

Summarised inspection findings

Braehead Primary School

West Dunbartonshire Council

15 September 2026

Key contextual information

Braehead Primary School is a non-denominational primary school situated in the centre of Dumbarton, West Dunbartonshire. The school is led by a headteacher who is supported by an acting depute headteacher and a principal teacher. The headteacher took up post in an acting capacity before being appointed to the substantive role in June 2025. The acting depute headteacher has been in post for just over a year.

At the time of inspection, the school roll was 270 children organised across 11 classes. Forty per cent of children enrolled at the school live outwith the school catchment area. A minority of children require additional support with their learning. In September 2024, the majority of children lived in quintiles 2 and 3 of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. A few children lived in quintiles 1, 4 and 5. In September 2024, a minority of children in P6 and P7 were in receipt of free school meals. A few children have English as an additional language.

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	
- Staff and children have developed very effectively a nurturing ethos based on the school values of ‘honesty’, ‘kindness’, ‘inclusion’, ‘equality’ and ‘respect’. Children confidently talk about children’s rights and how these are applied in daily life. They have worked together to create class charters to ensure a shared understanding of expectations within classes. Across the school, children behave well. Almost all children feel the school helps them to understand and respect other people. The majority of children feel others treat them fairly and with respect. - Children learn in a calm, attractive and supportive environment. Staff regularly evaluate classroom environments to help support the needs of all children effectively. For example, they have created areas within classrooms for children to use when they need some quiet time. Across the school, staff have created attractive displays of children’s work from across the curriculum. They have developed well areas outside classrooms to support children to lead their own learning, to work collaboratively in groups or to work independently. This approach is supporting children to take greater responsibility for their learning and to take pride in their work. - Senior leaders and teachers have developed an effective learning and teaching framework to support a clear and shared understanding of what high-quality learning and teaching looks like. Teachers are not yet consistently applying high quality learning and teaching approaches outlined in this framework. As a result, a minority of children are not making sufficient progress	

in their learning. Senior leaders recognise the importance of continuing to engage with teachers to improve the consistency of high-quality learning and teaching across the school.

- In almost all lessons, teachers provide clear instructions and explanations to children. Most teachers use questioning effectively to check for understanding and consolidate children's learning. A few teachers use questioning well to extend children's thinking and develop their higher-order thinking skills. Senior leaders should continue to support teachers to develop their questioning skills further. This should help enable children to have greater responsibility and increased ownership of their learning.
- In the majority of lessons, children experience learning that is well-matched to their learning needs. In a minority of lessons, the pace of learning needs to increase. Teachers should ensure a brisk and engaging pace throughout lesson input, tasks and activities. Senior leaders should ensure that children's learning time is maximised. They should work with staff to ensure that children's routines and transitions between activities cause minimal disruption to learning. This should support children to remain engaged in tasks and activities.
- In almost all lessons, teachers share the purpose of intended learning with children and how they can be successful. In a few lessons, teachers actively involve children in creating steps for success with teachers. Across the school, children receive helpful verbal and written feedback. The quality of written feedback is variable. In the best examples, children receive detailed feedback highlighting where they have been successful and what they need to do to improve. In a minority of lessons, children are involved in peer- or self-assessment. This is not consistent in all classes. Across the school, teachers support children in setting and reviewing targets in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Senior leaders and staff should now develop further their approach to feedback. They should ensure a consistency of approach linking intended learning, verbal feedback, written feedback and individual targets. This should support children to understand better what they have done well and what they need to do to improve.
- Teachers at early level are developing their understanding of play pedagogy. They have engaged in professional learning to support their practice. Moving forward, they should continue to develop their understanding of what effective play pedagogy looks like. They need to ensure a better balance of child-led, adult-initiated and adult-led play experiences for children. They should continue to review the learning environment to encourage curiosity, creativity and independence. Senior leaders should support teachers to develop further their role in observing, facilitating and extending play. This should help them to ensure all learning experiences are developmentally appropriate, engaging and allow children to develop effectively their learning through play.
- Teachers use interactive whiteboards effectively to support the delivery of lessons and engage children in learning. Across the school, children use laptops well to support their learning. They use digital technologies to present their work, carry out research and create presentations. Children use web-based games to support their learning in numeracy and literacy. Older children develop coding skills. Children are developing a range of digital skills well and apply these independently. Teachers should now plan learning to ensure all children develop their digital skills progressively.
- Staff plan appropriate learning opportunities for children to learn outdoors. Children, for example, develop their mathematics skills through using the playground to learn about

compass bearings. Children across the school enhance their learning across the curriculum through educational excursions. Senior leaders and teachers should now ensure children experience outdoor learning more routinely and enable them to develop skills progressively.

- Children across the school are developing well their understanding of the skills for learning, life and work, known as 'The Braehead Dispositions'. In most lessons, teachers encourage children to articulate the skills they are developing. In most lessons, children engage well with learning through a range of individual, paired and group activities. In the best examples, teachers ensure these activities offer children personalisation and choice in learning. This is supporting most children to take greater ownership of learning.
- Senior leaders have recently introduced a useful whole school assessment calendar. Teachers use a variety of literacy and numeracy assessments to support their understanding of children's progress in these areas. These assessments include ongoing, periodic, and high-quality assessments. Teachers are beginning to use assessment information to plan children's learning experiences. They moderate this information with colleagues in school, and with colleagues from the learning community. This is supporting well their professional judgement of achievement of a level in writing. Senior leaders and staff should now increase the scope of moderation activities and ensure assessment data is used more rigorously to plan learning. This should support further teachers' confidence and accuracy in making professional judgements about children's attainment. This should also help teachers ensure that learning experiences are matched better to children's needs.
- Senior leaders and teachers have worked collaboratively to review approaches to planning. They have developed clear guidance which sets out expectations for teachers' medium- and short-term planning. Teachers work well with stage partners to plan children's learning twice each term. They use local authority progression pathways to plan learning in literacy and numeracy. In the majority of classes, this planning reflects the needs of most children. However, this is not yet consistent across all classes. Teachers use the 'Braehead Overview' to plan a rolling three-year interdisciplinary learning programme. This approach is helping to ensure children's learning experiences are progressive and offer appropriate levels of challenge. Senior leaders should now ensure the Braehead Overview is used consistently across all classes. Children would now benefit from having a greater say in what and how they learn beyond learning across a few curricular areas. This should increase further children's engagement and motivation in learning.
- Senior leaders have recently introduced improved processes to monitor the progress of all children, including those who have barriers to learning or experience disadvantage. As a result, all staff have a strong understanding of the socio-economic context of the school community and beyond. The 'Stage on a Page' pupil profiles provide all staff with up-to-date information to support those children with barriers to learning. This is helping a few children manage their emotions better, improve their attendance and increase their engagement with learning.
- Senior leaders and teachers meet four times a year to discuss children's progress in literacy and numeracy. They use the information from these meetings well to track and monitor the progress of individuals, groups and cohorts of children. They plan a range of appropriate strategies and interventions to support children with barriers to learning. These interventions are ensuring gaps in learning are closing for the majority of children.

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 that need to be addressed as a matter for urgency.
- Following the inspection the education authority, working with the school, have taken forward areas for improvement in safeguarding which required urgent action. HM Inspectors have reviewed information relating to these areas for improvement. HM Inspectors are satisfied with the response taken by the education authority and do not require any further information.

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 in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics at the end of P1, P4 and P7 is good. However, this is not consistent across all other stages. Children's progress is too variable as they move through the school. Most children in P1 achieve expected Curriculum for Excellence levels in reading, writing, listening and talking and numeracy. Most children in P4 achieve expected levels in reading, and listening and talking, with a majority in numeracy and mathematics and writing. In P7, most children achieve expected levels in reading, listening and talking and numeracy. A majority achieve expected levels in writing.
- The majority of children who require additional support with their learning are making good progress towards their individual targets.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, the majority of children are making good progress from prior levels of attainment in literacy and English.

Listening and talking

- At early level, almost all children share ideas with a wider audience, for example, group or class. They talk clearly to others to share their feelings, ideas or thoughts. Children would benefit from more opportunities to make simple predictions about texts. At first level, almost all children recognise the differences between fact and opinion. They contribute to group and class discussions, engaging well with others for a range of purposes. At second level, most children plan and deliver presentations with relevant content and appropriate structure. They participate in class debates showing respect for the viewpoints of others and offering their own opinions. Across the school, a minority of children need further support to improve attentive listening and taking turns.

Reading

- At early level, most children hear and say the different single sounds made by letters. They read aloud familiar texts with attention to simple punctuation. They would benefit from developing a greater awareness of features of fiction and non-fiction texts. At first level, most children explain why they select texts for enjoyment, for example cover, author, title and blurb. They read aloud a familiar piece of text adding expression and showing understanding. Children would benefit from reading material from a wider range of authors. At second level, most children scan texts to find key information. They distinguish between fact and opinion and provide appropriate detail. A minority of children are not yet confident in responding to a range of questions including literal, inferential and evaluative questions.

Writing

- At early level, most children write words from left to right and attempt to spell familiar words correctly. They should be provided with greater opportunities to write for enjoyment in a range of play and imaginative contexts. At first level, the majority of children link sentences using common conjunctions, for example, and, but, so and because. They use their knowledge of the alphabet to locate words in a dictionary to help spell tricky or unfamiliar words. At second level, the majority of children apply their knowledge of spelling patterns, rules and strategies to spell most words correctly. They use a range of punctuation, for example, commas, apostrophes and exclamation marks accurately. At first and second levels children should develop the presentation of their work including writing consistently in a fluent and legible way.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, the majority of children are making good progress from prior levels of attainment in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, most children successfully add and subtract numbers within 10. They are developing their skills in solving simple missing number problems. They identify o'clock on an analogue clock correctly. They are less confident describing methods and units of measurement. At first level the majority of children use written methods to solve addition and subtraction calculations accurately. The majority of children at first level round numbers to 100. They solve three-digit addition and subtraction problems with confidence. They use a range of units to measure length and calculate area. At second level most children understand place value well. They explain the strategies they use to solve number problems. They are developing well their knowledge of fractions and percentages. At first and second levels, a majority of children would benefit from improving their accuracy and recall of multiplication tables.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, most children recognise and sort a range of two-dimensional shapes. They understand the language of position, including front and behind. At first level, most children identify right angles and are developing an increasing awareness of a range of angles. They understand directional language, compass points and 90° and 180° angles. At second level children have a confident knowledge of a range of angles including acute, obtuse and reflex. A majority of children at all levels need to improve their understanding of the properties of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects.

Information handling

- At early level, most children match objects based on size, colour and shape. They record simple data sets using tally charts. At first level, the majority of children answer questions accurately from bar graphs and pie charts about the difference between the most and least popular. At second level, most children are confident in using bar and line graphs to share information. Children at first and second levels should continue to develop further their information handling skills through using digital technology to support their learning.

Attainment over time

- Over time, children's attendance is consistently in line with the national average. A few children have an absence of 10% or more. Senior leaders follow local authority processes effectively to monitor children's attendance and lateness to school. They are proactive in understanding and addressing the reasons behind children's individual absences. These reasons are mainly due to

family holidays during term time, individual family circumstances and ill health. Senior leaders and staff work closely with parents and partners to improve the attendance of a few children. They support parents effectively to understand how attendance impacts on children's attainment and achievement. For example, they highlight the importance of good attendance regularly in newsletters and displays. All children attend school on a full-time basis and there are no exclusions on record.

- Senior leaders have recently developed a strategy to raise attainment in numeracy. This is beginning to impact positively on children's numeracy attainment in P2, P5 and P7. They now need to use attainment data to ensure this strategy is effective for all children. They need to develop a clear strategy to raise attainment in all aspects of literacy across the school. This should support them to improve outcomes for all children.
- Senior leaders and teachers gather a range of assessment information to support their professional judgements relating to individual children's attainment over time. They are beginning to use this information well to analyse and identify trends in the attainment of groups of children and specific primary stages. This information highlights significant fluctuations in children's attainment over time. As children progress through the school, their attainment is not maintained. Senior leaders recognise that the accuracy of teachers' professional judgements regarding the achievement of a level at all stages remain variable. They should continue to take steps to reduce this variability. Senior leaders are developing systems to support teachers' confidence and skill in understanding national standards. Moving forward, senior leaders and teachers should analyse more carefully the attainment of all children to ensure that appropriate and timely action is taken to address areas where attainment declines.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Senior leaders and staff celebrate children's achievements from both in and outwith the school during assemblies, newsletters and through the school's achievement board. Teachers nominate children for Pupil of the Week Awards and Learning Disposition Diplomas which house captains present at the weekly assemblies. Children feel motivated and included when their work is recognised and celebrated in this way. Parents are regularly encouraged to share the achievements of their children through an online portal. Children are rightly proud of these achievements and enjoy sharing their experiences. This is supporting children to be confident individuals and effective contributors.
- Children across the school participate in a range of sporting clubs, events and competitions. This is helping to develop their teamwork and resilience skills. A few children are developing well their leadership skills by participating in groups and committees and leading lunchtime clubs. These include, Pupil Leadership and House Teams, Children's Rights and Eco-Schools Committees and the Comic and Crochet Club. Senior leaders need to ensure all children have opportunities to develop a wider range of skills, including leadership. They should continue to develop their systems for tracking children's wider achievements. This should allow them to identify better children at risk of missing out and plan appropriate opportunities for them. Senior leaders and staff should also track the skills that children develop as a result of their wider achievements. This should help children to understand the skills for learning, life and work that they are developing.

Equity for all learners

- Senior leaders use local authority information to identify effectively children who have barriers to their learning, including social disadvantage. They use Pupil Equity Funding well to provide a

range of universal and targeted interventions for children across the school. This includes funding resources and additional staffing. Additional teachers work effectively with children to improve their learning and social and emotional wellbeing. Senior leaders and teachers track carefully the progress of cohorts of children and the impact all initiatives have on outcomes for children. As a result, the majority of children who have barriers to learning are making positive progress within targeted interventions and gaps in children's learning are closing. A few families have benefitted from a targeted family learning programme in the school. This has helped these children to improve their attendance and engagement in learning.

- Staff are mindful of the cost of the school day. They subsidise the costs of school trips and events for identified children. This ensures that these children are included and benefit from learning in different contexts. Moving forward, senior leaders and staff should work with parents to develop a cost of the school day statement. This should support them further to ensure all children have equity of experience and cost is not a barrier to participation.

Other relevant evidence

- Children across the school learn Spanish as part of the Scottish Government's '1 + 2' modern language programme. Older children also learn Gaelic. Children are not confident in their use of Spanish or Gaelic and find it difficult to recall their learning. Senior leaders should now ensure that all children receive learning in Spanish and older children in Gaelic more often to allow them to build effectively on their prior learning.
- All children benefit from at least two hours of physical education (PE) lessons each week. Senior leaders should now support teachers to ensure that all learning in PE is of high-quality. They should ensure that children build on their skills progressively.
- Teachers plan religious and moral education discretely and through learning across a few areas of the curriculum. Children learn about Christianity and world faiths. This is supporting them well to develop their understanding of religious diversity across the world. Senior leaders should now ensure that all children receive their entitlement to religious observance.
- The school submitted information relating to compliance with the 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.