

Summarised inspection findings

Lochpots Primary School

Aberdeenshire Council

16 September 2025

Key contextual information

Lochpots Primary School is a non-denominational school located in the town of Fraserburgh in Aberdeenshire. There are 162 children across seven mainstream classes. The headteacher has been in post for three years.

Most children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation areas 1 to 3. Approximately 81% of children require additional support for aspects of their learning and 30% have English as an additional language. The number of children registered for free school meals in P6 and P7 is above the national average.

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 across the school have warm, supportive and nurturing relationships with children. As a result, most children are happy and settled in class. Staff use positive praise and encouragement consistently and have clear expectations for children's behaviour. Almost all children reference the 'Lochpots Way' and explain how it helps them understand their role in creating a positive learning environment. On a few occasions, children require assistance to help them manage their emotions and behaviour. During these times, staff support children sensitively using a range of approaches to resolve issues in a calm and reassuring way. Learning environments such as the 'Sensory Room' and the 'Hive' provide nurturing and safe spaces that help children to regulate their behaviour and make positive choices. All staff show a commitment to children's wellbeing and are implementing a rights-based approach, for which they have achieved national accreditation. As a result, most children demonstrate respect when engaging with staff and peers.
- Most children are motivated and eager to participate in their learning. They work well within whole class lessons and when working cooperatively with partners and in groups. The majority of teachers use 'Learning Street Characters' to reference and promote the learning habits children should use to be successful. Staff are at the early stages of seeking children's views about their learning. They have introduced 'Wonder Walls' to provide opportunities for children to ask questions linked to their needs and interests. Teachers need to develop opportunities for children to lead their own learning and ensure tasks are at the right level of difficulty for all children. This will help increase children's motivation further, extend their learning and support them to develop as independent learners.
- Staff provide a range of learning through play experiences for younger children. Staff have engaged with professional development opportunities to develop their understanding of play pedagogy, with a focus on developing effective spaces and experiences. 'The Lochpots Play Promise' outlines the school's vision and commitment to implementing play pedagogy across the school. Staff should continue to fully engage with national guidance to develop further their understanding of play. They need to consider the role of teacher-initiated experiences to help

reinforce and extend learning opportunities, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Staff should ensure that play based approaches impact positively on children's progress.

- The majority of children across the school have regular access to digital technology, including laptops and tablets. In most classes, children use technology to consolidate learning. In the majority of classes, children use assistive technologies to support learning. Most teachers use electronic whiteboards effectively to support their teaching. In a few classes, children use digital technology well to develop skills in programming and coding. Staff should develop their own digital skills and use of innovative approaches in digital technology to enhance children's learning across the curriculum. This should help increase children's digital skills and engagement in learning.
- Staff are at the early stages of using the outdoor environment to enhance and extend learning. They have focused on identifying areas and spaces to utilise and developed these environments successfully to support outdoor learning. Teachers must now plan carefully to ensure children develop skills, in a progressive way, through outdoor learning.
- In almost all classes, teachers provide clear instructions and directions. The majority of children understand the purpose of their learning. Children are less confident in explaining how they know they will be successful. Children are beginning to review their own progress against set criteria in writing. This is helping them understand better what they have learned and how to improve. Staff should develop this approach to ensure children can clearly articulate the steps to success within all lessons across the curriculum.
- In most classes, staff make links with prior learning. Where open-ended questioning is used well, children's learning is enriched. Teachers should work collaboratively to develop a shared understanding of effective questioning that develops thinking skills and extends learning. The quality of written and oral feedback across the school is variable. Staff should develop a consistent approach to feedback, including the use of self and peer assessment. This approach should actively involve children in regular, meaningful discussions about their successes and next steps.
- The majority of teachers provide a variety of activities for children to learn in pairs and groups regularly. They should strengthen approaches to ensure all children experience appropriately challenging, well-paced learning activities, across all areas of the curriculum. To support consistency and improvement, the headteacher should work with children and staff to create and implement a learning and teaching policy. This needs to clearly identify the key features of highly-effective lessons.
- Teachers use a range of assessment information well to help support children's progress in literacy and numeracy. These include standardised and class-based assessments. The headteacher has created a whole school assessment calendar which details these assessments. Assessment procedures in writing are becoming more robust and reliable. Teachers need to develop their knowledge of the links between assessment, planning, learning and teaching across other areas of literacy and numeracy.
- All teachers plan for the long, medium and short-term using local authority, cluster and school progression planners. They use these pathways effectively to focus on the delivery of relevant experiences and outcomes for children. Teachers are at the early stages of ensuring children's interests are considered and planning opportunities for children to lead their learning. Within literacy and numeracy, teachers use national Benchmarks to determine children's progress towards achievement of a level. Teachers should now use national Benchmarks across all curriculum areas to assess children's progress. Most teachers plan well for children who

require support with their learning. Teachers have engaged in moderation activities within their own school. They now need to participate in moderation activities with colleagues in other schools. They need to develop further a shared understanding of children's progress within and across Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. This should ensure that professional judgements are even more robust and reliable.

- The headteacher and staff track and monitor children's attainment and progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. They meet termly to discuss the progress of individual children, groups and cohorts. This is beginning to help teachers use assessment data more effectively to track progress and identify appropriate interventions. The headteacher should ensure consistent recording of all tracking meetings. Staff are at the early stages of monitoring the impact of interventions. The headteacher and staff need to continue to ensure robust evaluation of all planned interventions. This should allow them to identify which interventions are having the greatest impact on raising the attainment of targeted children. The headteacher should continue to build staff confidence in using data effectively. They need to monitor children's learning across all curricular areas to check they are making the best possible progress in all aspects of their learning.

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

- Across the school, attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is satisfactory. Overall, the majority of children at P1, P4 and P7 attained expected CfE levels in literacy in 2024/25. Most children at P7, and the majority of children at P1 and P4 attained expected CfE levels in numeracy in 2024/25.
- The headteacher and teachers track and monitor closely the progress of children who require additional support. Most children with additional support needs are making satisfactory progress towards individual learning targets.

Attainment in 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 to their teacher and follow simple instructions. They now need to use their listening skills more consistently when others are talking. At first level, the majority of children share ideas in pairs and trios and work cooperatively in groups. They talk about texts they enjoy. They would benefit from further practice to develop their skills in asking and answering different types of questions. At second level, the majority of children listen well to instructions and respond to the ideas of others appropriately. Across all levels, children would benefit from more opportunities to develop and apply their listening and talking skills in new and varied contexts.

Reading

- At early level, the majority of children are developing their knowledge of letters and sounds to read simple words and sentences. They enjoy choosing stories and share their opinions on them. They need to develop further their reading skills through play contexts. At first level, the majority of children explain key features of texts such as the title, author, and illustrations. They read with accuracy using simple punctuation appropriately to support them. A minority of children need to improve expression when reading aloud. At second level, the majority of children read fluently with expression. They answer different types of questions about texts. They would benefit from further practice developing their skills in predicting, analysing and summarising texts.

Writing

- Teachers have adopted a whole school approach to support children's writing. Children at first and second level, are benefitting from this increased focus on writing and the quality of written work is improving. At early level, the majority of children form lowercase letters legibly. They need further support to form all letters correctly and to use a capital letter and

full stop in at least one sentence. They need further practice of writing independently, for example, through play experiences and discrete lessons. 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. Children should develop further their skills in reviewing and editing their own work. At second level, the majority of children make appropriate choices about the layout of their writing, including headings and bullet points. They organise their ideas in a logical way. They should now extend their use of a range of punctuation and develop further their use of subject specific vocabulary to enhance their writing. Across the school, children need to improve their handwriting and standards of presentation in their written work.

Numeracy and mathematics

- The majority of children are making satisfactory progress in numeracy and mathematics. They need to apply their skills in different contexts and revisit learning on a more regular basis.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, the majority of children identify and recognise numbers 0-20. They name accurately the days of the week and the months of the year in sequence. They are less confident when adding and subtracting mentally to 10. Most children require support to develop accuracy in writing numerals. The majority of children at first level, read, write and recite numbers to 1000. They know the number of seconds in a minute, minutes in an hour and hours in a day. The majority of children at second level, read and record time in both 12-hour and 24-hour notation. They solve accurately simple algebraic equations. Children at first and second level need to develop their understanding of fractions and division.

Shape, position and movement

- The majority of children at early level, recognise and describe common two-dimensional shapes (2D). They understand and correctly use the language of position and direction, including in front, behind, above, forwards and backwards. At first level, the majority of children identify simple 2D shapes and three-dimensional objects. They use mathematical language to describe accurately their properties. They are not yet able to describe or find right angles in the environment. The majority of children at second level, use mathematical language including acute, obtuse, straight and reflex to describe angles. They are unfamiliar with the diameter and radius within circles.

Information handling

- At early level, the majority of children use knowledge of shape and colour to match and sort items in a variety of different ways. The majority of children at first level ask and answer questions from a variety of data sets. At early and first level, children need to develop further their skills in collating and displaying data in a variety of ways, including the use of digital technology. At second level, the majority of children use the language of probability accurately to describe the likelihood of simple events occurring. They confidently identify ways to display data for different purposes, using digital technology. They should continue to develop their ability to determine the reliability of data.

Attainment over time

- Children's attendance is consistently in line with the national average. A few children, across all stages, have an absence of 10% or more. The headteacher effectively monitors attendance and late coming as part of the school's quality assurance activity. The headteacher is proactive in understanding and addressing the reasons behind children's individual absences. These reasons are wide and varied. For example, family holidays during term time, medical and personal reasons. Staff provide a breakfast club and work with cluster pupil support workers

to improve attendance rates. As a result of these interventions, children's attendance is improving. The headteacher communicates regularly with parents about the importance of good attendance and its impact on attainment. There are no children on part-time timetables.

- Termly attainment meetings enable the headteacher and staff to track attainment in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing for all children. Staff should now take steps to assess and record children's progress across the curriculum, over time. Attainment recorded over time has not been sufficiently robust or reliable. Teachers have recently improved their understanding and use of national Benchmarks. They now use these to achieve increasingly reliable professional judgements of children's attainment in literacy and numeracy. As a result, attainment data is now more accurate and reliable. The headteacher needs to ensure that staff continue to develop their skills in this area.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Staff recognise and celebrate children's successes and achievements in different ways, this includes on displays, in assemblies and in classes. Children, in the role of achievement officers, gather information about achievements on a weekly basis. They collate this information together into short videos to share in school and with parents. Children are extremely proud of having their achievements shared and celebrated in this way.
- Children across the school are developing citizenship skills well through worthwhile groups such as the pupil council, eco committee, digital champions and rights respecting committee. They are rightly proud of their valuable contributions to the life of the school. Older children benefit from leadership roles such as play leaders, buddies, house captains and vice captains. Through these roles they are improving their teamworking and organisational skills and becoming confident individuals. House captains and vice captains organise and run regular 'House Challenges'. Through these challenges children work collaboratively with others and develop a sense of belonging. A residential trip for children at P7 develops their skills in independence, resilience and communication. Children enjoy participating in different extra-curricular activities such as multi-sports, knitting and art and crafts.
- Individual, house awards and certificates provide incentives for children to engage in their learning and demonstrate behaviour which is in line with the 'Lochpots Way'. Staff are at the early stage of tracking children's wider achievements. They have identified that there is a need to monitor children's participation and achievements. They need to use this data to ensure that no child is missing out on opportunities to develop their skills. Staff should support children to identify and track the skills they are developing through these opportunities.

Equity for all learners

- The headteacher's rationale for Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) expenditure is based on analysis of data and wellbeing needs. She uses the majority of PEF well to provide additional staff. Additional staffing supports class-based interventions for individuals and groups in targeted areas such as reading, writing and wellbeing. This ensures all children are fully included in their class and ready to learn. The headteacher also uses PEF to fund trips for all children and additional reading resources. Recent tracking information indicates that these are beginning to improve outcomes for identified children. The headteacher recognises the need to track more rigorously the impact of PEF on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.
- The headteacher and staff have a strong awareness of the socio-economic background of children and their families. They know the children and their families well. They ensure barriers to learning, including poverty, are removed to allow children to succeed and achieve. They offer a uniform bank for families and free snacks for children. Staff work closely with

partners to secure additional funds or resources. This helps support families when they are most in need. The headteacher ensures cost is not a barrier to participation in educational trips.

Other relevant evidence

- All children learn French progressively as they move through the school. They experience different languages in other curricular areas across the school year. For example, children learn the Scots language of Doric and take part in the European Day of languages. This approach does not enable children to experience modern languages in line with national policy. The headteacher should review this so that all children experience their full entitlement to 1+2 languages programme.
- In all classes children have access to two hours of physical education. The headteacher has identified the need to introduce a progressive pathway for physical education to improve the quality of children's learning in this area.

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.