

Summarised inspection findings

Benarty Primary School

Fife Council

11 June 2024

Key contextual information

Benarty Primary School is located in the village of Lochore. It also serves the surrounding villages of Crosshill, Glenraig, and Ballingry. The school benefits from extensive grounds, play spaces and grass areas. The senior leadership team consists of the headteacher, who has been in post since January 2019, and three depute headteachers. At the time of inspection, the school roll was 284 children, organised across 12 mainstream classes and four additional support classes (ASC).

Across the school, 76% of children reside in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles 1 and 2 and 24% reside in deciles 3 and 4. Fifty-six percent of pupils are registered for free school meals, compared to 21% in the local authority and 20% nationally. Across the school, 45% of children have additional support needs.

Benarty Primary School Nursery Class was inspected by the Care Inspectorate within the past 18 months, therefore, the local authority and headteacher had the option to include the nursery class as part of this inspection. We have agreed with the local authority and school that the nursery class is not part of this inspection. The findings set out below are for the primary school stages.

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 provides highly-effective, strong and caring leadership. She has led the school very well through a period of significant change over the last few years. She is aspirational for all children and has a clear, ambitious vision for the school. She has secured the trust of staff and the wider school community and is very well respected by children, staff, parents and partners.
- Led very effectively by the headteacher, the school's vision, values and aims have been developed and agreed through consulting children, parents, staff and partners. They worked together well to create a vision that is relevant and meaningful for the school. The school values of ambition, success, perseverance, inclusion, respect and empowerment (ASPIRE) are displayed prominently in classrooms and around the school. Staff support children very well to explore the values frequently and meaningfully during assemblies, the 'Benarty Gatherings', and in class. This is helping children understand the importance of the school values and their relevance to learning and life. The values are very well embedded, underpinning very strong relationships and actions across the school.
- The headteacher creates a highly-successful culture of empowerment which builds capacity in the staff team, including the well-regarded senior leadership team. This embedded culture enables all staff to drive improvements and to improve outcomes for children and the school community. Senior leaders work very effectively together with their skills complementing each

other well. They have a clear strategic vision for the deployment of staff and their associated roles and responsibilities. This is impacting clearly and positively on the wellbeing and learning needs of children.

- Senior leaders have established highly-effective quality assurance approaches to ensure that all actions lead to improvements in children's experiences. They support and challenge staff thoroughly to self-evaluate in order to improve further children's wellbeing, progress and attainment. This includes them undertaking termly observations of classroom practice and analysing a substantial range of school data comprehensively. Staff review the impact of the school's work using 'How Good Is Our School? 4'.
- There are clear connections between self-evaluation, improvement planning and professional learning. The headteacher considers carefully and manages the pace of change skilfully. Senior leaders involve staff, children, parents and partners in the school improvement planning process and in agreeing priorities to take forward. They listen fully to everyone's views and demonstrate that they take account of stakeholder views. As a result, staff feel ownership of change and are clear about the rationale for change. Senior leaders ensure the school improvement plan is focused on improving outcomes for children and includes clear measures for success, based on rigorous self-evaluation. This session, senior leaders and staff have prioritised raising levels of attainment in numeracy, developing the curriculum to meet learning needs and digital learning. They have well-considered plans to achieve this through improving approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. Senior leaders and staff are now well-placed to streamline systems and processes to ensure that these are accessible and cohesive in allowing staff to further lead meaningful change across the school.
- Staff demonstrate a strong commitment to collegiality and teamwork. All staff are encouraged and empowered to embrace leadership opportunities in the school. Almost all staff, including support staff, undertake leadership roles which contribute well to school improvement, such as literacy, moderation and pupil committee groups. Senior leaders support all teachers to engage meaningfully with annual staff professional reviews. Teachers link their development plans effectively to the General Teaching Council for Scotland standards and the school improvement plan. Staff undertake ongoing professional learning, including visits to other schools, to learn from good practice in areas such as play, digital learning and numeracy. They share readily their learning with each other and support colleagues to implement change and improvements. Their engagement with professional learning and commitment to effective leadership of change is resulting in improved outcomes for all children.
- Children across the school have leadership opportunities as members of ASPIRE groups. These include pupil council, eco and children's rights steering groups. Most children feel their views are listened to and are confident to share their ideas with staff. Older children have the opportunity to become house captains, buddies and ambassadors. Children articulate how these leadership opportunities develop their confidence and decision-making skills. They are not yet able to explain how leadership opportunities help them meet all the curriculum capacities. Senior leaders should continue to increase leadership responsibilities for children at all stages. In doing so, children should take increased responsibility to evaluate, influence and lead continuous improvement.
- All staff have a clear understanding of the social, economic and cultural context of the school. The headteacher has a strategic plan for Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). She has allocated this funding effectively for additional staffing and staff professional development to support children with their wellbeing and learning. The headteacher consults with the Parent Council on the use of PEF. Senior leaders should continue to support staff to use a rigorous range of data to ensure that all children affected by socio-economic disadvantage make the best possible

progress and attain well. They should continue to use a range of data to inform strategic decision making and to evidence that the school is closing the poverty related attainment gap for all children.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

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

- Across the school, children experience a positive, calm and welcoming ethos. All adults in the school community develop very strong and nurturing relationships with children. In classes, children and staff demonstrate and model the school values through their daily interactions. They are proud of their school and their successes. Teachers are well-placed to develop further a shared understanding of children's rights in the class, building on the successful work of establishing impactful class charters.
- Staff have thought carefully about approaches and environments to support children's behaviour. Senior leaders plan regular professional learning for staff to improve their skills in managing the wide range of needs within each class. The local authority provides clear guidance and support through professional learning sessions, for example, by educational psychology services. As a result, almost all children are polite and respectful to other children and adults and are supportive towards their peers. Children are most motivated when teachers plan experiences that take account of children's interests and needs. A few children become disengaged with their learning when their needs are not met. Teachers manage this well with consistent responses and reminders of high expectations. Senior leaders provide valued support to staff to manage children's individual needs.
- Staff have agreed the key features of quality learning and teaching and this is leading to a more consistent approach for children. All teachers share the purpose of lessons to support children to understand how they can be successful in their learning. In almost all lessons, teacher's instructions and explanations are clear. In a few classes, children are involved in identifying how they will know they have completed a task successfully. Staff should be supported to involve children to co-create how they know they have been successful in their learning. At times, lessons are overly teacher led resulting in a few children being passive in their learning. Teachers should further explore ways to increase opportunities for children to be more active in their learning.
- All teachers use questioning to check children's understanding well. A few teachers use questioning to reinforce and extending children's learning. Staff should continue to work together to develop the use of questioning across the school. This should help to further develop children's higher-order thinking skills.
- Teachers, aided by skilful support staff, ensure that children are supported well when they require additional help in their learning. Staff can identify children who are facing additional challenges and almost all staff provide effective support to help children overcome barriers to learning. Moving forward, teachers should continue to work with senior leaders to ensure that all children experience a level of challenge consistent with their abilities. Providing children with more challenge should improve engagement and support them to make the best progress in their learning.

- Across the school, teachers use a range of digital technology effectively to support and enhance children's learning. Children use online support tools well to access the curriculum and have appropriate support as they learn. As planned, teachers should continue to develop children's digital skills to enrich learning across the curriculum.
- Children in P1 and P2 experience a range of opportunities to learn through play regularly. Staff have worked together to develop their understanding of play pedagogy effectively. They use this learning well to create a blend of adult-initiated and child-led learning. Alongside teacher-directed learning, this range of experiences supports children well to make progress across the curriculum. Careful planning of the experiences, spaces and interactions support children to make choices in their learning. Across the school, teachers should work together to share good practice and build on the success of play in the lower stages. This should help children continue to build progressively on their skills.
- Most teachers use verbal and written comments to provide children with encouragement and helpful feedback on their learning. In almost all classes, children are given opportunities to self- and peer-assess aspects of their work. Most children are developing their confidence to talk about their progress in learning. This is most effective in writing where teachers give individual feedback which highlights children's strengths and provides clear next steps. Teachers should continue to develop approaches to support children to identify and discuss clear and individual targets which are reviewed regularly with children across the curriculum.
- Teachers use a range of assessment information to monitor children's progress in literacy and numeracy. They use this assessment information effectively to identify gaps and target support for children in a timely manner. All staff collate summative assessment evidence to support teacher judgements. Standardised assessments and moderation activities at school and cluster level support these judgements. Senior leaders discuss and review children's progress with teachers through regular and planned professional dialogue and attainment meetings. As a result of this work, teachers are more confident in the accuracy of their own professional judgements of children's progress and achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence levels.
- Teachers plan children's learning over a range of timescales and across the curriculum. Children have a voice in planning aspects of learning contexts. They share with teachers what they already know and what they want to know more about at the start of each topic. Teachers plan and prepare literacy and numeracy lessons well. In these areas, teachers carefully consider groups of children to meet their individual needs. Teachers build on children's prior learning using the agreed lesson model and the local authority progression pathways to meet most children's needs. The staff team have developed curriculum overview planners to ensure appropriate coverage of all areas of the curriculum. Senior leaders track children's learning carefully. Teachers use manageable processes successfully to regularly monitor the progress of every child in literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and digital literacy. Teachers use the information gathered effectively to discuss and identify further support needed for groups and individuals and to plan next steps in learning. This is having a positive impact on closing poverty related attainment gaps.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Staff refreshed their curriculum rationale earlier this session. This resulted in learner pathways better reflecting the vision of 'our children, our school, our community, our future'.
- Teachers are empowered to plan learning and assessments for children across all curriculum areas using well-established local authority progression pathways across all curriculum areas. These pathways are designed well around the principles of curriculum design. Teachers should now consider how to plan opportunities for children to experience greater personalisation and choice through the curriculum.
- Staff plan learning which is linked across curriculum areas effectively by bundling experiences and outcomes together. They also use opportunities to link learning across different areas of the curriculum to offer life-long learning experiences for children. Children at all stages are developing their skills in literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing as well as digital skills across the curriculum very well. A next step will be for staff to develop a progressive skills framework. This should ensure that children develop a greater knowledge of how they apply key skills across all aspects of the curriculum.
- Staff plan outdoor learning experiences across the school using the local context of the school thoughtfully and meaningfully. Staff have developed an outdoor policy, taking account of learner views and national guidance and approach so that children's experiences are planned across the curriculum. This is enhanced through strong partnership working as a result of well-developed links with the wider community. For example, Lochore Meadows is widely used to help children explore nature and develop important skills such as gross motor skills, team building and sporting skills in water sports. This is increasing their understanding of the local environment. Teachers should now ensure that outdoor learning is planned progressively across the curriculum so that children are clear in how their experiences build on prior learning.
- Children experience their entitlement to two hours of high-quality physical education each week. They receive their entitlements to 1 + 2 languages provision by learning French and Spanish. Children take part in religious observance mainly through assembly time. Senior leaders are re-visiting their planning of religious education across the school to ensure children receive their full entitlement. They should continue to develop this programme in line with their plans to help children explore diversity.
- Children benefit from planned transitions into the school through the well-received transition from the nursery stage. Senior leaders protect time for staff to share learning and pastoral information. There is a well-established transition programme for children to transfer to secondary stage, with an earlier enhanced transition to meet individual learners' needs.
- Children at the early stages benefit from a well-appointed school library. Children across the school access a range of appropriate and quality texts available in classes. They value their input being sought in sourcing engaging and relevant texts to enhance their curriculum.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Parents and carers value the ways that staff are working with children to reflect the school values in all aspects of school life. They recognise and appreciate the openness of staff to work with parents as partners. Senior leaders are highly visible at the start and end of each day. Parents speak positively of how this affords them the opportunity to speak to staff. Parents are confident that all contact with staff will receive a response and concerns responded to with sensitivity.
- Senior leaders provide families with helpful updates on the life of the school through regular newsletters, social media updates and praise postcards. Learning Showcase events are well attended. Such events support parents to understand children's experiences in school and how they can support learning at home. Staff provide clear written communication about children's progress and parents are confident to approach their child's teacher for additional supporting information if required. Parents would find it helpful if there was a more consistent and unified approach to teachers' use of online learning platforms and homework.
- Parents are kept up to date with the work of the Parent Council and there is enthusiastic support for fundraising activities. Senior leaders consult with the Parent Council on school improvement priorities and PEF funding. They recognise that there is scope to work with parents further to develop school improvement priorities.

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

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 work well with children to embed the school values and have created calm and inclusive environments for learning. As a result, children feel that they have a safe and nurturing place to learn. All staff welcome children to school each day helping them to settle into class quickly knowing that they are valued members of the school community. Almost all children feel that their teachers help them to understand and respect others. As a result, children's interactions between peers and their teachers are very respectful.
- All children take part in the twice weekly 'Benarty Gatherings' where successes and achievements are recognised and celebrated. The focus of each gathering reflects school values and wellbeing indicators. Teachers use the language of wellbeing regularly in lessons. Children have a strong understanding of wellbeing indicators and are able to speak knowledgeably about how to look after themselves and others. For example, they express clearly ways that they can help themselves to stay safe when working online. Staff and children use sign language when taking part in the musical elements of gatherings to include all learners. Children are increasing their awareness of the needs of others as a result.
- Almost all children are able to identify confidently a trusted adult they would speak to if they had any worries or concerns. This helps them to feel safe and address the safety of others.
- Staff have responded to children's suggestions for other activity clubs. This has helped children feel that they are listened to by staff. Children enjoy outdoor learning and senior leaders acknowledge that there is scope for this to be developed further. Almost all children feel that they are encouraged to be active and healthy. They are keen to take part in the sports activities that teachers run.
- Staff ensure lunch menus and options are displayed in the dining hall so that children are able to see what will be available. These displays are helpful for all children, especially those who are at an early stage of developing their literacy and communication skills. Most children can discuss ways to make healthy food choices.
- 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 the school and the school meals provider.
- Staff have a clear understanding of their statutory duties in relation to children. Senior leaders identified the need to reduce exclusions and support for children at risk of exclusion

as a priority. Teachers have made changes to learning environments such as designated calm areas support children beginning to display dysregulated behaviours in class. Children are now able to make choices about when to access these spaces to support them to manage their emotions. This approach is helping children well to recognise the events that impact on their emotions and behaviours and to develop strategies that support them. Staff have been trained in intervention and de-escalation techniques to support regulation of behaviour. Staff confidence in applying these approaches is developing well. Senior leaders identify social and unstructured times are periods where children's behaviour can become dysregulated. Staff support children effectively to play well with each other and socialise during breaks. They use restorative approaches to support children to make good decisions regarding behaviour and interactions. Children in P7 have been trained as peer mentors and work with younger pupils during break times to support younger children. These approaches have contributed to improved relationships within peer groups and a reduction in the number of days lost to exclusion.

- Staff comply very well with national guidance in relation to attendance. Staff are fully aware of the importance of attendance and the positive impact this has on children's wellbeing and progress. Senior leaders effectively implement procedures to record, monitor and address identified attendance concerns. PEF funding has been allocated for a member of the support staff to liaise with parents and support children to attend. Senior leaders carefully monitor attendance and work very effectively with partners to sensitively support families and ensure appropriate supports are in place to encourage good attendance. They have implemented strategies such as a targeted collection arrangements which are leading to improved attendance for a few children. Senior leaders should continue to identify and monitor patterns of persistent lower attendance to provide targeted interventions and raise overall levels of attendance.
- Senior leaders record and monitor reports of bullying. Most children feel that bullying is dealt with well. A few children indicate that they do not always know what the outcome of reported incidents are. A helpful next step would be for senior leaders to consider how they communicate the outcome of reported incidents with children.
- Staff work well together to identify any children who require additional support. They identify a range of strategies that best support all identified needs. Staff have detailed and helpful guidance that include clear targets and appropriate interventions for each child. Teachers and support staff carefully plan how best to provide these supports for all curricular areas. Senior leaders discuss the progress of each child with class teachers at key points across the year. Targets and interventions are reviewed and amended as appropriate. Children benefit well from this planned and intensive support. Children discuss their targets and supports with their teachers. This helps children to have ownership of their learning.
- Partnership working to support children is well planned and careful consideration is given to the most appropriate interventions. Senior leaders have worked well together to develop positive relationships with parents. As a result, most parents feel that their child has the support they need to do well in school.
- Children are developing their understanding of relationships and diversity through their health and wellbeing curriculum. Children are able to describe ways to include people with disabilities. They would now benefit from learning more about different cultures and religions. Senior leaders have identified that a helpful next step would be to create a clear progression pathway for this aspect of the curriculum. Staff should continue to develop children's knowledge about equalities and inclusion through well-planned and progressive

opportunities. This will support children to feel able to recognise and challenge discrimination and intolerance confidently and knowledgably.

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

- Data for this session shows that a majority of children are on track to achieve expected levels of attainment in literacy and most children are on track in numeracy. A few children across the school are exceeding expected levels of attainment. The significant minority of children requiring additional support impact importantly on the school's overall attainment data. Taking account of this and the school's reliable data on individual children's progress it is evident that, overall, most children are making good progress in their learning. The majority of children who require additional support with their learning make good progress towards their individual targets. With additional challenge, there is potential for higher achieving children to make greater progress.

Attainment in literacy and English

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

Listening and talking

- At early level, most children can listen and respond to others appropriately and are able to follow simple instructions. They participate actively in songs and stories and can make simple predictions about text. At first level, the majority of children can identify the features of effective talking and listening such as making eye contact, expression and body language. At second level, most children are able to express their own views. Children value the opinions of others and build on these contributions during discussions. Across all stages, children would benefit from regular opportunities to apply their skills in listening and talking across the curriculum.

Reading

- At early level, most children use their knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns to sound out simple words. They enjoy hearing stories, exploring books in the classroom reading corner and discussing favourite stories and characters. At first level, most children read with growing fluency and expression. They know how to use the blurb and use their knowledge of authors and illustrators to select texts for enjoyment. They need to improve their skills in finding, selecting and using information, particularly in non-fiction texts. At second level, most children read using appropriate pace and tone. Children are able to discuss a range of authors and explain their preferences for particular texts. They would benefit from developing further their understanding of techniques used to influence the reader, for example, word choice and emotive language.

Writing

- At early level, most children can communicate ideas, messages and information verbally or in pictures. Most children are not able to form lower case letters accurately. At first level, the

majority of children use interesting vocabulary to engage the reader. They use their knowledge of the alphabet to locate words in dictionaries to support their spelling of unfamiliar words. They are less confident organising ideas into paragraphs. At second level, most children can write for a range of purposes and audiences. They review writing to ensure it makes sense. Children now need to write extended pieces more regularly and edit and update their writing, applying what they have learned from teacher feedback.

Numeracy and mathematics

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

Number, money and measure

- At early level, most children recall the number sequence forwards within 0-30 and the number sequence back from 20. They count on and back in ones to add and subtract. They are less confident sharing objects into equal smaller groups. At first level, most children recognise and write three-digit numbers and understand the link between a digit and its value. They tell the time using half-past, quarter past and quarter to the hour. They are not consistently accurate when calculating the change from a given amount. Most children at second level demonstrate increasingly accurate mental agility. They use well their strategies to check estimation. They need to develop further their ability to solve complex word problems.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, most children recognise and name simple two-dimensional (2D) shapes. They are not yet confident using the language of direction and position. Most children at first level identify, name and describe properties of 2D shapes and three-dimensional (3D) objects. Most recognise shapes and right angles in the environment. They require more practice in following routes using angles associated with direction. At second level, most children describe 3D objects and 2D shapes using mathematical vocabulary. They need to develop their knowledge of complementary and supplementary angles.

Information handling

- At early level, children are beginning to collect and organise objects for specific purposes. They should continue to develop confidence to record this information. At first level, most children create and interpret simple bar graphs. They use tally tables successfully to organise data. At second level, most children use a variety of different methods, including the use of digital technologies, to display and interpret data. At first and second levels, children now need to apply their skills in presenting and interpreting information to a wider range of contexts.

Attainment over time

- Senior leaders and staff use a robust tracking system very effectively to monitor the progress of both individual children and cohorts in literacy and numeracy over time. Overall, data shows that most children make expected progress as they move through the school. There is a dip in attainment at first curriculum for excellence level and this shows recovery as children progress through second level. A few children make very good progress across the school.
- Teachers and support staff provide a range of targeted interventions which have helped to raise children's attainment. These include, for example, a well-considered literacy intervention which substantially improved children's writing at first level. Senior leaders and teachers should continue with their relentless focus on children's attainment and progress across the school, particularly to ensure that all highly able learners are supported to be challenged in their learning.

- Senior leaders have significantly improved teachers' confidence in making sound judgments about children's achievement of a level. Senior leaders have supported this improvement through well-planned collegiate working and targeted professional learning. Senior leaders and staff have robust moderation processes in place and, as a result, attainment data is reliable.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Children's achievements in and out of school are valued, celebrated and recognised in a variety of ways. Children are increasing their self-esteem and confidence and developing skills such as teamwork as a result of their participation. Staff track children's achievements. The headteacher identifies children who are at risk of missing out by monitoring participation. Staff should now further develop this tracking system to include the identification of skills children are acquiring.
- Children are proud of the contribution they make to the life of the school. They increasingly demonstrate leadership skills through their participation in a range of ASPIRE groups and committees. Staff should continue to support all children understand the skills for learning, life and work as a result of their participation in these groups.

Equity for all learners

- Staff know the context of the school well and support children sensitively to ensure that they attain and achieve. Children who may experience socio-economic disadvantage are supported very well to attend and engage in all aspects of the life of the school. This includes a range of well-considered interventions funded through PEF to improve children's wellbeing, attendance and engagement so that they are better placed to learn. Senior leaders have allocated a significant portion of the PEF allocation to employ additional staffing to ensure that children can attend and engage in a supported and nurturing setting. There is evidence this is improving the attainment and achievement of children being supported through these initiatives.
- Children who are care experienced and those likely to be impacted by poverty are tracked carefully to ensure they achieve and attain appropriately. Senior leaders have used their rigorous tracking and monitoring data to target successful literacy and numeracy interventions. They do this where the majority of children being supported through initiatives are making good progress in their learning. Staff are well-placed to continue to ensure that all children affected by socio-economic disadvantage make the best possible progress and attain well.

Context

The Additional Support Classes (ASC) at Benarty Primary School provide personalised support for 44 children in four classes from P1 to P7. Each class comprises of children based full time at the ASC and children on split placements from schools within the West Fife area. All children have barriers to learning that require an enhanced level of support. These include social and communication difficulties, autism and attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder. Where appropriate, support may take place in mainstream classes. All children have regular reviews of their progress in keeping with local authority policy.

Leadership of change

- Senior leaders, teachers and support staff have developed a clear, consistent focus on child-centred learning and nurturing approaches. These approaches reflect clearly the vision and aims of the school. Staff have a strong focus on professional learning and have worked with a range of colleagues from partner school. They feel empowered to develop their understanding of a range of inclusive practices. These include highly effective communication with partner schools, the local authority Inclusive Practice Team and families. This approach ensures that children receive appropriate help and support when they need it.
- Staff support children well to understand the school's values in relation to their learning and real-life situations. They do this consistently by providing children with a structured and supportive learning environment which takes account of their age, stage and needs. Staff empower children, where possible, to engage with mainstream peers and take on leadership roles in activities that assist their peers where possible. For example, children participate in the ASPIRE group along with mainstream peers to ensure that the views of children within the ASC heard, valued and responded to. Where possible they are given opportunities to model school values. A few children provide support and act as buddies to more vulnerable peers in assemblies and outdoors. They undertake small tasks regularly in the ASC rooms and playground.
- Senior leaders plan continuous improvement through regular professional dialogue with teachers and a few observations of learning and teaching. They are clear about staff's key strengths and areas for development and provide further opportunities to improve teachers' professional development where required. Teachers welcome feedback on the quality of learning and teaching and are keen to further develop peer support with experienced colleagues and partners.

Learning, teaching and assessment

- Staff recognise children's rights through their learning and teaching approaches by regularly seeking their views on learning activities and supporting them to exercise choice safely. Approaches include encouraging helping attitudes, choosing from task options, preferred locations for learning and which materials they wish to work with.
- Teachers ensure that the learning environments in all classes are thoughtfully and clearly structured. They reflect on the needs and interests of children and help to settle and engage them in learning. In the majority of ASC lessons, teachers use approaches which ensure children understand key elements of their learning. These include sharing learning intentions and success criteria, quality questioning and reviews of their learning. Child-centred aspects include visual timetables, live learning walls, snack areas, personal target displays, play areas, a range of digital technology and low stimulus areas. Most staff use signing, a range of appropriate visual and concrete resources and play-centred activities to support children's understanding of tasks. Children with the most complex learning difficulties do not always

engage well with play-centred learning activities. Staff should review these activities to ensure that they support children with more complex additional support needs to engage more consistently with learning.

- Staff have had a key focus on developing effective approaches to tracking children's progress in learning. This has led to teachers having more robust and detailed evidence of children's progress. This is supporting teachers' and parents' understanding of children's progress more clearly. Staff have developed more detailed, incremental steps to further support children's progress in literacy and numeracy. As a next step, senior leaders plan to extend this approach across all curriculum areas.
- Staff carefully monitor and track the progress of children who are care experienced and support children and families who experience financial challenge. They work closely with partners to help children and families to overcome particular challenges.

Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

- Teachers and pupil support assistants support children to learn in a thoughtful and respectful way which takes account of their individual needs and rights. Resources and learning activities often reflect children's individual needs and personal interests.
- Senior leaders and staff ensure that plans to support children's wellbeing and progress are reviewed regularly and involve key partners, parents and children. Reviews focus clearly on solutions to any barriers to learning and attendance. As a result of personalised approaches and highly effective partnership working, children's attendance is improving overall. Most children are making good progress towards achieving targets set within support plans and child's plans. A few are making significant progress.
- Most staff are skilled in supporting children to self-regulate and focus on their learning. In most lessons, well-structured learning activities and routines, picture prompts, digital images and real objects of reference support children's understanding and help to minimise anxieties. Teachers and support staff are keen to further develop other contexts for learning to support children's social and life skills including learning outdoors, visits to areas of interest links with the local community.
- Personal support plans, prepared jointly with partners, support teachers to use strategies which de-escalate anxieties successfully. The learning environment and adjacent outdoor areas where accessible, offer a safe and supportive learning environment. Staff feel that more outdoor resources would further support learning outdoors.

Raising attainment and achievement

- Taking account of their additional support needs, most children are making good progress with their individual learning targets in communication and literacy and the majority in numeracy and mathematics and health and wellbeing. A few are making very good progress from their starting points.
- In literacy and communication, most children focus well and demonstrate some understanding of words and images. A few use technology to identify words and create their own text. Most older children use signs, books or other texts to find useful or interesting information. A few are able to read and write independently.
- In numeracy and mathematics, most children in the lower stages can listen to number rhymes and songs to develop their understanding of numbers 1-10. They use number blocks and coins to match up to £1. A few complete simple number matching or counting tasks independently. Older children are building their ability to count using concrete materials, visual aids and

number lines. Most children at P7 are able to demonstrate some understanding of basic fractions by dividing familiar objects into halves and quarters.

- Overall, most children, including those on part time placements, attend school regularly. The depute headteacher and staff work closely with the families of children who are not attending school and agree appropriate support with partner agencies to reengage children with school successfully.
- Children's personal achievements, including those shared by parents, are recognised through postcards in class and gold, silver and bronze certificates. These are presented at regular ASC assemblies. Staff encourage children increasingly to participate in school shows, parents' events and visits to places of interest including residential outdoor learning trips. Children would benefit from further opportunities to develop life skills through building on community links for outdoor education, visits outwith the community, digital literacy and sports.

Other information

Curriculum

- Staff have developed the curriculum to promote relevant, progressive planning for children working within the foundation and pre-early level milestones, early and first Level. The ASC curriculum now includes a range of meaningful and progressive skills. Planning takes account of the range of learning needs and allows for regular consolidation and practise of core skills. Staff recognise that they now need further develop robust approaches to tracking children's progress across other areas of the curriculum.
- Parents highly commend the quality of support that their children have received since joining the ASC. They feel that their children were very well supported when moving to Benarty ASC and settled quickly. Staff share information about children's progress along with helpful support strategies to support them at home and through termly learning showcases. Children enjoy attending the ASC and parents note significant progress in their learning. These improvements include, using words and communicating verbally, sharing and engaging with others and for a few, notable progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Parents have regular communication with teachers and support assistants and feel that the depute headteacher and all staff are always approachable.

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.