

Summarised inspection findings

Balmedie Primary School

Aberdeenshire Council

25 August 2026

Key contextual information

Balmedie Primary School is a large, non-denominational primary school serving the village of Balmedie and surrounding areas. The school is led by an acting headteacher. He has been in post since October 2025. He is supported by two substantive deputy headteachers. Both deputy headteachers have class teaching responsibilities.

At the time of inspection, the school roll was 386 children arranged across 14 classes. Almost all children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles 6 to 9. A few children in P6 and P7 are entitled to free school meals. There are 45% of children who are identified as having additional support needs (ASN).

1.3 Leadership of change	satisfactory
This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are: ■ developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community ■ strategic planning for continuous improvement ■ implementing improvement and change	

- Since assuming post in October 2025, the acting headteacher has worked closely with all members of the school community to exemplify the existing school values of ‘We aim high, we belong, we explore and play and we care and reach out’. As a result, all members of the school community share and understand the values. Within the next two years, the school leadership team should consider refreshing the school’s vision and values to ensure they align and support the school’s current improvement journey.
- The acting headteacher and staff demonstrate a very strong understanding of the school and its context. All staff know the children and families very well. The majority of parents believe the school is well led and speak positively of the recent changes implemented by the acting headteacher and staff. The acting headteacher is well respected by the staff team. They appreciate his approachability and his shared approach to school leadership. In a short space of time, he has strengthened and motivated the school team.
- The acting headteacher, supported well by the deputy headteachers, quickly and correctly identified the immediate needs of the school. Working closely with staff, parents and children, senior leaders quickly prioritised actions needed to improve children’s experiences. They lead the staff team well to engage in more rigorous self-evaluation to evaluate the work of the school. In doing so, they have supported staff to re-engage with national guidance documents such as How Good is our School? (4th Edition) as the basis for effective school improvement planning. As a result, senior leaders and staff now have a much clearer understanding of the school’s longer-term needs and of the strategic direction needed to improve outcomes for children.

- The acting headteacher now has an appropriate school improvement plan (SIP) in place. This plan outlines key priorities, actions and timeframes to address the immediate and pressing needs of the school. He is beginning to provide much needed direction to school improvement planning. The SIP focusses on raising attainment, ensuring children's wellbeing and increasing parental and learner engagement. Senior leaders and staff should reflect on the impact of their current improvement priorities. They should track rigorously the impact of their improvement actions on children's outcomes and use this information robustly to inform subsequent SIPs. This has the potential to support school leaders and staff to better evaluate the impact of improvements and help support a more sustained and focussed approach to school improvement planning.
- The acting headteacher worked effectively with staff to create a well-considered quality assurance calendar. This outlines a range of activities to evaluate the quality of children's learning experiences. Senior leaders observe learning in classes regularly and provide helpful and detailed feedback for teachers to improve their practice. Teachers appreciate the opportunity to observe learning in other classes. Although still in the early stages of implementation, these activities are beginning to provide staff with useful information to reflect upon what is working well and what needs to improve. Senior leaders and staff now need to work together to plan how they will use this information strategically to improve outcomes for children.
- The acting headteacher quickly and correctly introduced important structures and procedures to support improvement, including a whole school assessment calendar, a collegiate learning calendar and learning and teaching policy. He worked effectively with staff to establish a shared approach to the work of the school. This collegiate approach is an important first step in establishing ownership of and accountability for the school's improvement journey for all staff.
- Senior leaders have improved the professional learning offered to staff. Staff speak positively of their professional learning and of the positive impact upon children's experiences. For example, staff in the early primary stages engage very effectively with high-quality professional learning focused upon improving children's experience of learning through play. All staff now engage with professional learning and development review processes, linked to appropriate professional standards. They should now consider how their professional learning links to school improvement priorities. A next step is to build the capacity of staff to sustain effective school improvement.
- Senior leaders recognise the pressing need to widen leadership of improvement across the school community. Children do not yet experience sufficient nor impactful opportunities to shape the life and work of the school. Children are articulate, capable and proud of their school. They are very highly motivated to take a greater role in the leadership of the school. Senior leaders and staff must work with children to identify opportunities to enhance purposeful leadership by children. This has the potential to help children see how their views and opinions matter and make a difference in school.
- The current Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) plan was created by the previous headteacher. The acting headteacher discusses with the Parent Council how he uses this funding to support children who may be impacted by poverty. Senior leaders understand the need to work even more closely with parents to ensure a shared understanding of the school's improvement journey and the rationale for change. This shared endeavour should include agreement across

the school community about how the school uses PEF to close the poverty related attainment gap.

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

- Across the school, staff work very well with children to create a caring and nurturing ethos. As a result, there are positive and respectful relationships between staff and children, and amongst children. In most classes, children work with teachers and classmates to create class charters linked to children's rights and the school values. This helps children understand and agree how they should behave towards themselves and others. As a result, almost all children behave very well. Staff support well a few children who require additional help to manage their emotions and behaviour.
- Across the school, children learn in spacious classroom environments. Almost all teaching staff recently used an 'inclusive classroom framework' to audit their classroom physical and social environments, structures and routines. Most teachers have used this information well to adapt classroom areas to better support children. As a result, most children now learn in spaces which better meet their needs. For example, staff have developed supportive shared areas such as 'The Caterpillar Room', 'The Hive' and 'The Cloud Room' to support children who need a quieter place to work or a space to help them manage their emotions. A few children and staff use these areas increasingly well, with children now returning more quickly to class and ready to learn. As planned, senior leaders and staff should now work together to agree more consistent approaches to how classrooms and shared spaces are used to support learning and teaching.
- Across the school, most children engage positively with their learning. Children experience regular learning through individual, paired and group activities. However, in the majority of classes, learning is too often teacher led. As a result, most children are passive in their learning, and this leads to a few children disengaging with their learning and engaging in distracting low-level behaviour. In a few classes, children are becoming more involved in leading their own learning. For example, children in a few classes have opportunities to exercise choice in learning by selecting from a menu of learning activities in numeracy and mathematics. In almost all classes, children have opportunities to influence topic-based learning through sharing what they already know about a topic and what they would like to learn. Staff should now build upon this positive start by providing children with increased opportunities to lead and be more actively involved in their learning.
- Recently, senior leaders worked together with staff and children to begin to develop a shared understanding of high-quality learning and teaching. Senior leaders created a helpful learning and teaching document to help teachers plan more independent and engaging learning for children. This positive work is in the early stages of development and is yet to impact

significantly on most children's experiences in classes. Senior leaders should seek further opportunities for teachers to work together to agree consistent approaches to high quality learning and teaching.

- In most lessons, teachers provide clear explanations and direction for children. In the majority of lessons children explain clearly what they are learning and what they need to do to complete tasks assigned to them. Most teachers share with children how to be successful in their learning. In a few lessons, teachers skilfully involve children more in identifying what they need to do to be successful. In all classes, teachers use questioning effectively to check children's understanding of tasks. A few teachers use questioning very skilfully to develop children's higher order thinking skills. Teachers should now work together to ensure that all children become more skilled in recognising and assessing their own success and what they need to do to improve.
- In most classes, the pace of learning is too slow. In most classes, teachers need to provide increased challenge for those children who can achieve even more. Across all stages a significant minority of children experience activities which do not fully meet their needs well enough. To help all children make the best possible progress, teachers should ensure all children experience high-quality learning which provides appropriate pace and challenge.
- All staff regularly provide children with verbal feedback during lessons to support children's understanding of their progress. In the majority of lessons, staff use informal assessment strategies well to help assess children's learning. In most classes, teachers are beginning to use 'core' and 'specific' targets to help children assess their own learning. As teachers develop this approach further, they should consider how they ensure targets are less generic and more specific for individual children. Teachers do not yet provide all children with consistently high-quality written feedback on their work. Senior leaders and staff should develop agreed approaches to providing written feedback that helps children recognise their own progress and understand their next steps in learning.
- Teachers in the early stages of the school engage very well with professional learning to strengthen their understanding of play-based learning. They have used this learning effectively to create a play policy to support colleagues to provide purposeful play experiences for children. In most classes at the early stages, children benefit from well-considered, attractive environments designed to support children's curiosity and creativity. As teachers' understanding develops, they should provide children with a more effective blend of adult and child-initiated play-based learning. Staff use their observations of children's learning through play well to improve further the environment and identify next steps in learning for children.
- Almost all teachers use interactive whiteboards effectively to support whole class learning. Children use digital devices confidently to access web-based learning games, research tasks and to access resources to support learning. Older children develop their literacy skills well through regular access to digital technology. Children are developing their use of digital technology to support learning across the curriculum. For example, children use green screen technology to make entertaining and informative clips for 'Balmedie TV'. Moving forward, teachers should consider how they can use digital technology to help remove barriers to children's learning.
- All teachers use a range of assessment strategies to evaluate children's progress. However, staff's use of assessment strategies lacks consistency across stages. Senior leaders should now

review the regularity and scope of assessment approaches to ensure this provides robust data and evidence to better support teachers' professional judgements. Furthermore, they should develop high quality assessments which allow children to apply their knowledge and skills in different contexts.

- Teachers speak positively of the impact of moderation of writing activities on their classroom practice and are keen to engage with further moderation activities. Senior leaders should ensure they provide staff with opportunities to moderate standards in learning, teaching and achievement beyond the school. These activities should include other areas of the curriculum beyond writing. Senior leaders should also ensure staff have an increased focus on using national Benchmarks to strengthen the accuracy of their professional judgements of achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels.
- Teachers plan over different timescales, including short-, medium- and long-term. They utilise local authority and school pathways appropriately to plan learning. Teachers now need to ensure that planning ensures appropriate pace, progression and challenge across CfE levels. Teachers evaluate children's learning regularly. They now need to work together to ensure that their evaluations are based upon robust assessment information to better inform next steps in children's learning.
- Senior leaders meet with staff termly to track the progress of all children in literacy and numeracy. They should extend this approach to include all areas of the curriculum. Senior leaders and staff are strengthening these discussions to identify more quickly children who require support and more challenge. They use information gained during these discussions to plan more appropriate interventions and to review their impact. Senior leaders should review when these meetings are planned throughout the year to ensure children make the best possible progress.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Staff use local authority pathways increasingly confidently to plan children's learning experiences for the majority of curricular areas. This supports teachers to plan children's learning more progressively. Senior leaders should now ensure that all staff use progressive frameworks for all curriculum areas. They should review these frameworks to ensure appropriate breadth and coverage across the curriculum.
- Staff plan effectively for interdisciplinary learning. This is supporting children to make connections when learning across the curriculum. However, senior leaders and teachers do not yet have a strategic overview of learning across the curriculum which ensures all children receive their full entitlement to a broad general education. Senior leaders should work with staff to develop coherent curriculum programmes that ensures relevance and breadth across all areas of CfE.
- Most children across the school learn French as part of the national '1+2' languages policy. Children in P5 to P7 learn British Sign Language. However, children do not all receive learning in an additional language regularly enough. Senior leaders should review their current provision to ensure all children receive their full entitlement in line with national policy.
- All children benefit from learning weekly in physical education (PE) with a specialist teacher and class teacher. However, only a minority of children receive their entitlement to two hours of PE each week. Senior leaders and staff should review timetables to ensure all children receive their entitlement.
- Staff use the school grounds increasingly effectively to deliver learning activities in curricular areas such as numeracy and topic-based learning. Children also enjoy developing their orienteering skills through outdoor PE lessons. Staff used the wider local environment well to engage and motivate children during the recent 'Project Balmedie' local community topic. For example, younger children visited the local beach and learned how to care for the environment. As senior leaders and staff develop the curriculum further, they should consider how they include progressive and purposeful outdoor learning experiences.
- Children across the school learn about Christianity and other world religions, primarily in classes and school assemblies. They also learn about other world religions through celebrations and festivals. Children have regular access to religious observance through the school's partnership with the local church. Senior leaders and staff now need to consider how best to ensure all children experience more coherent and progressive learning in religious education as they move through the school.
- Staff, children and parents work well together to create a positive culture of reading across the school. All children have weekly access to welcoming and attractive central library areas providing a wide range of appropriate reading resources. Furthermore, teachers and children worked together to create inviting reading spaces within classrooms. This is helping to develop children's enjoyment and appreciation of reading.
- The school community recently celebrated the school's 50th anniversary. All children participated in a purposeful and very impactful whole school project about the town of Balmedie. Staff supported children's learning effectively through a range of well-planned activities including outdoor learning, digital technology and visits to and from the local

community. Children showcased their learning to parents and carers at a well-attended open afternoon. This strengthened very well children's understanding of and sense of connection to their local community, its history and its environment.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Staff work very well to sustain positive relationships with children and families. Parents are welcomed warmly into school, through recently introduced events such as 'SLTea and Blether' and open afternoons to share children's learning. The majority of parents speak positively of the changes introduced by the new acting headteacher to improve the school. As a result, most parents report that their child feels safe, respected and treated fairly. A minority of parents would appreciate greater opportunities to understand and share in the rationale for change as the school moves forward.
- The majority of parents appreciate the support and work of the Friends of Balmedie School (Parent Council). This includes raising funds to provide additional educational and social experiences for children. The acting headteacher keeps parents informed of the work of the Parent Council and encourages parents to participate in activities.
- Most parents appreciate the improved communication from school including regular newsletters and email updates. A few parents feel the school could improve day to day, informal communication. Teachers provide more regular updates on children's progress via online platforms and annual reports. Around 45% of parents would like to understand better how their child's progress is assessed. As planned, staff should continue to provide greater opportunities for parents and children to learn together. They should help parents understand how to support their child's learning at home.

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.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- Positive and trusting relationships underpin a nurturing and inclusive ethos across the school. This supports children's wellbeing effectively. Almost all children are polite, confident and proud of their school. The school value of 'we care' is evident in most interactions between adults and children, and amongst children. The majority of children feel safe in school. They feel that they are treated fairly and with respect and most feel that the school helps them understand and respect other people. As a result of these respectful relationships and a wide range of inclusive practices, such as soft starts, supportive routines and targeted wellbeing groups, most children feel calm and happy in their learning environment. This supports effectively their readiness to learn and ability to participate in school.
- Senior leaders, staff and children have recently revised the agreed approaches to supporting children's behaviour. This includes developing reflective thinking tools to support children; introducing playground zones; and creating calm spaces in school where children can manage their emotions. These approaches are helping children understand better how their behaviour impacts on themselves and others. Staff support children who require help to manage their emotions sensitively and effectively, helping children re-engage more quickly with their learning. They use helpful restorative strategies to support children's positive relationships. As planned, senior leaders, in partnership with children, should develop further their positive relationship policy. Most children demonstrate kind, safe and respectful behaviour. This supports a positive learning environment. There is a need to ensure all children have a clearer understanding of the behaviours and language that reflect the school value of 'we care'.
- Most children have a strong understanding of their rights and what this means for themselves and others. Children are rightly proud of their national accreditation for their work on advancing children's rights. Older children support very well positive playground experiences through their roles as Balmedie Friendshipippers, Buddies and Playground Leaders. They help younger children build positive relationships, resilience and conflict resolution skills. Older children develop their leadership skills well as they support younger children.
- Children talk confidently about how they keep themselves safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included. The majority of children feel that the school helps them to be active and provides opportunities for them to have regular exercise. This is supported through participation in extra-curricular clubs, such as basketball and hockey. Teachers develop well some aspects of children's mental, emotional and physical wellbeing, covering topics such as online safety, substance misuse, stress and anxiety. Children benefit from learning about healthy eating and how to measure and manage their emotions. However,

children do not benefit from a comprehensive and progressive health and wellbeing curriculum and there are significant gaps in children's learning. Senior leaders and staff must, at pace, develop a robust and well-considered health and wellbeing curriculum that provides children with progressive health and wellbeing experiences well-matched to children's needs. They must ensure regular opportunities for children to reflect on their health and wellbeing. Senior leaders and staff should track rigorously this data to identify children requiring further support and adapt children's experiences to meet their individual needs.

- Children benefit from well-planned, inclusive and structured transition experiences from primary to secondary school. Children build confidence through participating in a range of visits and induction activities. Staff plan activities well for children who require tailored approaches for transition including additional visits and strong partner agency working.
- All staff are well informed about child protection and safeguarding procedures and demonstrate a sound understanding of statutory requirements relating to wellbeing, equality and inclusion. Almost all teachers have engaged in relevant professional learning in areas including nurture, trauma informed practice, autism awareness, and relational approaches. Support staff have undertaken relevant training in, for example, de-escalation, trauma and allergies. As a result, the majority of children feel that staff care about them, know them well and understand the challenges they may be facing. Most children are clear about who they would speak to if they were upset or worried.
- Senior leaders and staff have worked quickly and well to support children more effectively who require additional support with their learning. Support staff work closely with teachers to provide targeted intervention to children who require this. Senior leaders and teachers provide a range of targeted support groups such as the motor skills group, lunch club, social skills group and targeted literacy and numeracy groups. Senior leaders and staff track carefully the progress of these children. Senior leaders and teachers now work collaboratively with children and parents to develop individual education plans for identified children with additional support needs. These are now reviewed more regularly to ensure that progress is monitored, and interventions are provided when required. Senior leaders and teachers develop appropriate and effective child's plans for children who require this. These plans include clear, measurable targets which help staff, children and parents track the child's progress. Senior leaders work effectively with partners and the local ASN forum to create individual additional support for learning pathways for identified children. As a result, children with individual support strategies are making positive progress. Moving forward, senior leaders and staff should work even more closely with children and parents to ensure their views are central to planning better outcomes for those who require additional support.
- Teachers are developing well their understanding of inclusion strategies to support children in their classes. Teachers regularly adapt spaces and environments throughout the school to better meet the needs of learners. As a result, most children are becoming more able to access their learning with increased independence. A few children experience a 'flexi-schooling' approach. A few children who require significant support for learning follow part-time timetables. These children are supported by effective individual planning. Senior leaders must now ensure that these plans are reviewed regularly in line with national guidance and include a clear plan to support children to return to full-time education.
- Senior leaders, teachers and children have recently reviewed the school's anti-bullying policy and procedures. Staff record and track effectively incidents of bullying behaviour. They

provide appropriate interventions, such as restorative conversations, behaviour charts and individual targets. As a result, the majority of children and parents believe that either bullying is dealt with appropriately or have never experienced it. A minority of children feel that bullying is not dealt with well. Senior leaders should now work with these children to understand how they could be better supported. Senior leaders should, as planned, work with children to create a child-friendly anti-bullying policy. The next step is to help children to better recognise bullying behaviour when they see it and gain the confidence to challenge it and the knowledge to report it.

- Children have some understanding of equality, acceptance and differences between themselves and others. As planned, senior leaders and teachers should now create a comprehensive, progressive program that develops children's knowledge of diversity. This is important so that they can better understand and challenge discrimination, racism and intolerance if they encounter this.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

weak

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

- Children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is weak. Across the school, attainment information is not yet consistent or accurate. Attainment is declining in most year groups. Senior leaders and staff must now ensure a clear focus on raising attainment across the school.
- Overall, children's attainment declines as they progress through the school. Attainment at first and second levels in reading, writing and numeracy is below the national and local averages. A minority of children are not making sustained progress over time.
- Teachers' professional judgements of attainment of a level in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics are not sufficiently robust. Senior leaders need to support teachers to engage more widely with moderation activities to support better their understanding of national standards.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, children's attainment in literacy and English is weak. Across the school, children are making satisfactory progress in listening and talking. Children at early level make good progress in reading and writing. Children's progress at first and second levels in reading and writing is weak, with a declining trend over time.

Listening and talking

- At early level, most children follow simple instructions. They take turns and listen and respond appropriately to others. At first level, the majority of children listen well to others and make an appropriate response. At second level, most children communicate clearly and confidently. Children describe techniques required to engage an audience, including eye contact, gesture and tone of voice. Children at first and second levels have a few opportunities to present their learning to peers and take part in debates. Staff should now ensure all children have regular opportunities to apply their listening and talking skills in a range of contexts.

Reading

- At early level, the majority of children recognise and read single sounds. They use what they have learned to attempt to read simple words. Children should now be supported to use blends to sound out unfamiliar words. At first and second levels, children talk with confidence about books and their reading preferences. Most children read aloud fluently, adding appropriate expression. At first level, children should now be supported to develop their understanding of inferential and evaluative questions about a variety of texts. At second level, children would

benefit from greater experience of questioning to demonstrate their understanding of a range of texts.

Writing

- Across the school, most children write for a variety of purposes including imaginative and functional pieces. Most children at early level use sounds to write simple words. They leave a space between words when writing. They need more practice to develop their independence in writing and be given opportunities to write in different ways. At first level, the majority of children link sentences using a range of conjunctions. They use simple sentence openers that state time and place. They need to be reminded to check their writing is accurate and makes sense in the context of the genre. At second level, most children use paragraphs to separate ideas. The majority of children write sentences with appropriate punctuation for their stage. Across all stages, teachers should now support children to consistently act on feedback to improve their writing.
- Across the school, most children should be encouraged to improve the presentation of their written work.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Attainment at first and second levels in numeracy and mathematics is weak. Children's attainment declines as they move through the school. However, attainment at early level is above the national average for number and mathematics.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, most children count accurately to 20 and count forwards and backwards using a number line. They add and subtract confidently within 10 and 20. At first level, children round accurately to 10 and 100 and are developing a good understanding of place value. Most children are confident in multiplication calculations but are less confident in division. They do not yet fully understand 12-hour time and need further support to develop their skills in using analogue clocks. At second level, most children round numbers to the nearest 100, 1000, and 10000. They use a range of strategies for multiplication and division and use these skills to solve multi-step problems. Most children identify and discuss equivalent forms of common fractions, decimal fractions, and percentages. They would benefit from more practice in calculating fractions and percentages of quantities.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, almost all children name, sort, and describe a range of common two-dimensional shapes. They recognise and repeat simple patterns. At first level, most children use correct mathematical language to describe the properties of common three-dimensional objects, including face, edge, and vertex. Most children name the four points of a compass. At second level, most children have a secure understanding of mathematical language such as acute, obtuse, straight, and reflex to describe, classify, and draw a range of angles. They are less confident in calculating missing angles. Almost all children confidently identify lines of symmetry but are unsure of the purpose and use of scale. For example, children need greater practice in using different scales to interpret floor plans and roadmaps.

Information handling

- Across the school, children record and interpret data in a variety of ways. At early level, children use pictograms and bar charts to record information. They are beginning to develop their understanding of tally marks. At first level, children extract key information and answer

questions from a range of graphs and tables. At second level, most children confidently interpret a range of data sources, including line graphs and pie charts. They would benefit from opportunities to use digital technology to create, analyse, and display data for a range of purposes through the use of tables, pie charts, and spreadsheets.

Attainment over time

- The school attendance figure is 96.2%. Overall, attendance is above the national average. The acting headteacher monitors attendance regularly and intervenes appropriately to support children and families who find attending school challenging. The acting headteacher works sensitively and supportively with families to address barriers to attendance.
- Senior leaders gather a wide range of attainment data in literacy and numeracy across all stages. Teachers are beginning to engage more meaningfully with whole school attainment data. Senior leaders should now support teachers to use data more effectively to plan appropriate next steps for children. There is a need to strengthen the school's approaches to tracking children's progress over time.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Staff and partner agencies provide a range of lunchtime and after school clubs, such as glee, construction and quiz clubs. These activities help to build children's confidence and social skills. Staff recognise, share and celebrate children's achievements, both inside and outside school, through house points, Balmedie TV, an online platform and at weekly assemblies.
- Senior leaders track children's participation in activities and events across the school and use this information appropriately to identify those who may be missing out. As planned, staff should now identify and track the skills children are developing from their achievements and link these to skills for learning, life and work. This should help children make clear links between their achievements, learning and progress.
- Children recently took part in a project about Balmedie. This included working with community groups such as Better Balmedie and the wildlife ranger. This supports children well to become effective contributors and responsible citizens in their school and local community. Children, staff and parents are keen to build on the success of this project and increase further community involvement in the life of the school.

Equity for all learners

- The Parent Council supports the life and work of the school well. They contribute funds to enhance all children's experiences, for example by funding resources for new entrants in P1 and funding gifts for P7 leavers.
- Senior leaders take appropriate action to ensure that cost is not a barrier to children's participation in school trips. Parents and families benefit from the pre-loved uniform scheme to address the cost of the school day. Senior leaders, with community groups, support families to access support through initiatives such as the local foodbank and national charities.
- The headteacher uses PEF to provide additional staffing and resources. This is at the early stages of supporting individual targeted children to improve their attainment in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Staff now need to measure and evaluate more effectively the impact of PEF interventions in closing identified gaps in children's attainment. They need to

demonstrate more clearly which supports are having the most positive impact on accelerating children's progress in attainment and achievement.

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.