

# Summarised inspection findings

**St Joseph's Primary School**

East Renfrewshire Council

4 March 2025

## Key contextual information

St Joseph's Primary School is a denominational school situated in the town of Busby in East Renfrewshire. At the time of the inspection there were 373 children on the school roll, across 14 classes. The headteacher's leadership team includes a deputy headteacher and two principal teachers. Approximately 17% of children receive additional support for their learning. More than half of all children reside in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data zone 10. Attendance is above the local authority and national average.

### 1.3 Leadership of change

**very good**

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

- The headteacher and staff recently worked very effectively with children, parents and carers to review the vision, values and aims of St Joseph's Primary School. The school's Gospel values of hope, compassion, justice and love underpin the school community's approaches to continuous improvement. Children and staff refer to the values regularly. The headteacher awards certificates at assembly to children who display these values through behaviours and actions. As a result, the values are embedded fully within the school and its wider community and children understand what the values mean in practice. The staff team's approach to promoting the use and understanding of school values has established a common and ambitious purpose. Senior leaders and staff work together very effectively to ensure that the interests of children are at the heart of all decisions. They have a relentless focus on improving outcomes for all children. The headteacher provides clear direction that children and staff understand and collaboratively work towards.
- Senior leaders agree school improvement plan priorities through consultation with children, parents and staff. They use a wide range of self-evaluation data to inform decision making. The current plan sets out appropriate priorities which reflect local and national initiatives. Senior leaders should continue to develop the leadership capacity in staff through providing guidance and direction to identify clearer and more specific impact statements. This will help ensure progress towards achieving success can be measured more accurately. As planned, senior leaders should develop approaches to encourage parents and carers to be more active participants in agreeing and evaluating school improvement priorities. This will provide staff with further helpful feedback on the effectiveness of interventions on outcomes for children.
- The headteacher and staff engage in an effective Professional Review and Development Process (PRD). Teachers and senior leaders use the General Teaching Council Standards to engage in helpful professional discussion. This provides teachers with ongoing opportunities to reflect on their practice and identify and engage in personal and professional learning. For example, all teachers have undertaken an Open University module on developing inclusive classrooms. As a result, children have access to enriched classroom environments that promote engagement in learning. Through the PRD process staff reflect carefully on their development needs including aspects of professional learning and align these with school

improvement aims. This supports very well, a targeted approach to professional learning which enhances staff capacity to take forward change and drive improvement within the school.

- Senior leaders and staff recognise the importance of monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. They have developed a strategic collegiate calendar which maps out very clearly activities staff will undertake to evaluate the quality of the work of the school. This includes sampling children's work, visiting classes and engaging with children in groups to discuss their learning. All teachers have undertaken practitioner enquiry to test and try new ideas linked to school improvement. Staff set a key question linked to a specific area they aim to improve. As part of the learning cycle model teachers work in trios to visit each other's classrooms. They test out if the planned change is delivering improved outcomes for children. This active and effective approach to school improvement is helping teachers to deepen their thinking and understanding of their practice.
- Senior leaders have created a strong culture of leadership across the school where staff feel empowered to initiate well informed change. They share a collective responsibility to improve outcomes for children. Staff enhance their professional learning from colleagues' involvement in local authority improvement groups. All teaching staff lead on key priorities linked to school improvement by engaging with educational research and driving improvement through working collaboratively. For example, teachers have led change and improvement for children to reflect successfully on how they learn. As a result, children are more accurately able to articulate their strengths in learning and identify their next steps to achieve further success.
- Pupil Support Assistants (PSAs) take on leadership roles across the school community. They work with colleagues and partners to plan and provide targeted support for identified children to enhance their motor skills. This promotes successfully children's access to the curriculum and enhances learning. All PSAs ensure that the playground is a safe and happy environment for children to play together. This positive culture of leadership results in highly motivated staff who understand clearly that they have individual and team responsibility for improving outcomes.
- Almost all parents are extremely positive about the school. Parents value the work and support provided by senior leaders and staff. They recognise the strong and visible leadership provided by the headteacher and senior leadership team. Senior leaders are very responsive to the views of parents and use these to inform change. For example, parents' views were used to inform the development of a useful homework help guide for families.
- There are very effective structures in place to support and develop pupil leadership across the school. All children are involved in leadership committees which include the pupil council, sports leaders and the Laudato Si Group. Children involved in these committees reflect effectively on the School Improvement Plan and agree appropriate key aims for their committee. They create an action plan, implement it and evaluate its progress. Children report back clearly about their work to the whole school through assemblies. Representatives from all pupil leadership groups also meet together with the headteacher at the school's Joint Committee to review progress. This is leading to meaningful improvements driven by children's voice. For example, as a result of the work of the sports committee, children now experience a greater range of sports within physical education lessons. These leadership opportunities help children to realise their rights and understand very well that their views are important and valued across the school community.
- Senior leaders and staff have a deep understanding of the social and economic context of the school community. Staff use this information very effectively to ensure they are well informed about challenges that may impact on individual children's learning, attainment or wellbeing.

Senior leaders consult parents, children and staff to determine the focus of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). Across the school, all staff have very high expectations of children and of each other. They ensure economic challenges do not present barriers to how well children engage, learn and achieve.

## 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

- All staff create a very nurturing and inclusive learning environment for all children. The ethos and culture of the school is underpinned strongly by Gospel values, nurture and children's rights. The shared values of hope, compassion, justice and love are integral to the St Joseph's community. Across the school, children are polite, confident and respectful. They are keen to share their learning and rightly are proud of their school and the part they play in it.
- Across the school, the climate for learning is calm and purposeful. Relationships between staff and children are very positive and promote children's learning and engagement. In all classes, staff have high expectations of behaviour based on Class Charters, which are informed by children's rights. Almost all children behave very well in school and in the playground. Skilled staff use a range of effective strategies to support a few children to remain focused on learning, when required.
- Almost all teachers provide clearly planned, motivating tasks and activities, which are matched effectively to children's needs. All teachers provide children with clear explanations and instructions. Almost all children work successfully in pairs and small groups. Staff support children through skilful interventions to extend their learning. For example, they work with groups or individuals to reinforce teaching points and provide children with clarity in their learning. Staff support children who require additional support with their learning very well using a range of targeted approaches. There is variability in the pace of learning in a minority of lessons which impacts on children's level of engagement. Teachers should now work together to ensure there is appropriate pace in all lessons. This should help enhance further children's purposeful engagement in their learning.
- In almost all lessons, teachers ask questions which require children to recall information, make links to prior learning and to check for understanding. In most lessons, teachers use effective strategies to ensure all children are actively involved in thinking and providing answers. For example, teachers use a 'no hands up approach' to ask questions. This helps ensure that all children are engaged in thinking which supports their learning.
- In almost all lessons, teachers support children effectively to understand what they are learning and how they will know if they have been successful. All teachers provide clear written and verbal feedback. This supports children to understand what they are doing well and how to improve.
- Staff have developed very effective approaches which support children to assess how well they are learning and to recall their prior learning. Children use these well to identify how much support they require in their next steps in learning. This can include working independently and providing support to others within the class. Through structured questions, children reflect on their learning across the curriculum. They record their achievements in a high-quality digital

profile as they progress through the school which is shared with parents. This approach is a significant strength of the school as it is developing children as independent and successful learners.

- Staff have worked together very effectively to develop play pedagogy in P1 and P2. They have a clear focus on developing children's learning and engagement. Staff use space very effectively inside and outside to provide a range of stimulating learning environments, linked to children's interests. Teachers use an appropriate balance of child-initiated activities, adult-initiated and adult-directed activities to support children's learning very successfully. Staff use observations regularly to assess and record children's learning. Staff are developing play pedagogy through enquiry tasks as children progress through the school. Children talk confidently about how enquiry tasks engage and motivate them in their learning. Senior leaders and staff should continue to evaluate this approach. This should help ensure that teachers use their observations to plan for effective progression and challenge in learning.
- Across the school, teachers' innovative use of digital technologies is successfully enhancing children's learning. This session, staff are continuing to develop the creative use of digital technologies, including the use of artificial intelligence. Staff provide helpful workshops for parents to share approaches on how digital technology is used effectively to support children's learning. Teachers use a progressive framework for digital technology. This helps develop children's digital skills, critical thinking and creativity. For example, children at second level use coding to program devices as part of their work in technology. Children, in their role as digital leaders, support and enhance the development of digital technology. As a result, children's digital skills for learning are improving across the school.
- Staff implement a comprehensive programme for outdoor learning, which ensures progression in children's learning as they move through the school. They plan high-quality challenging activities within the school grounds and in a wooded area outwith the school. Children take part in both child-initiated and adult-supported activities as part of Muddy Movers and Off Grid. These activities support children successfully to develop a wide range of skills, including problem solving, motor skills, social skills and understanding risk.
- Staff are beginning to develop children's understanding of meta-skills and making clear links to the world of work. Children talk positively about the skills they have acquired through science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) activities, which provide them with a high level of challenge. As planned, the headteacher and staff should develop approaches to track the development of children's skills across the curriculum. This should help them to enhance children's progression further by building on prior learning.
- Teachers use a range of high-quality assessments well to assess children's progress in literacy and numeracy and to inform their planning. Senior leaders and staff track children's progress effectively in these areas. Teachers meet with the senior leadership team termly to track children's progress in literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders and teachers rigorously analyse data to identify areas for improvement. Together, they identify children who require targeted support with their learning, including children who are impacted negatively by personal and socio-economic circumstances. Teachers plan and provide effective targeted support and a range of worthwhile interventions to those children who have additional support needs. Staff use assessment information effectively to evaluate the impact of these interventions.
- All teachers value the opportunities they have to engage in moderation activity within the school, the cluster and across the local authority. Teachers use national Benchmarks very well to support their professional judgement of children's progress through Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels in literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders should continue to develop

approaches to moderation across all curricular areas to ensure progression and high attainment for all children.

- Teachers plan very effectively using CfE experiences and outcomes across all curricular areas. The school ensures depth and progression in children's learning through their pathways approach. They have a very strong and successful focus on children leading and planning their learning. Teachers use provocations very effectively to support children to identify their prior knowledge and stimulate higher order thinking skills. Children identify a range of questions. They then record their Big Questions in Big Books and on wall displays. Teachers use this information well to inform lessons and activities. As their work progresses, children identify further questions that they wish to explore. This increases levels of motivation and challenge for all children.



## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- All teachers plan very effectively using local authority and school developed progression pathways for all curricular areas. These pathways are linked to CfE experiences, outcomes and the national Benchmarks and help to ensure children's learning builds on prior knowledge. Teachers use learning pathways to plan collaboratively across curricular areas. They group CfE experiences and outcomes together to create relevant and meaningful focus areas. This includes STEM, social subjects and expressive arts. This has helped them to promote breadth and depth within children's learning.
- Teachers ensure learning pathways allow for flexibility, reflecting the needs and interests of children. The well resourced 'Room of Requirement' provides an exciting and innovative learning environment. This space supports children well to further develop their skills in enquiry-based learning. Staff have engaged successfully with parents and partners to develop and deliver masterclasses to all children. These support the progressive planning and teaching of life skills across P1 to P7 such as sewing, cooking, British Sign Language and knitting. As a result of this, children are developing well their skills for learning, life and work.
- Staff recognise the importance of children learning outdoors and have developed a progressive outdoor learning framework based around the development of children's skills. Children across the school regularly experience a well-balanced programme of outdoor learning both within the school grounds and wider community. Staff use outdoor learning to enhance children's learning through meaningful contexts. For example, children in P1 and P2 take part in Muddy Movers each week. This is supporting children well to learn and apply their problem-solving and teamworking skills in new contexts.
- Children, staff and parents demonstrate a commitment to improving the environment as part of Laudato Si Catholic Schools' Programme.' The Laudato Si pupil sub-committee, Stewards of the Earth, shared their action plan successfully with the whole school through assemblies. As a result, children and their families engaged in planned days of action to plant trees, vegetables and improve their school grounds. The Laudato Si pupil committee organised an interesting, focused week for all children to highlight the importance of caring for the environment. This has ensured that there is a strong commitment and determination to embed learning for sustainability across the curriculum.
- All children receive two hours of high-quality physical education each week. Teachers use the local authority progression pathway to plan learning in physical education. This is helping to ensure that children's learning is progressive.
- Children across all stages learn French. In all classes, teachers provide progressive lessons to develop children's knowledge of the French language. Pupils in P5-P7 also learn Mandarin which is taught by an external provider. There is a clear progression planned with the associated secondary for both languages.
- Children visit the school library each week and the local library once a term. This is supporting effectively the development of children's reading skills and their enjoyment of reading. The pupil library committee identified areas for improvement within the school library using self-evaluation processes linked to school improvement. As a result, the library now includes a more diverse range of books along with a dyslexia friendly book identifier. This is helping to ensure greater accessibility for all children.



## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Children and families benefit from family learning experiences within the school and as part of the cluster of schools. Staff refer to a family friendly charter which prioritises effective partnership working with families. Staff have engaged families in skills-based learning, supporting learners to build skills for life, learning and work in family learning sessions. These include opportunities for families to learn about digital online safety, STEM and positive parenting programmes. This is helping families to better understand how to keep their children safe and well.
- Parents enjoy regular opportunities to engage in the life of the school with their child. These include family Masses, parents' evenings and opportunities to learn along with children in the classroom setting. Parent helpers regularly contribute to the work of the school, such as supporting outdoor learning activities. This is helping children and families understand how their contributions build a stronger school community.
- The Parent Council are very supportive of the school. The headteacher consults the Parent Council on the school improvement plan and PEF allocation. Parent Council members meet regularly in the school and church hall. They share information about the work of the Parent Council with the wider community through the school website and digital platforms.

## 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

very good

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

- Staff and children have worked together very effectively to establish a caring school community. There is a warm and nurturing atmosphere throughout the school, which reflects well the school's Gospel values. As a result, children are proud of their school and have a strong sense of belonging.
- Children's wellbeing is at the heart of staff's work. Staff and partners have a very good understanding of the importance of wellbeing to a child's attainment, achievement and development. Staff are committed to developing the whole child. Staff work regularly with children to help them understand and reflect on different elements of their wellbeing. Consequently, children are very aware of the wellbeing indicators and what each means to them. Children talk confidently, for example, about the importance and benefits of being safe and of respecting others.
- All children engage regularly in self-evaluation activities and other work to help them identify strengths and challenges relating to their wellbeing. Staff's approaches to supporting children's mental wellbeing are an important strength of the school. Children complete the 'My World Triangle' evaluation tool, resilience questionnaires and daily emotional check-ins. This is supporting children to be more confident, independent and resilient. Staff also use this information to plan and implement interventions which support effectively children. For example, identified children have benefited from successful approaches to enhance their mental health through emotional regulation in the school's dedicated nurture room.
- Staff maintain records and effective evaluations of interventions for individual children to support their further planning. As a next step, senior leaders should consider how to maintain a strategic overview of all children's wellbeing. This should help further understand trends and patterns in children's wellbeing over time and inform future planning.
- Staff have embedded a 'three named adults' approach across the school. Children have identified three trusted adults within their school community whom they can approach with news or concerns. As a result, almost all children feel that they have someone to talk to if they are upset or worried. Almost all children feel safe in school. This approach is strengthening relationships further, empowering children to share worries and concerns and also providing opportunities for them to share their successes.
- Children benefit from a relevant and well-planned health and wellbeing curriculum which is cohesive and progressive. Teachers make effective use of the health and wellbeing curriculum to contribute to whole school priorities on improving children's wellbeing. For example, learning about their rights and developing children's understanding about safety online. Staff have worked successfully to achieve a national recognition award linked to bereavement and loss.

Consequently, children are supported sensitively through this work. This is helping them to be better prepared to meet challenges in life.

- Staff work well with partners to support transitions. Staff work effectively with families to support children starting at St Joseph's Primary and there is a well-planned transition to secondary school. An extended transition beginning in P6 supports all children effectively to relieve possible concerns and prepare them well for secondary school.
- Staff fulfil their statutory duties very well. They identify the needs of children requiring additional support at an early stage and provide robustly planned and targeted supports and interventions. Staff review these approaches thoroughly to ensure that identified children make enhanced progress. Staff have a relentless focus to ensure that they are getting it right for every child. They create profiles to support children with an additional support need which are bespoke, effective and reviewed regularly. As a result, children with identified additional support needs make very good progress in their learning. Staff ensure that the principles of inclusion underpin the work of the school. Staff should continue their work on developing fully inclusive classrooms.
- Staff identify and support children facing barriers to their learning, including those who are care experienced or speak English as an additional language. Children benefit from the staff's implementation of effective strategies developed through their engagement in professional learning. They support care experienced children well in line with 'The Promise'. These approaches support identified children to maintain positive attendance at school and make progress in their learning. Senior leaders should continue to explore ways to identify and support children who may benefit from such approaches. For example, by further enhancing children's awareness and understanding of what it means to be a young carer.
- Most children feel that their peers treat them with respect. Children's daily emotional check-ins with staff are effectively enabling staff to promptly identify, explore and resolve potential conflicts or incidents of bullying. As a result of positive relationships with staff, almost all children who have experienced bullying feel that the school deals well with this. The pupil council has recently produced a child-friendly version of the school's anti-bullying policy and shared this with their peers. Staff should build further on this refreshed policy to continue to explore definitions and actions around bullying with the school community.
- The school submitted information relating to compliance with the revised Nutritional Regulations 2020 and key duties as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007. The Health and Nutrition Inspector (HNI) discussed this information with relevant staff and children. In addition, the HNI examined documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole-school approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of children through food in school. A few areas for improvement have been agreed with education and the catering service. Aspects of good practice were identified in relation to food and health promotion in the school.
- Children across the school are developing their understanding of equality and diversity well. Almost all children agree that their school is helping them to understand and respect other people. Staff have worked with children to identify engaging ways to learn more about prejudice, discrimination and persecution and how this can be challenged. For example, through carefully chosen novel studies or projects relating to disability or race. Children have also been involved in selecting new texts for the school library to reflect better a diverse school population of different races, religions and cultures. These activities are increasing children's understanding of diversity and how to challenge injustice.

- Children also enjoy, and benefit from, opportunities to celebrate differences. For example, children present regularly to their peers at assemblies about neurodivergence or cultural differences. Children plan events which contribute to the school's inclusive ethos through the culture and languages committee. Senior leaders and staff ensure that all children are fully included in social events and play activities irrespective of their individual needs, through effective planning. Senior leaders ensure that the school's annual calendar of events take account of multi-faith celebrations. As a result, children learn more about each other, develop empathy and have the opportunity to have their own lives and backgrounds celebrated.

### 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

- Almost all children attained nationally expected CfE levels for reading, writing, listening and talking and numeracy in 2023/24. A majority of children in literacy and most children in numeracy exceed national expectations. Overall, children's attainment outcomes are consistently in line with or above local authority and national averages.
- Almost all children who receive additional support for their learning make very good progress against their individual targets for learning. Most children achieve nationally expected levels in literacy and almost all in numeracy.

#### Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall children's progress and attainment in literacy and English is very good

#### Listening and talking

- Almost all children at early level listen carefully to stories, recalling information and responding appropriately. They follow simple instructions very well and respond to questions with enthusiasm. They are building their confidence in talking about personal experiences. Almost all children at first level turn take, share and listen to the views of others. They make very good use of non-verbal techniques, such as eye contact and hand gestures when engaging with others. They should continue to extend their skills in class discussions and debates. Almost all children at second level build appropriately on the contribution of peers and show respect for the point of view of others. They identify the difference between fact and opinion with appropriate explanation. They will benefit from further opportunities to present ideas and information to a wide range of audiences.

#### Reading

- Almost all children working at early level read and say different sounds and letters with confidence. They use picture clues very well to make predictions and identify characters in stories. They are building their confidence in asking and answering questions about texts. Almost all children at first level decode unfamiliar words. They read a familiar text accurately with expression and confidence. They understand the difference between fact and opinion. They should continue to develop their understanding of literal, inferential and evaluative questions. Almost all children at second level explain their preferences for particular texts, genres and authors providing supporting detail. They understand and use reading strategies, such as skimming, scanning, and summarising. They should continue to increase their skills in identifying aspects of the writer's style, use of language and other features appropriate to genre. Children across the school develop their reading skills and reading for enjoyment through borrowing and enjoying books from the school and local library.

## Writing

- Almost all children at early level are developing well their legible letter formation in writing. They are building their confidence in writing simple sentences using capital letters and full stops. Almost all children at first level write regularly for a range of purposes, use common words accurately and select interesting vocabulary to engage the reader. They are developing their skills using a wider range of punctuation such as commas, exclamation marks and speech marks. Almost all children at second level develop and apply their writing skills through real-life, meaningful contexts. They demonstrate a clear understanding of the key features of different genres of writing, such as imaginative, creative and functional texts. They are building their understanding further of key features of specific genre including aspects of layout and presentation.

## Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall children's progress and attainment in numeracy and mathematics is very good.

## Number, money and measure

- Almost all children at early level successfully add numbers within 10. They are developing their mental agility and knowledge of number facts. Almost all children at first level accurately round numbers to 100. They calculate accurately simple fractions of whole numbers. They are developing their understanding of equivalent fractions. Almost all children at second level confidently compare costs and determine affordability within a given budget. They understand the relationship between common fractions, decimal fractions, and percentages. They should continue to apply their numeracy and mathematics skills across an increasing range of problem-solving contexts.

## Shape, position and movement

- Almost all children working at early level recognise and describe common two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. They understand the language of position, including in front and behind. Almost all children at first level accurately identify lines of symmetry within shapes. They are increasing their understanding of compass points and using words associated with angles to provide directions. Almost all children at second level confidently use mathematical language accurately to describe and classify angles. They are developing their knowledge of circles and complimentary and supplementary angles to calculate missing angles.

## Information handling

- Almost all children at early level link routines to events, for example on their daily visual timetable. They are developing skills in interpreting data. Almost all children at first level, understand simple bar graphs and charts and use them successfully to interpret key information. They would benefit from further opportunities to gather, sort and display data in real-life contexts. At second level, almost all children analyse and draw conclusions from a variety of sources, including pie charts. They are developing their skills in identifying changes and trends in data through analysing charts and line graphs. Children in P6 and P7 use effectively maths notebooks to record key mathematical concepts across all areas of maths.

## Attainment over time

- Overall, children's attainment has remained consistently strong over recent years. Teachers have engaged in a range of effective moderation activities in school, within cluster schools and across the local authority. They use well the national Benchmarks and a range of assessment data, including standardised data, to inform their judgments on children's progress and attainment. This has helped to ensure that teacher professional judgments in literacy and numeracy around the achievement of a CfE level are increasingly robust and accurate.



- Staff use establishment and local authority systems effectively to check and monitor the progress and attainment of all children. Senior leaders and staff are ambitious for all children and have a clear focus on raising the attainment in literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders and staff have evidence that demonstrates accurately that almost all children maintain consistently high standards of attainment as they progress through the school. Senior leaders and staff now need to develop approaches to tracking and monitoring children's progress across all curricular areas. This should help staff identify trends and gaps in children's learning across the curriculum and further enhance approaches to teachers' planning for children's learning.

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

- Across the school, there is a wide range of opportunities for children to develop their leadership skills and achieve personal success. All children are members of a pupil voice committee and make an authentic contribution to improving the school. For example, the dyslexia champions have worked to build awareness of dyslexia and identify ways this supports learners across classes. This is helping children understand that their contribution makes a positive difference to the school community and develops children as responsible citizens.
- Most children engage well in a range of clubs provided by school staff. This includes drama, homework, coding and multi-sports. Staff change these clubs termly in response to children's feedback and requests. Children proudly represent their school and achieve success at sports festivals and tournaments. They take responsibility for gathering evidence to support applications for accredited awards. For example, a national award for rights or the nationally recognised Pope Francis Faith Award. This is building children's resilience, sense of achievement and sense of community.
- Children's achievements are valued and celebrated through their own profiles, assemblies, in classes and on the school's social media. Staff track children's participation in all clubs and achievements both in school and at home. They use this data successfully to ensure that an increasing number of children benefit from these experiences. Staff recognise the need to link children's achievement to skills development. This should further support the effective planning of achievement opportunities for all children.

### **Equity for all learners**

- Senior leaders and staff have a deep understanding of the socio-economic context of the school and of the challenges faced by children and families. Children in the Pupil Equity Committee have worked effectively to raise awareness of costs associated with the school day. As a result, children across the school have an increased understanding of the right to an education regardless of circumstances. Staff have taken positive steps to reduce the cost of the school day including providing a preloved clothing bank, the provision of healthy snacks and access to a range of free clubs. The headteacher ensures that parents, staff and children are consulted on PEF spending. The headteacher has appropriately prioritised the use of PEF to ensure that financial challenges do not prevent any children from taking part in opportunities for learning and achievement. For example, staff provide a progressive programme of outdoor learning across the school year. As a result, children are developing problem solving skills, teamwork and a greater sense of inclusion.
- Almost all children maintain very high levels of attendance at school. Attendance has been consistently above national averages. Staff monitor children's attendance carefully and senior leaders support families sensitively. Children's positive attendance is supported effectively by staff's caring and nurturing approaches and engaging learning experiences. This motivates children to want to attend school.

- Senior leaders track and monitor the progress of all children, including those who have barriers to learning or experience disadvantage. Senior leaders and staff identify any gaps in learning and plan appropriate targeted interventions for children supported by PEF. There is clear evidence that these targeted interventions are having a positive impact on children's learning and closing identified gaps in attainment.

## Practice worth sharing more widely

### **Learner Agency**

Developing successful and independent learners through retrieval and metacognition approaches.

The effective approaches, which support children to assess how well they are learning and to recall their prior learning. This is effective in supporting how children independently assess how much support they require in their next steps in learning. Teachers support children well with this through structured questions, opportunities for children to reflect on their learning and use of individual digital profiles. These profiles are helpful for children to reflect on their learning as they progress through school.

- Children are supported to reflect on their prior learning and consider their next steps to success in their learning journey.
- Children are encouraged to ask questions about how they learn and use this awareness to plan and improve their learning.
- In collaboration with the teacher, children influence, direct and make choices about their own learning.
- This approach is helping children to become more successful and independent learners and have an authentic voice in planning the support and challenge they need to be successful learners.

## 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.

4 March 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

In January 2025, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited St Joseph's Primary School. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- The highly effective headteacher provides very strong leadership and direction to the work of the school. The headteacher is supported very well by the deputy headteacher and principal teachers. Together, with all staff, they are highly ambitious for all children.
- Children who are happy, enthusiastic, and confident. They are successful and independent learners who are achieving important skills for learning, life and work. They display the Gospel values of hope, compassion, justice and love as they learn and play together. Children are very proud of their school.
- Together, staff and children create a welcoming, nurturing, caring and inclusive ethos. This supports positive relationships and a strong sense of community. Children feel confident, secure and able to flourish as a result.
- All staff work very well together as a team. They engage effectively with professional learning, research and reflect regularly on its impact on their practice. As a result, high-quality learning and teaching is leading to very strong levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from East Renfrewshire Council.

- Continue to build on the highly effective practice in learning, teaching and assessment.
- As planned, continue to develop approaches to the tracking and monitoring of skills across the curriculum.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school \(4th edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

## Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for St Joseph's Primary School

Quality indicators	Evaluation
<b>Leadership of change</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Raising attainment and achievement</b>	<b>very good</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our school (4th edition) Appendix 3: The six-point scale</a>	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:

[St Joseph's Primary School | Inspection Report | Education Scotland](#)

### What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. East Renfrewshire Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Fraser Gillan  
HM Inspector