

Summarised inspection findings

Woodlands Primary School

Angus Council

28 August 2018

Key contextual information

Woodlands Primary School is in the town of Carnoustie. The school building opened ten years ago. The headteacher has been in post for seven years and is supported by a deputy headteacher and acting principal teacher. The school roll is 231 and children are allocated in eight classes. Most children transfer to Carnoustie High School at the end of P7.

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

- Woodlands is a nurturing, inclusive school where staff work together successfully to ensure all children are well motivated, engaged and enjoy learning. The highly effective leadership team, led by the headteacher, have a clear vision for the school and give well-defined direction to staff. They involve stakeholders in the life and work of the school. Stakeholders are involved in a range of meaningful self-evaluation activities to support the school to continuously improve its work. Developing children's health and wellbeing underpins how the school moves forward its priorities for improvement very effectively. As a result almost all children are supported well and make very good progress in numeracy and literacy. Whole school programmes developing relaxation and mindfulness support children successfully to build their resilience for learning.
- The school has robust self-evaluation processes leading to improved outcomes for children. Staff understand that self-evaluation is essential to achieving school improvement. As a result of on-going self-evaluation staff engage in a wide range of professional learning activities to support them to take forward school improvement priorities very effectively. The school improvement plan clearly outlines improvements and is evaluated effectively adapting priorities and developments appropriately. A few staff engage in master level learning and professional enquiry, which they share very well with their colleagues. Links are made with other comparable schools to share and improve practice. Over the last few sessions key priorities for improvement have been developing children's resilience for learning and their conceptual understanding of numeracy and mathematics. As a result, almost all children are very well engaged and motivated to learn. Staff are implementing strategies to raise attainment in numeracy and mathematics very effectively.
- Staff undertake a range of leadership roles to support the work of the school. They engage well in professional dialogue, and moderation sessions, working closely with high school and cluster colleagues. The school representative for mathematics works at cluster level moderating approaches to assessment, and takes responsibility for sharing this work across the school. Cluster numeracy twilight sessions have been particularly helpful for staff in sharing practice, such as moderating the learning cycle in mathematics. As a result of this collaborative work staff are developing children's conceptual understanding of mathematics very well, and are improving how well children's needs are

being met. Staff are developing a shared understanding of standards. They plan to make use of the National Benchmark guidance more, and to develop further moderation activities to ensure consistency across the school.

- The school has recently refreshed its vision, values and aims as a result of children, staff and parent views being gathered. Children suggested that using the wellbeing indicators as the school's values would match how they are already developing their learning in health and wellbeing. As a result, school values are understood and applied in all classes. Children have choice in their learning through 'challenge by choice' and 'cold' and 'hot' assessment tasks. Most children identify their level of challenge in mathematics accurately. Across the school staff moderation is on-going to ensure assessment tasks are appropriately demanding, and that all children are developing skills to enable them to choose the level of challenge appropriately. Further consideration should be given to ensure all children are progressively developing skills for learning, life and work.
- School leaders carry out formal and informal monitoring and give helpful feedback to staff. They track and monitor attainment effectively in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing, and children's progress across all curriculum areas. Analysis of data and assessment information at regular staff attainment and planning meetings ensure that children are attaining and making expected progress. Children with additional support needs and those potentially at risk of missing out are well planned for and are making good progress. Staff engage in peer observations and are supportive of each other. Support staff are involved fully in the work and life of the school, and are deployed to raise attainment and support children's learning. They feel valued as part of the school team. Pupil Equity Funding is used to support learning appropriately.
- Children are confident, very articulate and give their opinions very well. Children enjoy a range of interesting learning experiences. They have opportunities to have their say through the pupil council, focus groups and during class observations. Across the school children talk about their progress in mathematics very well and know what they need to do to improve further. Children's views are gathered and shared with teachers and as a result changes to learning and teaching are made, for example assessment tasks have been adapted to aid children's understanding. Across the school, children are beginning to use the idea of the 'learning pit/pool' to support their learning. Children in P1 to P3 are developing well strategies to overcome being stuck with their work and to assist them in working their way out of the 'learning pool'. The school plans to improve further its approaches to learning, teaching and assessment in literacy. We would encourage staff to apply the same rigor they brought to improving children's learning in numeracy and mathematics. Children are involved in the life and work of the school and enjoy some good leadership opportunities. There is scope to involve all children more fully in leading their learning.
- Parents have opportunities to be part of the life and work of the school, such as number and reading partners at P4 and P5, helping with 'bikeability' training, and involvement in soft start. The parent council supports the school well and has funded items the children requested such as a stage in assembly hall, a gazebo in the quiet garden and benches for them to eat their packed lunches at. Information gathered through school surveys identifies that parents find curricular events and learning logs informative and supportive in providing them with information about their children's progress and learning.
- The school works well with a range of partners to benefit the children and the community, for example, developing mindfulness, and through learning about conservation and beach

cleaning. Children are very enthusiastic about this conservation work and there are plans to develop it further in the new session.

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.

3.2 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

Overall attainment in numeracy and literacy

- Overall, almost all children are making very good progress from their prior levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy. The headteacher and depute headteacher rigorously track children's progress. As a result of thorough tracking and monitoring of children's progress, gaps are being identified and addressed in children's learning to maximise opportunities to raise attainment.
- School data on attainment is gathered through professional judgement and supported by a range of standardised assessment. In literacy and numeracy, almost all children achieve appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels by the end of P1, P4 and P7. A few children at each stage exceed national levels and additional challenge is planned for them.
- Staff professional development and moderation activities with cluster colleagues support their professional judgement of children's progress in learning and achievement of a level. As staff confidence builds there is increased consistency in approaches to planning and evaluation of learning. Children talk confidently about their learning and their next steps.

Attainment in literacy

Listening and talking

- Overall, children benefit from a range of opportunities to develop and apply skills in listening and talking across their learning. At all stages, children listen well and respond to each other in a respectful and polite manner. Almost all children progress well and articulate their ideas clearly and confidently. At the early level, children ask and answer questions about texts to show understanding and to follow instructions related to their learning successfully. Across the first and second level, almost all children contribute their ideas and opinions confidently to one another and to adults at appropriate times. They express their views clearly and articulately. Teachers should now plan more structured planned opportunities in listening and talking to allow children to further develop confidence and independence when talking in groups.

Reading

- Across the school, a daily focus on reading is ensuring that all children are eager and enthusiastic to read, and almost all are attaining very well. Through a paired reading programme children in P3 are developing their confidence in reading aloud, and their skills to discuss and answer set questions about texts. Consideration should be given to how this can be extended to benefit the older children's learning more, for example, they could create

higher order questions to use with the younger children to enhance the current set questions they are provided with.

- At all stages children select texts for their personal reading and engage well with a range of stimulating texts across learning. They contribute to discussion about events, ideas and characters relevant to the texts. At the early level, almost all children are making very good progress in developing knowledge and application of phonics and identify sounds in their names confidently. At the first level, children read aloud familiar pieces of text with fluency, understanding and expression. They demonstrate their ability to ask and respond to literal and inferential questions, and identify key ideas within spoken texts. At the second level, children explain why they prefer particular authors and make relevant comments about structure, characterisation and setting. They provide thoughtful personal responses to chosen texts and justify these with supporting evidence.

Writing

- Overall, children are making good progress in their writing across a range of different contexts. At the early level, children are developing confidence to write purposefully, and with an appropriate level of independence. By the end of first level, a majority of children create a range of short and extended texts for a variety of purposes, and using appropriate punctuation. Children working at the end of the first level are positive about and motivated by writing imaginative pieces. At the second level, most children use appropriate style and format to convey information effectively in their chosen genre. Children would benefit from receiving quality feedback more consistently about what they do well in their writing and what they need to do to improve further. Across the school there is scope to provide children with more opportunities for independent writing.
- Children are motivated by the use of film making as a context for developing composition skills. Older children support younger children well in developing this learning. The school has comprehensive plans in place to review writing in the coming session including extending the scope of their moderation.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, almost all children are making very good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Current practice is providing children with very good opportunities to develop numeracy and mathematics skills across learning. The school has invested heavily in their priority to develop the language and skills of numeracy and mathematics. Almost all children feel challenged in their work and talk confidently about their learning. The 'challenge of choice' system with children identifying the level of difficulty to work at and identify their next steps is having a positive impact on their progress and understanding of mathematics. Attainment in numeracy and mathematics has shown a consistent increase and is predicted to continue to raise attainment. Class observations, sampling of children's work, and focus group discussions carried out by the inspection team support the school's predictions.
- Numeracy is developed across most areas of the curriculum. Children talk about the relevance of mathematics in relation to life and work in a confident and knowledgeable way. They understand how their work in numeracy and mathematics links to real-life applications.
- In all lessons observed learning intentions were clear and success criteria for each lesson discussed with children effectively. Across all stages children use mathematical language in an appropriate way to demonstrate understanding of concepts being learned. Children are

involved in their learning, however there is scope for them to lead their learning in a more meaningful way. They have the potential and are eager to take on this new challenge.

Number, money and measurement

- At the early level, children use their number skills confidently. They use practical resources and mental strategies to count numbers of objects. They count to 20 and back. They recognise some number patterns and count in twos, fives and tens. They add two numbers on a horizontal layout, adding and subtracting within 20. They partition numbers to give equal amounts and understand this is division, for example children count 15 teddy bears or counters and share them equally onto three paper plates accurately. They recognise this is called dividing. In the class café they use coins up to 10p to cost items and give change. At the first level, children are developing skills in ordering two and three digit numbers and in their challenge choice activity they identify place value of digits in three digit numbers. In worked examples, children demonstrate their understanding of a variety of different methods to solve addition and subtraction sums. They are beginning to develop skills in algebra. They find the missing number in calculations when $A=3$, $B=2$ and $C=1$. They are learning strategies to estimate length and check it using standard units of measure. They understand fractions and place simple fractions on a number line in correct order. At the second level, children recognise numbers to hundreds of thousands. They multiply hundreds, tens and units, and display confidence in finding factors of a number. They convert currency, length and weight correctly. Children involved in film making calculate running time of films and relate this to their work. They plan journeys using timetables with 12 hour and 24 hour times. They demonstrate ability to find fractions of a given quantity. They calculate equivalent fractions and find missing values.

Shape position and movement

- At the early level, children recognise circles, squares and cubes. They sort and describe various 2D shapes according to properties, such as shapes that roll, slide, and balance. Most recognise 3D objects. They categorise the shapes and objects according to surfaces, such as flat, round and straight. Children use directional language such as front, back, above, below, backwards and forwards correctly. At the second level, most children use specific mathematical vocabulary such as diagonal, radius and circumference to describe 3D objects. Children have sound knowledge of angles and recognise and describe acute, obtuse and reflex. They measure and draw angles and link this to compass points. At the first and second level, children understand scale in relation to maps or plans.

Information handling

- At the early and first level, children display information on simple bar graphs or tables. At the second level, children investigate most appropriate ways of collecting data and displaying this information to give accurate findings. This is linked to their activities on chance and probability. Most children at this level understand and use the vocabulary of chance correctly. This includes equal chance, percentage chance and fifty-fifty. This learning is linked to their project on money management. Children would benefit from more opportunities to use a wider range of media including digital tools to display and explain data.

Attainment over time

- Overall, almost all children are making very good progress from prior levels of attainment in numeracy and literacy. The school data shows that children's attainment has remained consistently high over time. The results are high in comparison with Angus Council's comparative data. The headteacher displays a sound awareness of how this data should be

used. Assessment information supports staff to ensure professional judgements agreed in tracking meetings, are ambitious, and that all children are making expected progress.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Woodlands Primary School offers children many wide-ranging opportunities for personal achievement. Individual achievement is displayed and celebrated at assemblies. Across the school, children experience a wide range of opportunities to develop confidence, and this enables them to develop further their personal interests. Children record their achievements in and out of school in their achievement folders. They develop leadership skills through a wide range of responsibilities in the school. Young leaders are involved in several committees and councils, for example, playground and digital leaders, junior librarians, Fairtrade, eco, sports, pupil and reading councils. Most children across the school are involved in these activity groups.
- Children develop their understanding of the four capacities through a range of enterprise opportunities where skills development is explicit and related to the world of work. A good example of this is the 'Glass from the Class' enterprise project. Parents and local community members come to school to talk about their work and the skills involved in their jobs. The school takes part in a careers fayre, and are building a database of parents' skills, talents and expertise to develop this work further.
- Children in P2 have opportunities to buddy nursery children as they prepare for transition to P1. Children in P6 participate in an Activities Week annually, using the local area. They develop skills of canoeing, climbing, team working and raft building. In P7 these skills are developed further in a residential trip where they work to achieve accreditation through the John Muir Award.
- A range of extra-curricular clubs and activities, some led by older children, are offered. These include football, netball, bowling, 'bikeability' and dance.

Equity for all learners

- All staff know all the children and families very well. Barriers to learning are quickly identified and intervention programmes put into place effectively. The school monitors children's progress very effectively, including those with potential barriers to learning. The caring, nurturing and inclusive ethos of the school supports all children and families and ensures all children achieve positive outcomes.

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.