

# Summarised inspection findings

**St John Paul II Primary School and Nursery Class**

North Lanarkshire Council

25 February 2020

## Key contextual information

St John Paul II Primary School and Nursery Class is located within a joint campus with Laburnum Family Centre, situated within the community of Viewpark and serving the surrounding areas of Birkenshaw and Tannochside. The school opened in May 2006. The current roll is 371 with 16 classes. There is also a nurture room, 'The Treehouse'. The nursery class has 19 children on the roll, operating within a pilot of the 1140 hours initiative.

### 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

- The headteacher and staff have created a very welcoming, attractive, and inclusive learning environment. The school's motto, 'Reach Potential, Achieve Success, Grow Spiritually, and Believe in Yourself' underpins every aspect of school life. Across the school, the ethos and culture reflect successfully a commitment to children's rights and positive relationships based on strong Gospel values. Children are very friendly and polite and proudly welcome visitors to their school. They enjoy and benefit greatly from their positive relationships with staff and peers. They are supportive of each other in and out of class. Almost all children report that they feel safe in the school.
- Almost all children engage well in learning and benefit from many opportunities to work in pairs and groups. They are very attentive in class and respond well when given the opportunity to make decisions about their learning. Children benefit from regular opportunities to share their learning with peers, staff and families. They also reflect proudly on recent learning when presenting this to their parents at a termly event. Helpfully, this is organised in a way that enables parents to engage with their own child about their progress. This is supporting parents to have a greater understanding of their child's next steps in learning.
- The headteacher is a very positive role model for children and staff. He models exemplary interactions with children to support all to feel valued and to have a positive attitude to learning. The headteacher and the staff team promote positive behaviour strategies very effectively, which helps to create a very calm and purposeful learning environment. Staff have introduced a range of initiatives, which recognise and celebrate children's successes well. For example, 'T with Mr T' (when they join the headteacher for afternoon tea), and the 'bravo boards' in classes. Positively, the nursery children are also invited to 'T with Mr T' celebrations.
- As part of their work in promoting children's rights, there is a child-friendly charter in each class and children are able to relate this to all aspects of school life. They relish the opportunities they have to lead their own learning and inform decisions about school improvement. A significant number of children are members of school improvement groups, for example, Rights Respecting Schools, Junior Road Safety, and the pupil council. Staff need to continue to explore and develop ways for all children to have opportunities to develop key skills in meaningful contexts such as these.

- Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. Over the last few years, staff have worked hard to improve consistency in learning and teaching through collaborative working and professional learning. Together, with the senior leadership team (SLT), they have developed a helpful learning and teaching policy which details clearly what high quality learning and teaching looks like. In almost all lessons, staff provide clear explanations and instructions. They make very effective use of different strategies, which help children to explain and describe their thinking. For example, staff question children well to deepen and check their understanding of key teaching points. In most lessons, staff plan differentiated activities and tasks, which meet the needs of all learners. They have a very good understanding of the individual needs and circumstances of children. As a result, those children who require additional support with their learning benefit from tailored, sensitive support, which helps them engage meaningfully in appropriate learning experiences. In almost all lessons, children are clear about the purpose of the lessons and the ways in which they can be successful. Commendably, at the early level, staff employ a range of effective and creative strategies to help younger children understand their learning steps.
- At all levels, children can benefit from more opportunities to access and read a range of literature, both fiction and non-fiction. The SLT should work to improve the quality of classroom libraries and consider the importance of re-establishing a whole school library. This is particularly important for the high number of learners who are unable to access books at home.
- Across the school, staff use digital technology effectively to support and enhance children's learning. Younger children use digital tablets to record their stories to help them to identify how they can improve their writing. Staff are developing the use of the outdoors to promote learning. For example, children explore the local area to learn about different seasons and gain key skills as part of their participation in forest schools.
- Teachers use a wide range of summative and diagnostic assessment approaches to collect information on children's progress in learning. These assessments are planned across the school year and the data gathered is the focus for termly professional dialogue meetings with the SLT. Staff use this assessment information to plan effectively for universal and targeted support. The SLT and staff monitor closely the impact of these interventions to ensure that all children, including those who may face barriers to their learning, can achieve appropriately.
- Staff have benefitted from a range of professional learning activities linked to assessment and moderation. Their increased skill and confidence in using formative assessment strategies has had a positive impact on learners. Children are becoming more aware of their intended learning. Most can identify next steps as a result of the accurate and insightful feedback that staff provide. Staff's involvement in moderation activities across the school and local cluster is increasing teachers' confidence and accuracy when making professional judgements on children's attainment. Staff should build on this progress by participating further in moderation, within and beyond the local education authority.
- Teachers plan learning well on a termly basis, using skill progression pathways for almost all areas of the curriculum. They have welcomed a significantly streamlined approach to planning across the curriculum. Their planners reference clearly children's experiences and expected outcomes, National Benchmarks and higher order thinking skills. The SLT and staff track children's progress over time well. They track attainment in literacy and numeracy at class, stage and whole school level. This supports staff to monitor effectively children's progress and identify the need for additional support or challenge. Staff should track children's skills and progress across other curricular areas.

## 2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

### 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

good

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

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

#### Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Overall, across the school, the quality of children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is good. Data presented by the school in June 2019 indicates that, in P1, most children are achieving appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy. In P4 and in P7, a majority of children are achieving appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy. Over the last few years, there has been a fluctuating trend in children's attainment in literacy and numeracy. The school's predicted data for 2020 in literacy and numeracy demonstrates an improving picture across the school at all levels. Overall, this is an accurate prediction. The SLT are supporting teachers to develop a shared understanding of standards and as a result, the headteacher is confident that the school's attainment figures in literacy and numeracy are becoming more accurate.
- Support for learning staff use reliable baseline assessments and this is helping to identify where children have gaps in their learning. As a result, almost all children who may be experiencing barriers to learning are making progress from prior levels.

#### Literacy and English language

- Overall, most children are making good progress in literacy and English language. Overall, across the school, children's progress in listening and talking and reading is stronger than in writing.

#### Listening and talking

- At the early level, most children are making good progress in listening and talking. Children can describe well what they can visualise from texts they are reading. Most can listen well and contribute their own ideas. At first level, a majority of children are making good progress in listening and talking. Children work well in groups and in pairs as they contribute their ideas and opinions well. Most children can listen carefully and follow teachers' instructions. Across second level, most children are making good progress in listening and talking. Most collaborate well and question each other confidently in a respectful fashion. They can explain their thinking and can use a wide range of vocabulary. A few children demonstrate use of sophisticated language. Older children are not yet confident describing the common features of a debate.

#### Reading

- At the early level, most children are making good progress in reading. Most can recognise and identify a significant number of initial sounds. Most children are beginning to read familiar texts well, using their knowledge of specific sight vocabulary. Across first level, a majority of children are making good progress in reading. Most children can read novels independently and aloud to each other well. At first level, children are not yet familiar with a range of reading texts. Across second level, most children respond well to inferential questions related to texts and can describe how a writer uses creative language to describe a character. From P4 to P7,

children who may be experiencing barriers to their learning are making appropriate progress through the addition of high interest texts.

## Writing

- At the early level, the majority of children are making good progress in writing. They enjoy mark-making and are developing appropriate pencil skills. A few children still require staff to scribe their ideas for them. At the start of first level, most children can write sentences well, with use of finger spaces and full stops. By the end of first level, the majority of children can write well within a clear structure. The majority make use of targets to help them to understand what they have to do to succeed. The majority understand the importance of correct spelling and make creative use of common words. A few children are not yet applying their knowledge of spelling strategies and patterns in words in their written work. The majority write well using paragraphs, interesting openers and clear note taking. They write informative reports, for example, about the city of Edinburgh. At second level, a majority of children are making good progress in writing. Children write regularly using a wide variety of genres, including digital presentations and the use of narrative and instructional writing. The majority of children use their writing skills and techniques across their learning, for example, in their work on the water cycle. At all levels, those children not yet achieving expected levels in writing, need to develop their understanding of punctuation and spelling strategies. They need to make use of their basic reading vocabulary and apply this within their writing activities.

## Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, most children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics.

## Number, money and measurement

- At early level, most children can count forwards and backwards confidently to 20. They can identify accurately the number before and after within 10. At the start of the first level, the majority of children can read and order numbers to 20, including identifying missing numbers. By the end of first level, most children are confident with times tables and can add and subtract two and three digit numbers confidently. Children use terms such as divide, half, share equally, split and sort accurately. By the end of second level, the majority of children tell the time well using 12-hour time. They are less confident using and expressing 24-hour time. Children at second level are not yet confident in their use of fractions, decimals and percentages. They are aware of the additional costs in interest involved when using credit cards and borrowing money from a bank. Across the school, children's skills in mental calculations and participating in number talks are developing well. This has been a positive result of a targeted focus for raising attainment in numeracy over the past year.

## Shape, position and movement

- Most children working at the early level are making good progress in recognising different shapes. They are beginning to make appropriate use of prepositions to talk about where items are located in their learning environment. Most children working at the start of first level have a good understanding of two-dimensional shapes. They are less confident in identifying three-dimensional objects. As children move through first level, a few are confident in recognising features of three-dimensional objects, such as cuboids or pyramids. By second level, children identify compass points. Children can tessellate with two-dimensional shapes.

## Information handling

- At the early level, the majority of children interpret simple graphs. The majority of children at first level use tally marks to gather and interpret information. They make simple floor graphs and charts based on what they find on woodland walks. This contributes well to their understanding of eco-issues. At second level, children create bar chart displays effectively to illustrate their topic work. Children need to use digital technologies more to display information

and acquire skills in interpreting data in real life contexts. Across the school, children need to make better progress in information handling.

### **Attainment over time**

- Overall, across the school in the last four years, the data gathered demonstrates a fluctuating trend in children's attainment in literacy and numeracy. The SLT have taken positive steps to address this. This includes developing further teachers' confidence in making professional judgements about achievement of a level and strengthening approaches to tracking children's progress in literacy and numeracy. The SLT and staff need to begin to track children's attainment across other areas of the curriculum.

### **Overall quality of learners' achievement**

- Most children achieve well and are developing the skills and attributes of the four capacities through their involvement in a wide range of achievement opportunities. An increasing number, are taking part in physical activities through school clubs and events beyond the school day. This is improving their levels of fitness and sense of wellbeing. Most children are becoming creative, as well as developing their confidence through their participation in drama, dance and the school choir. Children involved in the pupil council, the new house captains and the long-established junior road safety officers, are developing their ability to make informed choices and decisions. 'Rights ambassadors' demonstrate confidence through presenting at assemblies and leading effectively the school's work to promote children's rights. This includes the creation of a dinner hall charter and playground charter to encourage positive actions and behaviour of their peers. Raising money for a number of local and international charities supports almost all children to have compassion for those less fortunate than themselves. Teachers should continue to support children to recognise the skills they are developing, as a result of their achievements in and out of school. This includes making better links with the world of work.

### **Equity for all learners**

- The SLT have very effective systems in place, which promote equity of success for all learners. Together with partners, staff provide very well planned interventions to ensure all children, make the best possible progress. This includes well-considered use of additional funding which is improving literacy, numeracy and wellbeing for all learners. Promoting nurturing approaches across the school has led to a significant reduction in exclusions and children being more ready to learn. Well-considered approaches are in place to reduce the cost of the school day, which ensures that no child misses out. For example, providing bicycles to allow all children to take part in cycling activities and the recent 'bootique' where all children could have a dressing-up costume for Halloween. Senior leaders should continue to work with partners to improve the attendance of a few learners to support them to make the best possible progress in their learning.

## Practice worth sharing more widely

- The engaging and interesting ways teachers share with young children how to be successful in learning at the early level.

## 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.