

Summarised inspection findings

Woodburn Primary School

Midlothian Council

23 April 2024

Key contextual information

Woodburn Primary school is in the town of Dalkeith in Midlothian. The Headteacher is supported by 3 deputy head teachers and 4 principal teachers. Woodburn has a roll of 650 children in the primary school and capacity for 100 children in the nursery. There are 25 classes in Woodburn school with at least 3 classes at every stage across the school. This has increased over the past few years from 18 classes. The roll is still increasing due to a number of factors, including new housing nearby. An extension is currently under construction to increase the potential number of classes to 31. The most up to date information shows that there are 66% children residing in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles 1-4. There are 40% of children with an identified additional support need. Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) of £188.000 principally funds staffing to support children's learning and wellbeing, particularly those living in the most disadvantaged circumstances. There are 31 class teachers in Woodburn primary school.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very 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 know children and their families very well. As a result, in almost all classes, they create a very positive learning environment to encourage and support learners to engage enthusiastically in their learning. Very strong nurturing relationships across the school are underpinned by a strong culture of learning, care and support aligned to the school vision and values. All teachers take a rights-based approach to their practice, putting the needs, aspirations and successes of children at the heart of their work.
- Almost all learners engage well in learning and enjoy a range of opportunities to work individually, in pairs and in small groups, interacting positively with each other and with the adults that support them. Almost all learners are motivated to work hard and do their best. Most children use a shared language of learning to describe what and how they are learning.
- All children experience learning in nurturing, inviting classrooms which are literacy and numeracy rich. Almost all children enjoy their learning, particularly when they are able to exercise choice about the contexts for learning. Almost all teachers offer children a range of well-planned and structured lessons and activities. In almost all lessons, teachers offer children explanations and instructions which are clear, and which enable them to progress through their tasks and activities.
- Staff are developing their approaches to outdoor learning and children regularly use the nearby woodland to engage in rich learning opportunities to develop their skills for life, learning and work. These include, for example, teamwork, communication and problem solving.

- In almost all class lessons, the pace of learning is appropriate for most children. A few children would benefit from greater levels of challenge in their learning to ensure that they are able to maximise their full potential and sustain their motivation. Increased opportunities for all children to lead learning more frequently in lessons would further support the development of children's responsibility and independence.
- A positive, supportive culture in classes encourages children to share their views about how successful they feel in lessons and how they are progressing. Almost all children understand the purpose of their learning which is shared by teachers in almost all classes. In almost all classes, teachers share with children what they need to do to be successful in lessons. Further development in this approach, including the sharing of good practice where this is working most effectively in lessons, would further support consistency across classes.
- The use of digital technology is well embedded across the school. All children have access to a one-to-one device which supports their learning and engagement. Most teachers use creative approaches to using digital technology to enhance the learning experiences of children in lessons. This important feature of lessons is developing children's digital skills as well as their skills in communication and personal responsibility.
- Staff integrate children's play experiences with learning well in Primary 1 and Primary 2 classes. They have developed stimulating learning spaces to provide opportunities for children to be creative, use their imagination and make links in their learning through hands-on, practical experiences. Staff support children to make clear links between their learning through play and the Woodburn Learning Skills. Staff are now extending their understanding of assessment of children's learning through observations of play.
- Most teachers use questioning to promote curiosity in children in the majority of classes, children are challenged in their thinking, engage more effectively and respond well. This area of practice should be further developed through sharing practice, further professional learning and practitioner enquiry, where appropriate. This will support children to develop further their high order thinking skills.
- Almost all teachers observe children closely, monitoring their learning to inform their understanding of children's progress and their future planning. Almost all teachers regularly provide appropriate interventions to support children's learning and progress where appropriate. This includes, for example, support from learning assistants and support for learning staff. Almost all teachers provide regular feedback to children on their short-term and long-term targets and how they are making progress. In the best examples, a few children can explain what their targets are and how they can overtake their targets. Teachers also regularly provide regular oral and written feedback for children. Digital feedback on children's work also enables most children to identify what they need to progress their learning. Senior leaders and class teachers should now consider how to consolidate this best practice and how to ensure consistency in the application of these approaches.
- All class teachers meet regularly with their stage partners to plan learning and teaching effectively. These plans are well focussed, progressive and manageable. When appropriate, children are able to contribute to aspects of planning including what and how they learn. Children would welcome further opportunities to shape their learning experiences in this way. Plans are reviewed with senior leaders and staff with responsibility for support for learning at timetabled regular meetings across the term.

- All class teachers regularly monitor and evaluate the progress of children. Robust discussions between teachers, senior leaders and staff with responsibility for support for learning take place four times per session. Senior leaders prioritise these meetings to ensure that all learners are on track to attain and achieve well. Interventions to support children with a range of identified needs and barriers to learning are put in place as a result of these important progress discussions. All staff use a range of summative assessments such as National Standardised Assessments (NSA) and the local authority Numeracy assessments (DNAs) to inform their professional judgements and regular tracking of progress.
- Stage partners work closely with each other to develop a shared understanding of standards. They engage in moderation activities with teachers from across all stages, from Woodburn Primary's associated school group and with the associated secondary school. This helps to ensure that their professional judgements about children's attainment levels are accurate and robust. Senior leaders prioritise professional development time for staff to undertake this whole school approach to moderation. This collaborative work supports professional judgements across the cluster and enhances the transition process when children transfer to secondary school.
- Children with specific needs, such as those who are care experienced and those experiencing socio-economic barriers to learning, are carefully tracked by staff and appropriate supports put in place to meet their needs.

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

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

very good

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

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

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Overall, attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is very good. At early level almost all children have achieved expected levels in listening and talking and most in reading, writing and numeracy. A few children at early level are exceeding nationally expected levels in literacy and numeracy. At first level, almost all children have achieved expected levels in listening and talking and most in reading and writing. A majority of children have achieved expected levels in numeracy. At second level, most children have achieved expected levels in listening and talking and writing and a majority in reading and numeracy. At first and second level, a minority are exceeding nationally expected levels in reading and numeracy and a few in writing and listening and talking. Children with additional support needs are making very good progress towards their individual targets.

Attainment in literacy and English

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

Listening and talking

- At early level, most children listen well to everyday instructions and prompts. They listen and respond to each other appropriately in a variety of contexts, including during play. At first level, most children apply verbal and non-verbal techniques, such as eye contact and body language, when communicating. At second level, most children communicate clearly and with expression in different contexts. They identify the difference between fact and opinion giving appropriate explanation.

Reading

- Across the school, all children read for pleasure. They access a range of books and reading material within the school library, class libraries or when using digital technology. They talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors. Most children at early level recognise individual sounds and use this knowledge to read simple words. They share thoughts and feelings about stories and other texts. They now need to read familiar texts aloud with attention to simple punctuation. At first level, most children read fluently and are able to discuss the differences between fiction and non-fiction texts confidently. A few children would benefit from further challenge in the texts that they are reading. Most children at second level understand literal, inferential, and evaluative questioning.

Writing

- At early level, most children produce detailed line drawings and, with support, attempt to write sentences leaving a space between words. They have opportunities to enjoy and explore interesting materials for writing, including through their play. Children should explore

further events and characters in stories and use what they learn to invent their own. Most children at first level organise information in a logical way. They include relevant information in their writing but need to improve their use of punctuation. At second level, most use paragraphs to structure their writing. They make appropriate choices about layout and presentation, including in digital texts, to engage the reader. Most children use notes effectively to develop their thinking and create new texts. Across the school, children should have opportunities to produce different types of writing on a regular basis. Increasingly, children talk more confidently about how reading different genres is improving their writing.

Numeracy and mathematics

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

Number, money and measure

- At early level, most children count on and backwards to 100. Most children recognise odd and even numbers. They would benefit from developing their understanding of estimation when measuring using non-standard units. At first level, children tell the time using half past, quarter to and quarter past. Most children successfully describe how they use instruments to measure heights and lengths. A minority of children need to revisit their understanding of how to order fractions according to size. At second level, most children competently calculate durations of journeys showing a link between speed, distance and time. Most can read and write using both 12- and 24-hour time and convert between these effectively. A minority of children at second level should be given more opportunities to apply their learning in new and unfamiliar contexts.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, most children recognise, describe and sort two dimensional (2D) shapes and basic three-dimensional (3D) objects. Almost all children use the language of position and direction effectively. They should now be given opportunities to create shapes showing one line of symmetry. At first level, most children effectively calculate missing angles in a right-angled triangle. Almost all children confidently identify the key properties of 3D shapes such as, edges and vertices. They need to develop their knowledge of the use of compass points. At second level, children identify, measure and draw a variety of angles well. They have a good understanding of how to locate points on a grid. A majority of children need to develop their knowledge of key features of a circle such as, diameter and circumference.

Information handling

- At early level, most children answer questions about simple graphs such as pictograms. At first level, most children understand how to gather information using tally marks. Most children understand the key features of simple graphs. Most children at early and first level would benefit from opportunities to create their own charts and displays. At second level, most children analyse data and draw conclusions about data shared in graphs and charts. At first and second level, most children should develop a better understanding of the mathematical vocabulary appropriate to describe the likelihood of events occurring.

Attainment over time

- Senior leaders maintain accurate data through effective systems and processes for checking children's progress over time in literacy and numeracy. Children's current attainment is higher than that of the local and national average in literacy. In numeracy, attainment is in line with local authority average and marginally below the national average. Data shows that attainment has improved over the last session and now exceeds pre-pandemic levels in both literacy and numeracy. Staff should now consider how they can begin to track attainment in other curricular areas.

- Senior leaders use all available data to deploy staff effectively to support targeted children requiring extra support. Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) is used predominantly to provide additional staffing. These staff ensure children receive the interventions they need to accelerate their progress. Senior leaders skilfully analyse their data over time to filter and track progress for different cohorts of learners. Senior leaders can demonstrate how they have accelerated the progress in closing the poverty related attainment gap.

Attendance

- Attendance is above the national average following the pandemic. Senior leaders have rigorous processes in place to monitor and track attendance. Senior leaders and key staff have responsibility for specific families and make contact promptly to support improving attendance. Senior leaders have created a helpful poster for families to support their understanding of the importance of good attendance.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Staff share and celebrate children's achievements across the school through displays, assemblies and online platforms. Staff encourage parents to share successes outside of school. Children enjoy receiving certificates in recognition of their achievements.
- Children develop their team-working skills in a range of sports activities such as football, netball, basketball and skiing. P5 and P7 children enjoy a residential experience which helps them develop skills for life, learning and work. A range of clubs including orchestra, dance and looking after school pets provide children with wider opportunities. These activities are developing a range of important skills for children including building confidence, communication and problem solving.
- Older children adopt leadership roles such as P7 Buddies, House Captains, Eco Committee and Rights Respecting School Steering Group which builds their confidence well. These are providing valuable opportunities for children to apply their skills as effective contributors and responsible citizens. School leaders and staff should now consider how best to further develop meaningful roles for all children, including those in the lower stages.
- Staff track children's achievements and participation in wider achievements. Additional staffing is used to support children who may be at risk of missing out. As planned, senior leaders and staff should now develop the existing tracking system to help children understand and track the skills they are developing through participation in these activities.

Equity for all learners

- Staff have a good understanding of children and their families and their socio-economic circumstances. They are fully aware of the potential barriers children may face to learning. Following consultation with parents and staff, PEF is being used effectively to provide additional staffing and planned targeted interventions across literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Staff are aware of the poverty related attainment gap and track children's progress to monitor the effectiveness of appropriate PEF funded interventions to ensure children make good progress in their learning. Tracking information is used to regularly evaluate the support being provided for children. This support is adapted where necessary in order to meet the needs of individuals.
- Staff work very effectively with external partners. Together they remove barriers for families, build capacity and share relevant information in order to provide appropriate support. As a result, this approach to multi agency working is having a positive impact on children and their families.

- A clear plan is in place to reduce the cost of the school day. This has been shared with the whole school community. Interventions are planned to ensure all aspects of school life are accessible to all. A breakfast club, school food bank, free snacks and school uniform are accessible to all children across the school which mitigate the cost of the school day. PEF funding has been allocated to support individuals who face financial barriers to enable them to access excursions and residential trips.

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.