

# Summarised inspection findings

**Dalreoch Primary School**

West Dunbartonshire Council

24 April 2018

## 1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement

very good

This indicator defines rigorous self-evaluation as a responsibility of all stakeholders. It highlights the importance of partnership approaches to self-evaluation and continuous improvement. It emphasises the need for strong leadership and robust analysis of a range of intelligence and data as essential features of effective continuous self-improvement. A key factor in this indicator is demonstrating the impact of self-evaluation in relation to outcomes for all learners. Their active participation in self-evaluation is therefore essential. The themes are:

- collaborative approaches to self-evaluation
- analysis and evaluation of intelligence and data
- ensuring impact on learners' successes and achievements

- Since taking up her post around three years ago, the headteacher has engaged very effectively with staff, parents, children and partners to reflect on the work of the school and shape school improvement. The headteacher has a very collaborative leadership style and this sets the tone for very good collaborative approaches to self-evaluation across the school. The school uses formal approaches, including questionnaires and focus groups, to gather views and also makes very good use of informal discussions with partners and stakeholders. The headteacher listens to all views and makes very good use of these to refine the work of the school further.
- The Parent Council is enthusiastic in supporting school improvement and makes good efforts to ensure that the wider parent body is kept up to date with key developments that are taking place through regular newsletters and social media. The Parent Council works closely with the school on priorities for improvement. Recently, after listening to a presentation by children on proposals for the use of the playground, the Parent Council helped to secure funds so these proposals could be taken forward.
- Throughout the school year, there are many meaningful opportunities for children to share their views about their school. These include regular meetings of school committees including the Pupil Council, the Eco group, Junior Road Safety Officers and Rights Respecting School committee. Children have a real voice in the school. They make their views known and identify how they can make improvements to enhance their school. At all stages, children are given responsibilities inside their classrooms. Those at P7 are very proud to act as leaders of their 'family groups' and provide support to younger children in their weekly family group time. Children discuss their learning with their teachers and reflect on what they are learning. They set targets to help them make progress in their learning. Increasingly, children engage in evaluating their work and identifying their own next steps in learning. There is some scope for this to be carried out more consistently across all classes.
- Throughout the school, the whole staff group are committed to, and engaged in, ongoing school improvement. Teachers work together collegiately. They support each other and work together very well. They observe each other's lessons, learn from each other and share good practice. All teachers willingly take a lead on a range of whole school developments and share the expertise they develop with each other. Teachers are improving their understanding of, and confidence in, using national benchmarks in numeracy and mathematics, literacy and English and health and wellbeing. This is helping them to be secure in their assessments of children's progress in their learning and children's ability to apply this learning in new contexts. The school should continue to build on this good practice and extend the use of benchmarks in other curriculum areas.

- Teachers work very effectively with colleagues in other schools within the local learning community to moderate standards in children's writing and continue to develop a shared understanding of achievement of a level. As a learning community, they have engaged in action research and have recently undertaken training on new approaches to teaching mathematics and modern languages. Staff readily engage with a very good range of Career-long Professional Learning (CLPL) opportunities closely linked with delivering school priorities. Many CLPL opportunities, including the probationer teachers' programme are provided by the local authority.
- The school has very good processes to monitor and track all children's attainment and their progress in learning. Staff make predictions on children's progress through curriculum levels in literacy and English, and numeracy and mathematics based on their professional judgements and knowledge of children's learning needs. The headteacher meets with class teachers regularly to discuss individual children and make decisions about how they can be supported to make progress. Children who are not making good progress are provided with very good programmes of support and targeted interventions, for example, by receiving support from learning assistants. Teaching staff and children use profile folders to record significant learning and make good use of Learning Journey books to record their learning experiences which are then shared with parents. Standardised assessments have been used diagnostically by staff to influence planning for individuals and cohorts of learners. Staff will use the Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA) this session and beyond in a diagnostic manner to identify gaps in learning and plan appropriate interventions.
- The school's approaches to self-evaluation are leading improvements for children. The school has made health and wellbeing a key priority which underpins the work of the school. This strong focus on health and wellbeing for all, including outdoor learning is having a positive impact of children's confidence and resilience. Specific approaches targeting children who have suffered loss or bereavement are supporting those children well. Children are keen to learn and are making progress in their learning. The school is now very well placed to further improve. It should continue to focus on providing consistent approaches to learning across the school and raise attainment further.

## 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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

## 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; and
- equity for all learners.

### Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- The school's approaches to raising attainment in literacy and English, and numeracy and mathematics are resulting in children making appropriate progress from their prior levels of attainment. There is a high percentage of children across all classes with additional support needs. This amounts to 60% of the school roll. Work carried out by inspectors indicates that the current professional judgements made at P1, P4 and P7 are reliable and informed. The school's data indicate that children with particular challenges arising from a range of barriers generally make sustained progress. Overall, the majority of children will attain appropriately at the end of levels.

### Attainment in literacy and English

- Children are making good progress from their previous levels of attainment in literacy and English. Last session, staff identified the need to improve children's writing across the school in order to raise attainment further. Teachers engaged in moderation activities with each other and with teachers in local schools. A new, active approach to writing is now being put in place in all classes and this is helping to develop children's writing skills. In observed lessons teachers made good use of differentiated approaches to support children's learning. Children who have difficulty with engagement in learning and literacy skills are supported to learn to read by reading to Lily, a golden retriever who is the school's 'Therapet'.

### Listening and Talking

- Across the school, children are making progress in developing and applying skills in listening and talking across their learning. At all stages, children are given a wide range of opportunities to develop their listening and talking skills in a progressive way. At the early level and first levels, children listen to their teachers well. They follow instructions, and most make good attempts to take turns when they talk in class and in groups. Overall, children working within second level listened well to each other. They were able to share their ideas and most could build on each other's contributions.

### Reading

- Overall, children are making good progress in developing their reading skills as they move through school. At the early level, children enjoy the active learning opportunities and are learning to recognise letter patterns, sounds and common words. They have many multi-sensory opportunities to explore sounds, letters and words and the majority are beginning to read aloud with understanding. Children working at first level are developing the skills of reading for understanding and are increasing their vocabulary and understanding of synonyms in their reading. Those at second level enthusiastically discuss the plot and characters in their

class novel. They recognise different genres and are aware of the differences between fact and fiction. They know how to use reference books and websites as a resource for their learning across the curriculum. A minority of children read at home for pleasure. The school should build on the good use of class novel studies to increase children's interest in reading for pleasure.

## **Writing**

- Children are given regular opportunities to write for a variety of purposes in different contexts. At early level, a majority of children are making good progress from their prior levels of learning and are moving from making meaningful marks to independent writing. Children at the first and second levels are developing their writing skills in a range of contexts in different curriculum areas. In jotters and on wall displays there are examples of a range of writing styles including reports, instructions, character profiles, recall and recount. Children at the second level increasingly use correct punctuation and spelling in their writing. Class discussions and shared writing approaches are having an impact and extend children's writing skills.

## **Numeracy and Mathematics**

- The school has identified mathematics and numeracy as an area for further development and has included this as an action within the improvement plan. Staff's professional development has been planned as part of on-going improvement. There are also plans in place to make more effective use of assessments to inform planning.

## **Number, Money and Measurement**

- Across the school, children are able to work confidently within an appropriate range of numbers. At the early level, most children are able to count forwards and backwards from a given number to 20 as well as confidently using a number of strategies to double numbers accurately. Children at the first level are able to describe the language of addition and subtraction and show good understanding of the commutative property of addition and multiplication. Children at the second level can describe appropriate units of measurement for a number of calculations. Children who were on track to achieve the second level can work effectively with fractions and are able to show accurately the equivalent forms of simple fractions. Some were able to describe the strategies they use to solve a variety of problems and understand that there can be different ways to determine answers.

## **Shape, Position and Movement**

- Across the school, almost all learners have a good knowledge of appropriate shapes and their properties. At the early level, children can name and describe the properties of a range of 2D shapes and use them to create pictures of parrots. At the first level, children linked their learning in Spanish to work on shape and were able to discuss the properties of corners, vertices and edges. The majority at this stage confidently discuss the properties of 2D shapes and some 3D objects. At the second level, children can describe the formula to calculate the area of 2D shapes and 3D objects. They are able to use co-ordinates to accurately create images and have explored some co-ordinates using ordnance survey maps.

## **Data Handling**

- Across early, first and second levels, children are given opportunities to organise and create graphic representations of work. Children are able to display the gathered information and display it in a manner appropriate to their stage. Children at the early level produce a daily pictorial graph detailing their lunch choices, and can use a pictorial graph to display class birthdays. Jotters give evidence of tally marks being used accurately to support data handling

activities. By the first level, children were able to describe the work undertaken in their experiments on evaporation which they displayed using a line graph.

### **Attainment over time**

- The school is unable to provide reliable professional judgement data which demonstrates improvement over time. However, improved staff confidence in making professional judgements has led to more robust and valid judgements regarding attainment. This is enhancing tracking and will continue to do so over time. The school have clear and appropriate procedures in place to track the progress of children. Formal Tracking meetings take place every term between the headteacher and class teacher. These focus on identifying the barriers to learning and planning appropriate interventions. Throughout the year there are further good opportunities for staff to respond appropriately to learners' needs through responsive meetings. Children who have additional support needs have their progress towards meeting their targets reviewed regularly.

### **Overall quality of learners' achievements**

- Children in Dalreoch Primary School are confident and responsible and contribute to the life of the school. There are a variety of opportunities for children to develop their leadership skills and participate in the wider life of the school. These include Playground Sports Leaders, Fair Trade Committee, Junior Road Safety Officers and Pupil Council. P7 children have weekly leadership development sessions which gives them opportunity to make a positive impact on the life of the school through roles such as improving displays and managing recycling. Children across all classes are involved in the creation of annual Class Charters which are based on the articles of UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child). The achievements of children are recognised. Children and staff can post a note of achievements in the Achievement Post-box. These are then celebrated at whole school assemblies. Children access their entitlement to two hours quality PE. There is a clear commitment to consulting children on school matters. The recent change to the school uniform was driven by the children. Throughout the year, the school, working in partnership with Active Schools, provides a number of after-school clubs to extend children's skills and interests. The focus on developing learning outdoors provides strong partnerships as well as giving children opportunities within an RSPB (Royal Society for the protection of Birds) initiative, Forest Schools work and the John Muir Award scheme. Children talk very positively about these experiences and are able to articulate the skills they are developing. Throughout the academic year, all children will participate in planned outdoor learning.

### **Equity for all**

- The school has a clear and committed focus on providing equity for all learners. Staff identify children who require support to overcome barriers to learning and plan appropriate interventions. For example, a programme which supports children who have experienced some form of loss is being led by one of the class teachers. Children involved are being supported to develop their emotional literacy. There are plans in place to develop this work further. A number of targeted interventions have been put in place in order to increase attainment and close the poverty related attainment gap.

## Explanation of terms of quality

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quality 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.