

Education & Families

VSE Support Visit Report

From:

Education and Families Manager

Date: 26th & 27th March 2026

Team Members:

Designation	Name
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Background

St. Andrew's Primary School is located in the Carrickstone area of Cumbernauld and currently has a roll of 195 pupils. The school is organised into 8 classes, one of which is a composite: P1, P2, P2/3, P3, P4, P5, P6 and P7. It forms part of the Our Lady's High School High School Cluster. Staffing includes a Head Teacher, 2 Principal Teachers (10.4FTE). The school's context reflects relatively low levels of socio-economic disadvantage, with only 1% of pupils living in SIMD Quintile 1, while the majority live in SIMD Quintiles 4 and 5 (73%). At the time of the SSR, 4% of pupils were entitled to Free School Meals and 4% to Clothing Grants, indicating low levels of material deprivation overall. 41% of pupils are identified as having an Additional Support Need. Attendance for session 2024/25 was 94.7%, which is above the North Lanarkshire primary average of 92.2%.

St. Andrew's Primary also includes a term-time nursery class with 46 children. The Head Teacher holds overall strategic leadership for both the school and the nursery. The nursery's most recent Care Inspectorate visit took place in April 2026. At this visit, the nursery was awarded 2 'Very Good' and 2 'Good'.

Themes of Support Visit

The last HMIE Inspection for St. Andrew’s Primary School was 2023. The nursery’s last Care Inspectorate report was published in April 2025. It was agreed with the Head Teacher, as part of the school’s planned improvement cycle, a VSE would support the school and nursery’s overall self-evaluation. The agreed focus was on Qis 2.3 and 3.2, and the nursery would continue to make use of their Action Plan created by the nursery, supported by the ELC Quality Team.

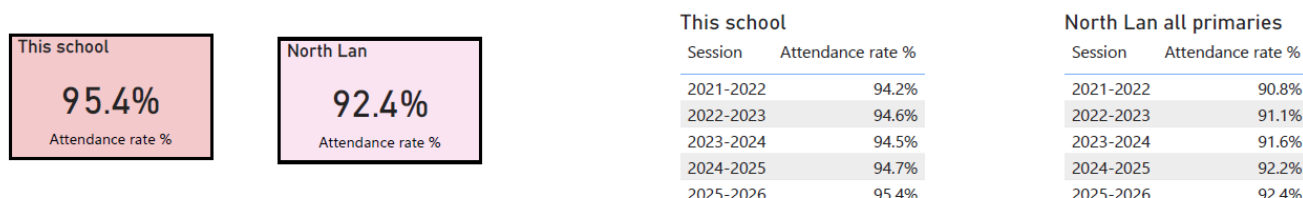
School Self-Evaluation

Quality Indicator	Self-Evaluation Grade	HMIE Grade *2023
2.3 Learning, teaching & assessment	Good	Satisfactory
3.2 Attainment and achievement	Good	Good

Attendance Over Time

Attendance has remained consistently high and continues to improve. Whole-school attendance increased from 94.2% in 2021 - 22 to 95.4% in 2025 - 26, remaining above local and national averages. Over the same period, both authorised and unauthorised absence rates have reduced, with the most recent figures (2025 - 26) showing 2.6% authorised and 2.1% unauthorised absence, both lower than local authority comparators.

Figure 1: St. Andrew’s Primary School – Attendance and Absence



Current Data Summary

Attainment at St Andrew’s Primary School, Cumbernauld shows a clear upward trend since session 2020 - 21.

Across literacy, the proportion of pupils achieving expected levels (P1, P4 and P7 combined) increased from 70.7% in 2020 - 21 to 88.7% in 2024-25, with a notable peak of 93.0% in 2022 - 23.

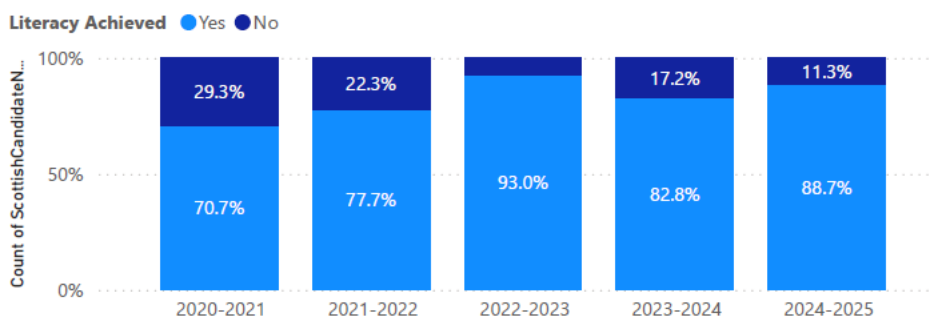
Attainment in reading, writing and listening & talking each demonstrates year-on-year improvement overall, despite some variation between stages and cohorts.

P1,4, 7 combined Numeracy attainment also rose steadily, increasing from 78.0% in 2020 - 21 to 92.8% in 2024 - 25. Attainment for pupils in higher SIMD quintiles remains strongest, while progress for lower quintiles shows gradual improvement over time. The poverty-related attainment gap at St Andrew’s is inconsistent and small overall, with little or no gap in reading and numeracy, but a larger (up to ~40pp) gap in aspects of literacy. However, this is based on very small numbers in the most deprived groups, making the gap unreliable and variable year to year.

Overall, the data indicates sustained improvement in attainment across the school, with outcomes consistently strengthening prior to the current session.

Table 1 – Literacy P1, P4 and P7

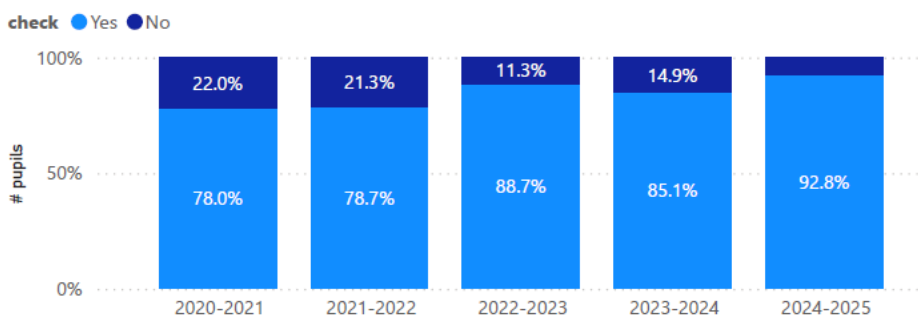
School - Literacy % achieved (P1, P4, P7 combined)



St Andrew's Primary School - Cumbernauld

Table 2 – Numeracy P1, P4 and P7

School - N % achieved (P1, P4, P7 combined)



St Andrew's Primary School - Cumbernauld

Key Messages

Over the course of the two-day visit, the VSE team met with school and nursery staff, partners, parents and pupils, and observed 14 learning episodes across P1–P7. In summary, the team identified the following strengths of the school:

- The school demonstrates a strong, inclusive ethos, underpinned by the school’s Catholic faith, vision and values, which are clearly embedded across the school.
- Staff report a strong sense of belonging and collegiality and feel well supported by the leadership team. Positive relationships and strong collaborative practice supports children, particularly those requiring additional support.

- Professional learning is purposeful and valued, with a strong focus on practitioner enquiry, reflection and continuous improvement.
- Staff demonstrate increasing confidence in using attainment data to inform planning and professional judgement.
- Leadership is well distributed, with staff leading key aspects of school improvement, including literacy and numeracy. This has led to improvements in staff confidence around teacher professional judgement and has increased the pace of change and embedding of new pedagogical approaches.
- Self-evaluation is well embedded, with staff demonstrating strong awareness of the school context and improvement priorities.

Classroom Observations (Learning, Teaching and Assessment)

- Learners across early, first and second level demonstrate high levels of motivation, engagement and positive behaviour.
- Classroom environments are calm, purposeful and well organised, supporting learner responsibility.
- Learning intentions are shared and success criteria are increasingly co-created.
- Teachers use a range of effective approaches, including direct teaching, questioning, collaborative learning, digital tools and structured task boards to ensure pupils can participate with increasing independence.
- Feedback is timely, specific and purposeful, supporting clear next steps in learning.
- Learners confidently discuss their learning, its purpose and how they can improve.
- Numeracy data evidences progression across stages, with strong attainment evident from P1 to upper primary.
- Highly effective P1 environments balance child-led and teacher-led learning, supported by strong routines and differentiation.
- Across stages, learners demonstrate secure understanding of numeracy concepts, positive attitudes to challenge, and well-matched support and challenge.
- Emerging approaches to play and enquiry were noted as having a very positive impact on the learner experience.

Partner Focus Groups (Parents and Families)

Feedback from parental questionnaires evidence that parents and carers:

- report high levels of satisfaction with the school and its leadership
- value the school's strong welcoming and inclusive ethos, that support children's wellbeing.
- feel well informed about their children's progress through effective and regular communication.

The following areas for continued improvement were highlighted by the thematic visit:

- Strengthen consistency in differentiation and challenge across stages, building on strong practice already evident.
- Strengthen task design to ensure learning is appropriately matched to learners' needs providing appropriate levels of challenge.
- Increase opportunities for learner choice and leadership, particularly at early and first level.
- Expand opportunities (over time) for learners to make informed choices, lead aspects of their learning and engage in open-ended, exploratory tasks, using these opportunities to further strengthen independence, creativity and higher-order thinking skills.
- Continue to develop flexible and responsive learning environments, including the ongoing creative use of classroom and shared spaces.
- Further develop literacy, numeracy and STEM areas to support independent and collaborative learning, promote application of skills across contexts.

- As planned, build on emerging practice through increased use of observations, annotated photographs and purposeful learning displays, using this evidence to further strengthen assessment, planning and tracking of progress.
- Continue to develop collaborative approaches with partners on the shared campus.

In summary of the visit, the team identified the following strengths of the nursery class:

- Strong relationships and nurturing ethos. Staff consistently demonstrate warm, caring and respectful relationships with children and each other, thus creating a calm, secure environment where children feel confident to engage in play, take risks and build positive relationships.
- Improved learning environments and increased independence. The review of spaces have resulted in more purposeful, well-organised and engaging learning environments. As a result, children are increasingly independent, making informed choices and demonstrating sustained engagement across a broad range of play experiences.
- Nursery staff feel well supported by the Lead Practitioner and Principal Lead.
- Positive developments in routines and wellbeing. Changes to lunchtime routines and eating environments have led to more relaxed, child-centred experiences that better meet individual needs and support children's wellbeing.
- Emerging rights-respecting culture. The introduction of a "Right of the Month" reflects a clear commitment to embedding the UNCRC and promoting children's rights.
- Reflective staff team and commitment to improvement. Staff are reflective and committed to improvement. Regular professional dialogue, supported by the Lead Practitioner and Principal Lead, is strengthening understanding of planning and learning and teaching.
- Developing curriculum planning. The introduction of a simplified planning format is improving consistency and clarity. Staff are beginning to engage more confidently in discussions around planning and learning intentions.
- Growing parental engagement. The setting is developing strong partnerships with families through stay-and-play sessions, shared resource development and contributions to learning and outdoor spaces. Children's wider achievements are celebrated, supporting confidence and positive home-nursery relationships.

Recommended next steps for the nursery class include:

- Strengthen understanding of progression in learning. Continue to build staff confidence in identifying clear learning intentions, success criteria and progression to ensure learning experiences are purposeful and appropriately challenging.
- Develop consistent use of the language of learning. Support staff to use the language of learning more consistently so children can recognise, describe and celebrate the skills they are developing, helping them to see themselves as successful learners.
- Enhance planning, observation and assessment practices. Strengthen links between planning, observation and assessment to support responsive practice.
- The senior leadership team should continue to strengthen links between the nursery and the school through shared priorities.
- Further develop the quality of observations to accurately capture children's learning and progress over time. Observations should clearly identify skills, progression and next steps to inform responsive and intentional planning.
- Embed systematic tracking and monitoring. Continue to develop consistent processes for tracking and monitoring children's progress, including those with additional support needs. This will support more reliable professional judgement and evaluation of impact.

- Strengthen moderation and use of benchmarks. Continue to increase staff engagement with *Realising the Ambition*, benchmarks and progressive pathways to support shared understanding of expectations and ensure coherent progression across the curriculum.

Summary

The VSE confirms that St Andrew's Primary School and Nursery demonstrate many strong features, underpinned by a clear vision, and highly positive relationships across the community. Children are engaged, motivated and achieving well, with improving outcomes in literacy and numeracy and consistently high levels of attendance. Staff work collaboratively, reflect thoughtfully on practice and show a strong commitment to continuous improvement. Leadership is well distributed and self-evaluation has become a clear strength, supporting sustained improvement across the school and nursery. The agreed next steps provide a well-judged focus for further strengthening consistency in differentiation, challenge and learner leadership, building on the strong foundations already evident.

Signature

M. Dinsmor