

# Summarised inspection findings

**Our Holy Redeemer Primary School**

West Dunbartonshire Council

6 December 2022

## Key contextual information

Our Holy Redeemer Primary School is situated in West Dunbartonshire. The school leadership team consists of a headteacher, a depute headteacher and two part-time principal teachers. The school roll at the time of the inspection was 202. In September 2021, 67.6% of the school roll lived within the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles 1 and 2.

While schools were open in 2020-21, there was 2.7% COVID-19 sickness or isolation with provision. While schools were closed in 2021-22, there was 99.5% attendance of home learning. During the inspection week, no children were undertaking remote learning.

### 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 school's vision, values and aims support practice across the school very effectively. They are evident in how staff plan for continuous improvement and how all members of the school community engage with one another. Gospel values of respect, love and faith are noticeable in almost all relationships and the value of learning is central to the school's vision, "Learn to love, love to learn". There is a very positive, nurturing Catholic ethos across the school, with almost all children and staff feeling included and happy. Across the school community, most stakeholders appreciate that senior leaders and staff seek, and listen to, their views well to inform the leadership of change. Staff should continue to reflect on and use stakeholders' views to maximise outcomes for children.
- The headteacher demonstrates very strong leadership skills. She is hard-working, caring, and reflective. Along with senior leaders, she has a very good understanding of the needs of all members of the school community. This has led to children's wellbeing, equality and inclusion needs being met very effectively. Additionally, almost all staff and partners, including parents, speak very positively of the very supportive and confident way in which the headteacher and senior leaders led the school through the pandemic. They praise them for how they reached out to, and met the needs of, families. The headteacher and senior leaders continue to identify and meet the needs of families very well.
- Senior leaders and staff engage regularly in discussions that inform the school's improvement plan. The discussions are informed consistently by staff's self-evaluation of the school's practice, using various quality indicators (QIs) from How Good Is Our School 4?. Staff should continue to work together to share and evaluate their practice and to build creatively on their strengths and areas for improvement. This will support them in continuing to develop consistently high-quality practice across the school. As planned, senior leaders and staff should now re-introduce a range of processes that will help them to use data and tracking more effectively to continue to meet all children's learning needs well. This will include them implementing a new calendar of classroom visits to monitor the quality of learning and teaching.

- Senior leaders and staff use data effectively to plan, track and monitor individualised interventions for individual children. This is leading to improved outcomes for these children in relation to their wellbeing and, especially, their progress in learning. Senior leaders and staff now need to further develop similar high-quality strategies to meet the learning needs of all young people effectively and to further close the poverty-related attainment gap. Staff need to make increased use of high-quality assessment information and tracking and monitoring data to do this.
- Almost all staff are involved in leading aspects of the school's work. This includes them taking responsibility for significant curriculum areas, such as science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) and religious and moral education (RME). Staff also take responsibility for aspects of school improvement, such as writing and family learning. Almost all staff feel empowered and motivated to succeed. They work well together to improve practice continuously across the school and to raise attainment and achievement for children.
- All children are encouraged to take responsibility for aspects of their learning in classes. Most children do so confidently and enthusiastically. Most children are encouraged to develop their leadership skills through participating in various school initiatives and activities. These include children from P4 to P7 supporting other children as digital leaders, play leaders, and reading leaders. A small number of children from P3 to P7 participate in a newly-established pupil voice group. Children are also developing their leadership skills through participation in events in the local community and parish, such as the Shoebox appeal. They contribute to important charities, such as MacMillan Cancer Support and 'Refuweegie'.
- Almost all staff value professional learning. They speak enthusiastically about how aspects of their professional learning, such as learning about new pedagogies, including enhanced digital skills, are having a positive effect on learning, teaching and assessment. Staff undertake professional learning that links specifically to the needs of the children and to the school improvement plan. Staff are enthusiastic about current plans for a learning-community practitioner enquiry related to writing.

## 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

- All staff develop positive relationships with children and treat them with respect and consideration, in line with the school's vision, values and aims. They support most children well in their learning and know them as individuals. During periods of remote learning because of the pandemic, school staff developed their approaches to using digital technology to support teaching and assessment. The school's very clear remote learning guidance supported them very well in this work. Almost all staff have a strong understanding of the school's context and any challenges that children face in their learning. This includes gaps in learning caused by the pandemic.
- The benefits of using an online platform have continued now that children have returned full time to school. These include children continuing to develop their digital skills and teachers giving children feedback on their learning in different ways. Pupil Digital Leaders provide strong support to children who need help with their use of electronic devices and online applications.
- All staff work together effectively to improve learning, teaching and assessment. During the pandemic, the school's focus was on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Senior leaders have developed strategy documents, aligned with local and national priorities, to support this work. Teachers have concentrated on improving children's writing and have developed new approaches in this area. These approaches are leading to increased consistency in teaching writing and in how children learn. Teachers discuss what has worked well to improve outcomes for children and are very committed to making further progress.
- In the majority of lessons, staff provide work for children that is suitably challenging, and give skilful feedback to help learners make progress. Almost all children know what they need to do to make improvements in their learning. In a minority of classes children have developed well their higher-order thinking skills and their ability to talk about their learning. Teachers should now work together to help all children improve their ability to think about and discuss what and how they are learning. A few children have found it difficult to engage with their school work as they have returned to school after the periods of remote learning. Staff are very aware of this and, in the best practice, use effective classroom management strategies to engage children in their learning.
- Teachers make effective and creative use of learning spaces within the school, including the two open areas. This has helped children to develop their social skills as they work together. Staff also make effective use of outdoor learning to motivate children's learning. A flexible seating approach is in use at second level, which allows children to choose how to do their work. Children are enthusiastic about this approach.
- Teachers working at early level and first level are developing their understanding of play pedagogy. They work collaboratively to plan, provide and evaluate an effective range of

play-based learning experiences. Teachers incorporate a high level of choice and encourage children to develop their skills and knowledge through exploration and problem solving. Teachers at early level have created a learning environment that makes effective use of the outdoor area and encourages free play. Teachers interact well with the children, helping to consolidate or extend their learning as required. Children demonstrate independence and enjoyment. As planned, teachers should continue to develop their knowledge of national guidance and engage in further professional learning related to play pedagogy to build on this positive start.

- Teachers assess children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing in a variety of ways and use these assessments to plan learning. In most classes, children are encouraged to assess their own work so that they can understand what they need to do to improve. Most children know what to do to meet their targets, which they have agreed with their teachers. During the pandemic, teachers developed new ways of gathering information on children's progress using an online platform. Staff should continue, as planned, to work on developing approaches to moderation to help ensure that assessment judgements are valid and reliable.
- Senior leaders and teachers discuss children's attainment in literacy and numeracy during termly meetings. They are beginning to engage in increasingly robust dialogue about the progress and attainment of individuals and groups of learners. This is helping to inform further how teachers plan appropriate support to meet children's needs. Senior leaders need to develop further the school's approaches to checking children's progress in learning by analysing assessment data more closely. This includes data linked to the attainment gap experienced by children whose progress is impacted by poverty.
- Prior to the pandemic, senior leaders had started to develop approaches to tracking pupils' achievement and participation. They intend to resume this work, incorporating an appropriate focus on skills. Senior leaders acknowledge that the school has not yet initiated work on tracking progress across the curriculum. This is an area that they plan to develop when they have established increasingly effective systems to track attainment and progress in literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders should continue to consider how to streamline the school's online system for recording attainment and achievement.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- During the pandemic and the subsequent recovery period, teachers focused on delivering learning experiences in English and literacy, mathematics and numeracy and health and wellbeing. Senior leaders and teachers acknowledge that developing the curriculum, and ensuring that all children have their full curriculum entitlement, are important school priorities.
- Teachers use progressive pathways to plan learning in literacy, numeracy, RME, and health and wellbeing. These pathways are clearly based on Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes and include a specific focus on skills. Children at all stages receive their entitlement of two hours of high-quality physical education each week. Teachers are currently delivering several curriculum areas exclusively through an inter-disciplinary approach. As a next step, senior leaders should ensure that there is appropriate skills progression and coverage across the full curriculum.
- Prior to the pandemic, children were learning Spanish as a second language, with plans to introduce French as a third language. Senior leaders had also initiated plans to adopt Makaton as another language. Staff now need to ensure that children's modern language experiences are progressive and align with Scottish Government's 1+2 language learning policy.
- Teachers plan for three blocks of community learning that provide children with the opportunity to develop and self-evaluate a range of skills for learning, life and work. Children are offered a choice of activities that are delivered with the support of a wide range of partners. These include first aid, baking and science. This community-linked approach supports children's engagement and provides an enjoyable and relevant context for learning and teaching.
- All children learn outdoors on a regular basis and are highly motivated by this approach. Teachers report that it is having a positive impact on children's physical and emotional wellbeing. Children have opportunities to engage in outdoor learning activities to develop their confidence and promote teamwork.

## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Staff engage well with a range of partners, including parents, to improve experiences for children. Most parents who engaged with the inspection process strongly agree or agree that they receive helpful, regular feedback about their child's learning and development, and the school gives them advice on how to support their child's learning at home. Most parents also strongly agree or agree that the school organises activities where children and adults can learn together. While staff and partners engaged well with parents virtually during the pandemic, they can now provide opportunities for face-to-face engagement. A few parents are very appreciative of this and are enjoying visiting the school again. Most partners show considerable willingness to engage in and support school events and activities. They speak highly of their very positive relationships with senior leaders and staff.

## 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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.



### 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

- The headteacher and staff prioritise the wellbeing of children and their families. Wellbeing lies at the heart of the school's work. Children and their families are treated with respect and dignity. There is a warm, welcoming atmosphere throughout the school, which reflects a strong ethos of care and support. Children are proud to attend the school and show respect for adults, peers and the wider school community. Relationships between staff, children and their peers are very positive. All staff and partners are proactive in promoting positive relationships, creating a climate where almost all children feel safe and secure. Most children are confident in sharing any concerns they have with adults.
- Senior leaders and staff know the children very well. Supported by Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) interventions, children are developing a range of strategies to help them make improvements to their wellbeing and that of others. All staff are aware of their responsibilities in relation to Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). Staff refer regularly to the wellbeing indicators in dialogue with children. This helps children to understand the wellbeing indicators well. Children can discuss aspects of their life that contribute to their wellbeing and how to make positive choices to improve their wellbeing. The wellbeing indicators are displayed prominently across the school and are evident in planning for curricular health and wellbeing. Systems and processes are in place to monitor children's wellbeing on an ongoing basis.
- Partnership working is used well across the school community to support wellbeing. This includes children, parents and staff having very strong links with the local parish. Children enjoy engaging with the parish priest and the youth minister. The school also has an active Parent Council, which supports the school in a variety of ways. The Parent Council provides support for learning activities to enhance children's experiences. Parents report that communication between the school and the Parent Council is very good. Staff are also engaging with Active Schools' staff to support children's wellbeing. They are monitoring children's participation in clubs and activities. Staff identify children who are not participating and encourage and support them to take part.
- Senior leaders and staff continue to work together to ensure a consistent approach to managing children's emotions and behaviour across the school. As part of this work, they engaged effectively with the pupil voice group to create a positive relationships policy. The policy is beginning to impact positively on practice across the school.
- The school recognises that celebrating achievements contributes towards children's wellbeing. Celebrations of children's achievements from within and outwith the school are given a high profile through assemblies. Children have many leadership opportunities across the school including kitbag leaders, buddies for P1, digital leaders, play leaders, and reading leaders.

- The school complies with and engages actively in legislation, guidance and codes of practice that relate to the wellbeing, equality and inclusion of children. During the inspection, senior leaders shared comprehensively how staff use key systems and processes to try to ensure all children's wellbeing, equality and inclusion. One of these key processes is monitoring attendance. The headteacher and senior leaders monitor attendance and punctuality regularly. The school has clear and effective procedures to address non-attendance to ensure no children are at risk of missing out.
- Staff are supported to deliver the health and wellbeing curriculum effectively through a health and wellbeing framework. All staff have a shared understanding of their role in developing health and wellbeing across learning. This is demonstrated through them creatively delivering appropriate learning on, for example, the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child and the wellbeing indicators. Outdoor learning is also a key feature of planned learning. All children benefit from regular, meaningful woodland experiences. Staff use the outdoors successfully to support children's emotional wellbeing.
- Staff use all information they gather on children's wellbeing to identify and address children's individual support needs very effectively. Senior leaders and teachers meet regularly to ensure appropriate interventions are in place. An extensive range of interventions are used to meet the wellbeing needs of children, which includes high-quality support from partners. Detailed action plans are in place for identified children, with appropriate targets to help ensure their progress.
- Teachers are developing children's awareness of diversity and protected characteristics well in a planned and progressive way across the curriculum. They also provide opportunities for children to explore diversity and multi-faith issues throughout the school year. Most children have a strong awareness of diversity and other cultures, and demonstrate respect for the beliefs of others. Staff and children have a strong understanding of equalities, in terms of race and disability. The school is very welcoming and inclusive to new children and their families. Staff place a strong emphasis on inclusion and support for all pupils. Staff are proactive in supporting families with English as an additional language to engage with the school. As a result, more families with children who have English as an additional language are engaging well with school events. Senior leaders have reflected on the school's annual calendar of events to take account of multi-faith celebrations.

### 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

- Data provided by the school indicates that attainment in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory, with the majority of children attaining expected levels.
- Inspection activities identified that attainment in numeracy is lower at first level than has been reported. Senior leaders are able to identify a range of factors that have contributed to this lower attainment and have been proactive in providing appropriate support to address the issue. Teachers now need to engage more fully with the National Benchmarks and in moderation activities in literacy and numeracy. This will support them in developing an improved, shared understanding of standards to strengthen the accuracy of all professional judgements.

#### Literacy

##### Listening and talking

- Overall children's attainment in listening and talking is good. Across the school children listen well to teachers and to one another. They do so respectfully. The majority of children in P1 respond positively to instructions related to their learning. Children identified as having achieved first level need further support to make timely contributions to group discussion and build on each other's ideas. Children working towards the end of second level work well in pairs and small groups, sharing ideas and collaborating on tasks. They can identify features of good listening and talking and can relate these skills to the world of work. The school should now develop children's listening and talking skills further to advance their learning and understanding.

#### Reading

- Overall children's attainment in reading is satisfactory. Children can access high quality texts in class and engage in appropriate reading activities. The school has redeveloped the school library. The library, which will be launched soon, incorporates a variety of reading materials, including novels, magazines, audio books, books covering a range of genres, and ideas for writing. Children report that they enjoy reading their own books outwith school. Children working at early level are beginning to recognise individual sounds and letters. These children enjoy listening to stories. Children at both first and second level confidently explain their preferences for choosing a particular genre. They use text and illustrations well to identify main ideas in the books they are reading. They identify ways of recommending books they have enjoyed to others. Children at second level can identify rhetorical questions and use these to

include suspense in their writing. Senior leaders should now plan a strategic approach to raising attainment in reading.

## Writing

- Based on the data provided by the school, overall attainment in writing is satisfactory. Children at early level are beginning to form their letters correctly and the majority can write their name. They enjoy writing numbers and opportunities to mark make. They can write for a purposes, including, for example, 'thank you' cards. Children working at first level can use play activities as a stimulus to write instructions. They can identify a variety of vocabulary to support them in constructing sentences. Children working at second level write at length using a variety of vocabulary. They write in paragraphs, use a variety of punctuation accurately, and are developing their skills in identifying different types of text. Children's presentation in jotters is developing well. Senior leaders should continue with their plans to improve the quality of learning and teaching in writing.

## Numeracy and mathematics

### Number, money and measure

- Children working at early level can form numbers and demonstrate accurate one-to-one correspondence. They use numbers in real-life contexts and talk about daily routines and events linked to time.
- Children identified as having achieved first level can solve simple equations and round with accuracy. They can partition numbers and record the date in different ways. They require support to use the four basic number operations, and they need to develop their knowledge of fractions and money. They also need support to develop their understanding of common units of measurement.
- At the beginning of second level, children can estimate and solve problems involving addition and subtraction. They have a sound understanding of place value. They need to develop further their knowledge of fractions and negative numbers and improve their ability to complete accurately calculations involving multiplication and division. They can read and record time in both 12 hour and 24-hour notation but demonstrate limited understanding of the link between time, speed and distance. They need to improve their knowledge of perimeter and area.

### Shape, position and movement

- Children working at early level can name 2D shapes and identify a few of their properties. They can classify by colour and size. Children identified as having achieved first level at the end of P4 can name a property of basic 3D objects and identify a right angle. They now require support to develop and extend their skills and knowledge within this organiser. At the beginning of second level children can identify a range of angles and understand nets. They are developing their knowledge of 3D objects.

### Information handling

- Children at first level and second level can find and use information from a menu to answer questions. They need support to identify and interpret information from a range of sources.

## **Attainment over time**

- Progress in literacy attainment shows improvement over time, but progress in numeracy attainment is variable. The reported poverty-related attainment gap in numeracy at early level and first level widened after the pandemic but is beginning to reduce. At second level, the data provided by the school indicates that the gap in numeracy attainment has reduced year on year and has been closed. There is a fluctuating attainment gap over time in literacy.

## **Quality of learners' achievement**

- Children are enthusiastic about the opportunities they are given to share their achievements at assemblies. These assemblies were sustained virtually during the pandemic, helping to maintain relationships and a vibrant sense of community.
- Children in P3 and above have the opportunity currently to nominate themselves for groups, such as the pupil voice group, and to become digital leaders and kitbag leaders. They are given appropriate training in advance of taking on specific responsibilities, which impacts positively on their confidence and skill. Senior leaders plan to extend the range of opportunities offered to children. They should now consider extending the opportunities to include younger children. Senior leaders were tracking children's participation in groups and clubs before the pandemic. As planned, they should resume this work and incorporate the tracking of skills that are developed through children's involvement in these activities. This will support children to make links across their learning in different contexts.
- The school has achieved accreditation from the Scottish Book Trust as a 'Reading School'. This is a positive outcome of the efforts of the school community in promoting reading for enjoyment. Staff and children are now working towards achieving a silver award in this area.

## **Equity for all learners**

- All staff have a strong understanding of the socio-economic context of the school and recognise the challenges facing children and families. Staff, along with a wide range of partners, are practical, sensitive and empathetic in providing equitable opportunities for achievement.
- Senior leaders and teachers are committed to closing the poverty related attainment gap. They ensure this issue is central to professional dialogue around attainment. They are improving their understanding of how to measure accurately the attainment gap and track effectively the success of targeted and universal interventions. This will support their planning and help them to exemplify more clearly the impact of their work.

## Practice worth sharing more widely

During the pandemic, staff supported the wider school community very well in a range of ways. Working with local partners, including the local priest and the youth minister, staff helped to maintain the wellbeing of all in the local community. They further developed and maintained strong links with the families of children in the school. Staff are continuing to reach out to families through the development of a new programme of family learning.

## 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.