

Summarised inspection findings

Barnhill Primary School and Nursery Class

Dundee City Council

2 June 2020

Key contextual information

Barnhill Primary School is situated in Broughty Ferry, Dundee. They have a roll of 459 with an additional 82 children in the nursery. The school is located in a private housing estate in the East of Dundee. The catchment area consists of a small number of children living in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles 1 and 2.

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 leadership team has refreshed the school vision and values of 'believe, respect, include learn and achieve, and look after each other' (BRILL) in consultation with children and parents. These have been an important feature in the creation of a positive school ethos. The leadership team has a clear vision for school improvement and has undertaken a significant range of improvements to the school over the last few years. As a result, the quality of learning and teaching in most classes is strong, and attainment in literacy and numeracy is very good.
- The school is in receipt of a small amount of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). The headteacher has used it wisely and prioritised much of the funds to improve the quality of learning and teaching overall. As a result, the standard of teaching in most classes is very good and in a few classes, excellent. The headteacher has been successful in developing a strong staff team who work collaboratively to establish the Barnhill shared standard for the quality of learning and teaching. This standard helps clarify high expectations and supports the drive for consistency in expectations across the school. Staff have established a strong 'Relationships Blueprint' to promote wellbeing and positive relationships and behaviour across the school. As a result, children respond very well to the consistent approach staff use to deal with conflict and build positive relationships. Working together, staff, the leadership team and local authority support staff have improved the approaches to listening and talking, reading and children's conceptual understanding in mathematics.
- All priorities in the school's improvement plan have a clear focus on equity, addressing the attainment gap and raising attainment. Staff identify priorities for improvement through self-evaluation, making effective use of How good is our school? (4th edition), and analysis of attainment data. The leadership team has a rigorous quality assurance programme to ensure they monitor the quality of learning and teaching and measure the impact of improvements. Staff are reflective and take initiative to improve the school further.
- There has been positive impact of changes introduced across the school. Staff have a well-developed knowledge of the social, economic and cultural context of the school. This is helping to inform their approaches to equity and their understanding of the needs of children and families. Staff are extremely motivated to work collaboratively towards improving the school. The majority of staff engage well with action research which they disseminate to other

staff to secure improvements. For example, one member of staff developed a new approach to improving talking and listening and shared it with all staff. As a result, attainment in talking and listening is very good. Staff have worked well with the attainment adviser, the University of Glasgow and representatives from the local authority to secure changes across the curriculum. The headteacher has prioritised improving the rigour and accuracy in staff's use of self-evaluation to help raise attainment. As a result, staff now have reliable information to inform the regular tracking meetings to review children's progress. They use this information well to identify an appropriate range of priorities and implement a range of interventions to raise attainment. For example, staff have established a nurture room to support children's social and emotional needs. Staff should continue to review arrangements to how the school meets children's needs. At present, information on interventions for individual children and their progress is not easily accessible for staff to use effectively. A few more children would benefit from having their needs assessed.

- Most children have opportunities to develop leadership skills through their involvement in leading house teams, being part of the junior leadership team and their work as digital leaders. Junior leaders take part in identifying areas for improvement and provide feedback on school priorities. They play a lead role in linking with the parent council on school priorities. There is scope to include more children in identifying and leading areas, such as school improvement. Teachers are increasingly encouraging children to discuss their skills in relation to potential future careers. Children have a range of experiences to develop their skills for life such as working with Heart Start, running a café and working with a local bank on money sense. Senior leaders have made an early start to developing approaches to 'Developing the Young Workforce' (DYW) across the school. They should now use the Career Education Standard 3-18 to develop this further.
- Senior leaders are working with parents to develop effective partnerships to address inequity and support children's learning. They make good use of the family support worker to provide a range of out of school provision to support families. As a result, a few parents are able to engage more effectively in their child's education and to remove barriers to participation.

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

- Staff have worked well with the leadership team to articulate the Barnhill standard for the quality of learning and teaching. This provides staff with clear support and guidance on how to deliver high quality learning and teaching. As a result, teaching and learning across the school is of a very high standard. To improve this guidance further, staff should include their expectations on assessment within this document. This would help support new or less experienced staff to understand the school's approaches to assessment when they join the school team.
- Overall, there are very positive relationships between staff, children and their peers. There is a strong nurturing ethos, where children are happy and are highly motivated by their learning in almost all classes. Across the school, children enjoy learning, are enthusiastic and keen to learn. Children work well independently, in pairs and in groups. They feel that adults listen to them and seek their views and opinions. The junior leadership team supports staff in monitoring the quality of learning and teaching across the school. Children provide feedback to staff to help improve experiences in classes. This supports staff to create high quality learning experiences for children. Most staff share the purpose of learning activities with children. In almost all lessons, children are clear about how to achieve success.
- In most classes, the quality of teaching is very good, with a few examples of excellence. In almost all lessons, staff provide clear and helpful explanations and instructions which support children's learning. Teachers use questioning effectively to check understanding and build on prior learning. Increasingly, children have opportunities to exercise choice in their learning and engage in tasks which encourage creativity. Staff are well organised and differentiate their teaching effectively. In doing this, they meet the needs of most children well. There is appropriate challenge for children in most lessons. Staff should now review approaches to setting children across year groups for reading and for numeracy to ensure all children's learning and wellbeing needs are well met.
- Dundee City Council has recently improved internet access and hardware to support the development of digital skills across the school. As a result, most staff use digital technologies effectively to enhance learning. Children are increasing in confidence in sharing learning through digital technologies. Staff should continue with plans to use digital technologies to enhance learning and share learning with parents. Pupil digital leaders have created a digital learning action plan. They are beginning to improve digital learning in most classes through providing support in coding, e-safety and animation.

- Almost all staff create effective assessment tasks aligned to the planned learning in literacy and numeracy. A majority of staff plan effective assessment tasks across the curriculum. As a result, teachers' assessments inform teaching and learning effectively. Most staff use assessment information well to identify interventions in learning and to plan next steps for learners. They are gaining confidence in analysing information and data from standardised assessments to identify specific needs and review approaches. Staff make good use of the National Benchmarks to support assessment and moderation across the majority of curricular areas. Staff plan learning with their stage partners to help share the standard expected effectively. The school uses 'Feedback Friday' with very good effect to ensure that children are involved in reviewing and identifying next steps in their learning. Children use peer assessment well in most classes, to give and receive constructive feedback.

- Teachers plan lessons well across most areas of learning. All staff use Dundee City Council progression pathways in literacy and numeracy. This supports staff well to track progress and plan to meet most children's needs effectively in most classes. There is a need ensure the barriers to learning for a few children are identified sooner. A few more children would benefit from having their learning planned using short, focused targets.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- The headteacher has identified further development of the curriculum as a priority for the school. The leadership team have created a draft curriculum rationale in consultation with children and staff.
- They should now include the views of parents and carers and the views of the wider community. The draft rationale is underpinned by the school's values BRILL. It also illustrates how the school plans to provide learning across the four contexts of the curriculum.
- The headteacher has put in place revised progressive pathways for literacy and numeracy. These are linked to the Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes and are linked to National Benchmarks. This supports continuity and progression in learning across the school. Most staff use progression pathways for most other curricular areas, but this is not yet consistent across the school.
- Staff worked collaboratively to review interdisciplinary learning by bring together bundles of experiences and outcomes under themed contexts. This is helping provide a balance of experiences for children over time. A more consistent use of progression pathways across all classes will help to provide further progression in learning within interdisciplinary learning.
- All children receive their entitlement to two hours quality physical education. Currently, children do not receive regular enough learning and teaching in modern languages. Senior leaders and staff need to plan a progressive and comprehensive learning pathway for languages. This should allow all children to access fully their entitlement to learn modern languages as outlined in the Scottish Government's 1+2 policy.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- The headteacher and staff have developed very positive relationships with parents. Most parents feel welcomed in the school and feel they can approach staff easily to discuss their child. Staff provide opportunities to share learning with parents through open days, parents' evenings and activities such as class enterprise activities. A few parents would like more frequent, specific information on their child's progress. The school has an active and supportive Parent Council. Partners highlight the school's positive approach to collaborative working to meet the emotional, social and pastoral needs of children.
- The school engages effectively with a number of partners to enhance the delivery of aspects of the curriculum and to provide opportunities for wider achievement through extra-curricular activities. These partners include the Active Schools Co-ordinator, parent volunteers and the school chaplain.

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

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 Barnhill vision BRILL is widely evident in Barnhill Primary School. Children recognise the positive impact the school vision has on their learning in the classroom and their friendships in school. They are very well mannered and well behaved. Most children enjoy school and feel it is helping them to become more confident.
- The recently introduced 'Relationships Blueprint' ensures all staff have shared expectations on improving emotional resilience for all children. Staff know children well and understand the needs of their families and the local community. Most children feel staff treat them fairly and with respect. BRILL awards, golden tickets and house points provide children with good opportunities to appreciate their personal skills and those of others. Children talk very positively about 'Feedback Friday' which provide opportunities to reflect well on their learning and their emotional health. This is supporting children to be sensitive and have empathy for others. Teachers' shared understanding of the 'Magic 5' questions is leading to consistency in restorative approaches. This approach supports children to resolve issues and problems positively through discussion.
- Staff across the school support children with useful opportunities to discuss their health and wellbeing. In some classes, staff are beginning to use wellbeing indicators well with children to give them ownership of their own actions. For example, children in P3 know that looking after school property is an example of them being responsible. Children with barriers to learning use the wellbeing indicators to identify areas in which they feel less confident. Staff should provide all children with regular opportunities to use the wellbeing indicators regularly to review their own wellbeing. This can be helpful to support all children set personalised targets and have greater ownership of improving their own health and wellbeing. This will also support senior leaders to monitor and track wellbeing across the whole school.
- Children in Barnhill Primary School contribute and influence the life and work of the school through a range of leadership groups. This includes as house captains, Eco Committee, digital leaders, P7 buddies and pupil-led lunchtime groups. The junior leadership team organised a whole school competition to design a poster displaying the school vision giving all children the chance to be effective contributors. They worked with a local graphic designer to create the winning design which is displayed widely. The 'Respect Me' team used the Barnhill Standards and learning walks to ensure a 'cosy corner' is available in every classroom. This provides all children with an attractive classroom space to be calm and regulate their emotions. Digital leaders carried out a survey and in response to children's needs, the provision for digital learning in all classrooms has improved. These opportunities build self-esteem and leadership skills well in children. The school should plan for all children to contribute to school improvement, not only to make improvements, but also to continue to ensure children feel valued within school.

- All staff understand well their role in supporting the health and wellbeing of children and their families. Staff participate in professional learning activities on children's mental health and nurturing approaches. This helps them to better understand children's needs and use appropriate strategies to support them. As planned, senior leaders should offer this training to parents and carers to support children at home. The 'Beehive' classroom provides a welcoming safe base for children to access support and overcome barriers to learning. Parental feedback reports that this provision is especially effective in supporting children with transitions into school in the morning, and helping them to feel secure. There is a need to improve the Beehive approach further, to include a more thorough assessment of children's social and emotional needs. This will allow staff to use data to plan effective interventions and measure children's progress more effectively.
- All staff understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to statutory duties. Attendance across the school is high and in recent years, there have been no exclusions. Most parents feel that the school deals with bullying effectively and almost all children are confident they have someone to speak to about worries or concerns. A few parents and children would like the school to do more to develop further children's understanding of anti-bullying. Children in the 'Respect Me' team are working well to improve relationships and promote a culture of respect. Teachers are very pro-active to address any concerns or issues that arise. For example, teachers in the upper stages are helping children to identify and understand the importance of respecting others when using social media. This provides children with coping strategies and helps them understand their rights and responsibilities when socialising online.
- During regular meetings, senior leaders and staff discuss the needs of children with barriers to learning. Support staff and teachers offer a range of useful supports for small groups and individual children. As a result, most children with barriers to learning are making good progress. Senior leaders, with staff, should include children and their parents in regular meetings to plan targets for children. Staff should review targets regularly to measure progress and agree further steps. This will ensure children and their parents are fully involved. Senior leaders recognise that the school would benefit from reviewing its approach to staged intervention. The leadership team should develop a whole-school staged intervention policy to ensure early identification of need for children with barriers to learning. The leadership team should now develop a more streamlined approach to monitoring children's progress towards achieving their targets. These changes are needed to ensure improved outcomes for more children with additional support needs.
- The school and family development worker has strong relationships with parents which supports children and their families well. Staff use child plans, which focus on improving children's outcomes using the wellbeing indicators, to identify effective interventions. A young carers support group helps children to experience a range of enjoyable activities and to access useful help from outside agencies. This is helping them to be more confident.
- The main duties under the Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007, to promote the school meal service, ensure access to free drinking water and ensure those entitled to a free school meal are not openly identified, are being met. The planned menu meets appropriate nutritional standards.
- Staff provide a range of meaningful experiences to improve children's understanding of nutrition and health. For example, children in P2 are learning about the journey of food from the farm to their plate. Children in P6 research nutritionally balanced menus from websites and other reliable sources. These experiences help children to choose healthy foods and understand better their changing dietary needs for different stages of life.

- Barnhill Primary School is warm and welcoming and there is an inclusive ethos in all classes. All children participate in worthwhile community activities. This builds their citizenship skills well. For example, children share their learning with and entertain local residents at 'The Butterfly Café'. The school is aware of the need to explore further issues of equality and diversity with children to help them understand their place in the wider Scotland context. The school has made a positive start to developing children's understanding of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). As planned, the school should continue to develop this and improve children's understanding of their rights within the local and global context.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

very good

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

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

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Children's attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is very good. Most children with barriers to learning are making good progress in their learning. Staff plan and moderate standards well through joint working within their stage partners. Approaches to monitoring and tracking children's progress are sound. As a result, most staff are accurate in their judgements on achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence level. Most staff plan and track children's learning across most curricular areas. Staff should now work together to ensure this is consistent across all classes.

Attainment in literacy and English

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

Listening and talking

- Children's attainment overall in listening and talking is very good. At the early level, almost all children listen and respond to cues appropriately. All children show enjoyment when listening to stories. At first level, almost all children listen well and respond confidently in group discussions. At second level, almost all children show confidence in communicating clearly and audibly in a range of different contexts. Almost all children across the stages contribute relevant ideas to discussions and justify their opinions with confidence. Children's skills in listening to each other and adults in social contexts and conversations is an important strength. The new initiative to improve children's communication skills is having a positive impact on children's attainment in listening and talking, particularly at first and second level.

Reading

- Overall, children's attainment in reading across the levels is very good. Most children are making very good progress in reading. Across the school, a few children are exceeding national expectations. At the early level, most children read aloud familiar texts with good awareness of simple punctuation. Almost all children are confident in summarising short texts. At the early level, senior leaders and teachers should keep under review approaches to developing the skills of reading to ensure children develop reading skills across the curriculum. At first level, almost all children read aloud a familiar piece of text with appropriate fluency and understanding. They can identify a favourite author and can explain reasons for their preferences of genres. Most children understand and answer confidently literal, inferential and evaluative questions with accuracy. At second level, almost all children read fluently with expression, linked to punctuation. Most are confident in talking about characters, setting, plot and reasons for choice of genre. Children should now link their understanding of literary techniques in their reading to improve their writing further.

Writing

- Overall, children's attainment across the levels in writing is good. Most children are making good progress in writing and a few are exceeding national expectations. Across the school, children are developing well their skills in planning and writing for a range of purposes. At the early level, most children can form a meaningful sentence and punctuate appropriately. Most children are confident in using strategies to check spelling and apply their knowledge of phonics when attempting to spell new words. At first level, most children use with increasing accuracy, simple punctuation and common conjunctions to link sentences. They create texts for a range of purposes and audiences, with recognisable features of genre. At second level, most children write accurately in a range of genres. This includes writing about personal experiences, imaginative stories and poetry. Most children know how to use paragraphs effectively to organise ideas and themes and use an increasing range of punctuation accurately. There is a need to improve the standards of presentation in writing and spelling across the school.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, children are making very good progress in numeracy and mathematics. The school's focus on improving conceptual development in number is supporting children's understanding of number concepts and processes. As a result, children are becoming increasingly confident to explain their mathematical thinking to each other and their teacher.

Number, money and measure

- Almost all children working towards early level are able to count, identify and recognise numbers to 10, with a few working within 20. At first level, most children read, write, order and recite whole numbers to 1,000. They have a good understanding of fractions and can compare the size of fractions and place simple fractions in order on a number line. Most children use their knowledge of everyday objects to provide reasonable estimates of length. At the second level, most children show a confident grasp of all tables and can multiply and divide large numbers. Across the school, children are developing their understanding of place value and number processes well. Children have a very good knowledge and understanding of number, money and measurement. As children progress through the levels, almost all are able to carry out key number operations accurately. Increasingly, children across the school are beginning to talk about using a range of strategies to carry out tasks mentally.

Shape, position and movement

- Children's knowledge and understanding of shape, position and movement is good across the school. At early and first level, almost all children can recognise and name a variety of shapes and can discuss their properties. Children at first level are unable to use and apply positional language consistently. At second level, children talk confidently about the properties of a range of triangles and circles, but are less confident in their understanding of perimeter and area.

Information handling

- Children at early and first levels have opportunities to collect and present data in a range of ways, including pictorial representation. Children at second level can present and interpret data from a variety of graphs.
- Across the school more work is required to develop children's understand and application of probability and chance.

Attainment over time

- Staff ensure children maintain high levels of attainment over time and have a clear focus on raising attainment. Overall, there is a positive trend with most children making very good progress in their learning in literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders and teachers have very

robust arrangements in place to monitor data on children's attainment and achievements for reading, writing, talking and listening, and numeracy and mathematics. Staff have made a positive start to tracking curriculum areas, other than literacy and numeracy. For example, teachers have begun to track children's progress in areas of the curriculum such as technologies, PE and health and wellbeing. This continued, will help to give a fuller overview of children's overall progress over time.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Children value opportunities to take roles of responsibility through participation in the junior leadership team, Eco committee, sports clubs, as well as meaningful opportunities to work with partners across the community. Children are developing their self-confidence and leadership skills as part of the junior leadership team. Through this, children promote pupil voice across the school and contribute to the school's work in improving the quality of teaching. Children are increasingly taking the lead in running clubs and activities. As part of the 'Respect Me' team children are developing well their sense of responsibility as citizens promoting anti-bullying across the school. In addition, groups of children regularly take part in the school's joint initiative with a local church and Alzheimer Scotland in 'The Butterfly Café'. This intergenerational work is helping children to develop empathy and understanding of others.
- A significant number of children are developing well their health and wellbeing through participation in a wide range of sports. Teachers are committed to engaging children in physical activity and sport. A wide range of after school and lunchtime clubs are on offer. Staff provide children with support to improve their learning out of school through the supported study class in the library to help children in homework tasks. Senior leaders track and monitor children's participation in wider activities to ensure no children are missing out.

Equity for all learners

- Staff across the school community know children, families and their contexts very well. They understand the diverse socio-economic context of the local community. Senior leaders and staff are committed to promoting equity for all children and reducing the cost of the school day. For example, staff ensure all children can access outings and the breakfast club, ensuring cost is not a barrier to participation. The headteacher has secured regular funding from a local church to help support children and families in need, to help ensure equity of access to all opportunities.
- There is a clear rationale for the use of PEF. Staff use this for professional learning to make improvements to the quality of learning, teaching and differentiation in all classes. This ensures all children, including those targeted by PEF, have access to high quality learning and teaching to help secure strong attainment. Staff also ensure children who have barriers to learning have targeted interventions in literacy and numeracy. One example of this is the 'Beehive' classroom, which provides daily nurture support for targeted groups of children, as well as for those children who wish to take advantage of this resource.

School Empowerment

■ Pupil participation

- Children have a range of ways in which they participate and make decisions about the life and work of the school. They are involved in a range of committees such as the junior leadership team, who have a clear focus on improving learning and teaching. They have been involved in the creation of the Barnhill Curriculum Rationale and the Barnhill Standard for learning and teaching. A significant number of children are involved in the 'Respect Me'; team and they are developing a draft bullying policy.
- 'Feedback Friday' allows a clear focus on involving children in their own learning and reflecting on their own progress. Children regularly share their learning with parents through their toast café, their Scottish afternoon and open afternoons. Children have an opportunity to lead learning at 'The Butterfly Café'. A few children at P6 lead extra-curricular activities for other children.

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.