progress against their individual targets for learning.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, most children make good progress in literacy and English as they move through the school. In the last year, most children have made very good progress.

Listening and talking

- Most children working towards early level, retell a simple story successfully. They communicate and share stories in different ways, including through imaginative play. Most children working towards first level, select and share ideas and information using accurate vocabulary. Children should develop their skills further in delivering a simple presentation with appropriate content and structure. Most children working towards second level, find information accurately for a specific purpose within spoken texts. Children should continue to develop their skills in building effectively on the ideas of others in discussions.

Reading

- Most children working towards early level, hear and say the sounds made by a combination of different letters. They should now develop their skills further in predicting what will happen next in a simple story. Most children working towards first level, select different texts regularly for enjoyment using the cover and title. They should strengthen their understanding of fiction and non-fiction texts. Almost all children working towards second level respond accurately to a range of questions, including literal and inferential questions to demonstrate understanding. They should now develop their skills further in clarifying and summarising texts.

Writing

- Most children working towards early level form lowercase letters legibly. A minority use capital letters and full stops accurately. Most children working towards first level, link sentences successfully using common conjunctions. They should now develop their skills further in note taking to help plan their writing. Almost all children working towards second level, attempt to engage and influence the reader through vocabulary and use of language. They should continue to develop their skills in creating texts across a wider range of genre.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, as they move through the school most children make good progress in numeracy and mathematics. In the last year, most children have made very good progress.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, most children recognise and recall numbers correctly in a forward sequence to 30. They accurately use the language of forwards and backwards and double numbers to a total of 20 mentally. They are not yet confident in telling the time using o'clock. At first level, most children apply strategies to determine multiplication facts. For example, children use repeated addition, grouping and multiplication facts. They confidently round whole numbers to the nearest 10 and 100. At second level, most children read, write and order whole numbers to one million, starting from any number in the sequence. They accurately read and record time in both 12-hour and 24-hour notation and convert between the two. Overall, children across the school should be supported further to build their skills and apply their learning of numeracy in real-life contexts.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, most children recognise and name two-dimensional (2D) shapes with a few recalling the properties of three-dimensional (3D) objects. Most children develop their use of positional language well through the use of loose parts and block play. At first level, most children identify 2D shapes and 3D objects and a majority use appropriate mathematical language to describe the properties of these common shapes and objects. Most children at second level use mathematical language to describe and classify a range of 2D shapes, 3D objects and angles. Across the school children should develop their skills further in angles and movement.

Information handling

- Across the school, most children gather and use information in a variety of ways. Almost all children at early level explain confidently how they match, sort and organise objects. At first level, most children discuss how to gather data using tally marks. They are developing their confidence in presenting information in bar graphs, tables, charts and diagrams. At second level, children use technology to display data simply and to record their analysis. They confidently discuss a range of ways of presenting information.

Attendance

- Overall school attendance is 93.8%, which is above the local authority and national average. Senior leaders monitor closely the attendance of a few children whose attendance is lower. Where required, senior leaders intervene appropriately. They work well with partners and parents to improve children's attendance. Staff provide effective targeted support for

children with low rates of attendance. They work well with parents and partners to identify and address barriers to children's attendance. This has led to an overall 2.1% increase in attendance across the school over the last four years. Senior leaders highlight that family holidays during term time contribute greatest to children's non-attendance.

Attainment over time

- Senior leaders and teachers track children's progress effectively over time in literacy and numeracy. This accurate data demonstrates clearly that the number of children achieving appropriate CfE attainment levels increases as they progress through the school. By the time they come to the end of P7, almost all children have gained appropriate CfE levels in reading and writing. Most children gain appropriate CfE levels in listening and talking and numeracy. Robust tracking data for this session indicates a predicted further increase in children's attainment in both literacy and numeracy. Staff's new approaches to numeracy has increased attainment for most children at all stages. Teachers now need to plan consistently lessons which meet children's individual needs more effectively and which offer all children appropriate levels of challenge in their learning. This will help improve attainment further across all curricular areas.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Senior leaders survey all children each year to establish what activities they would like the school to offer. They ensure that each year they provide a wide range of activities, events and clubs that support children well to develop their skills. For example, children are developing a range of sporting skills through their participation in karate, rugby and Gaelic football.
- Children develop their digital skills well. For example, they use green screen applications successfully to make films. Children are building their confidence in public speaking by recording videos of themselves speaking prior to presenting to their classmates. They develop and apply their digital skills in real life contexts. For example, when writing and recording their own commentary to recent sporting events.
- Children in the senior years develop their skills well when acting in leadership roles. Digital leaders help others to access digital technologies. Playground leaders support younger children to play in the playground. All children who serve on school committees show responsibility and respect to others when offering ideas to help improve the school. The school is beginning to explore how to develop children's awareness of the skills they require for the world of work.
- All staff recognise and celebrate children's achievements through assemblies, displays and digital platforms. Children are proud of their achievements and enjoy sharing them with others. Senior leaders should now consider how they track the skills children are developing through their personal achievements. This will support teachers to identify ways for children to apply their skills in other contexts.

Equity for all learners

- All staff have a good understanding of the socio-economic context of the school and local area. They ensure that cost is not a barrier to any child's participation in a club, trip or event. All children experience equitable access to the range of activities in the school. Parents are highly supportive of the school, including making donations to ensure children other than their

own can enjoy everything the school has to offer.

- Senior leaders use pupil equity funding (PEF) predominantly to fund additional teaching staff. This allows the school to increase the universal offer of support by reducing class sizes. This helps teachers and support staff to focus effectively on those children who require additional support. The increased staffing funded by PEF allows the deputy headteacher to focus more on supporting improvements in play-based approaches and literacy across the school. The deputy headteacher is helping staff to establish play-based approaches effectively in the early years. As a result, children in the early years are more motivated and engaged in their learning. The school's focus on literacy is increasing children's attainment across the school. Initial data shows the school is beginning to close the poverty related attainment gap. Senior leaders need to continue to monitor the effectiveness of interventions funded by PEF to build on this positive start.

Other relevant evidence

- All children receive their entitlement to two hours high-quality physical education each week.
- Children across the school learn Spanish and French progressively in line with the 1+2 approach to modern languages.
- Children across the school access well-resourced and welcoming classroom libraries. This is helping to promote children's reading for enjoyment.

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.