

# Summarised inspection findings

**Dalry Primary School**

The City of Edinburgh Council

21 August 2018

## Key contextual information

Dalry Primary School was built in 1876 and serves the local community of Dalry in the West of Edinburgh. It is a non-denominational, co-educational primary school. The associated secondary school is Tynecastle High School. The headteacher was appointed to the permanent post of headteacher in April 2018; previously she was acting headteacher from January 2017. She is supported by a depute headteacher, a development officer, an acting principal teacher and business manager. The school roll is 248, allocated in 12 classes. Around 65% of children attending have English as an additional language with 28 different languages currently spoken by children and their families.

### 1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement

good

This indicator defines rigorous self-evaluation as a responsibility of all stakeholders. It highlights the importance of partnership approaches to self-evaluation and continuous improvement. It emphasises the need for strong leadership and robust analysis of a range of intelligence and data as essential features of effective continuous self-improvement. A key factor in this indicator is demonstrating the impact of self-evaluation in relation to outcomes for all learners. Their active participation in self-evaluation is therefore essential. The themes are:

- collaborative approaches to self-evaluation
- analysis and evaluation of intelligence and data
- ensuring impact on learners' successes and achievements

- Stakeholders at Dalry Primary School are encouraged to have their say about how well the school is working and about how it can further improve. There is a culture of reflection and of all working together for the children. Staff know the children and their families well. There is a very welcoming ethos and strong relationships with children, parents and the wider community. Children and staff are rightly proud of their school. The school is working on a range of ways to further gather all stakeholders' views.
- Led by the headteacher and leadership team, staff are involved in decision making about school priorities, and engage in a range of well-planned self-evaluation activities, which are leading to school improvement. The school is improving children's attainment in literacy and numeracy building on prior learning. Through effective programmes, the school is developing children's resilience, and positive relationships with them and their families. The school's quality assurance programme covers a range of activities. The headteacher is working to make this more focused on key priorities for improvement.
- The new headteacher has worked well with the leadership team, staff, children, parents and partners to ensure changes support the school to continue to improve. The school's self-evaluation processes identify current and future priorities for improvement effectively. The whole school approach to developing growth mindset is beginning to impact on how well children are talking about their learning and how well they understand their 'steps to success'. The school should involve children more in decisions about their learning. This will support children to better understand what they need to do to further improve aspects of their learning.
- Staff undertake leadership roles effectively to support school improvement and to offer a wide range of experiences for children. For example, a free breakfast club is open to all children, the homework club to support children's learning, 'bikeability' training, outdoor learning around

the city, recording children's achievements and updating the website. There is scope to involve children more in working with staff in some aspects of these roles, such as in updating the website and taking photographs of their achievements.

- School leaders support professional learning for all staff through a range of activities including guided professional reading. Professional learning is linked to school improvement priorities, research, sharing practice with other schools and working with cluster colleagues to further improve practice. Staff have moderated writing and aspects of numeracy with cluster colleagues, and are growing in confidence about their professional judgement of how well children are achieving a level. The school should continue to provide opportunities for staff to work with other colleagues, sharing best practice and in using national guidance and research.
- School leaders engage in monitoring activities providing helpful feedback to staff. This is beginning to impact positively on the consistency of learning, teaching and assessment across most classes. The school should continue to build on the start made, such as the plan for staff to engage in sharing practice through peer observations.
- Children, staff and parents are involved in planning improvements to the playground resulting in children's skills being developed, and the purchase of new resources. Children are very enthusiastic about learning to use these new resources. Children have leadership opportunities, such as gathering parents' views very successfully at parent consultation meetings, and as Clan Chiefs, members of the pupil council and Junior Road Safety Officers. They often buddy children new to the school, particularly supporting children with English as an additional language. The school's aim is for children to develop skills to become 'young interpreters'. Children's views are gathered and are leading to changes being made, for example, children have designed and costed the refurbishment of their class library areas, and a focus on play and the learning environment involving children at the early level is at the early stages of development. There is scope to further develop quality learning opportunities for children through play across the early level.
- The parent council is very active in supporting the work of the school, such as through fundraising, and is now taking a greater interest in school improvement priorities. The school and parents are developing interesting ways to share and gather information led by a parent, such as using social media groups in parents' first languages. This is at the early stage of development; however the school feels it is improving shared communication between parents and the school, and is supporting families to give their views and know more about the work of the school.
- Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) is used very well to target individuals and groups of children effectively ensuring they make progress appropriately, and in giving support to families. School leaders use assessment information and data to track and monitor children's progress in literacy and numeracy, and achievement for children in P2 to P7. The school should include all children in tracking their achievements. Staff and the school leaders meet regularly to review children's progress and plan interventions. Success of these interventions is evaluated and children are well supported to make progress in literacy and numeracy. School leaders are planning with staff to further improve how progress across the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels is tracked. Staff should continue to review the effectiveness of the wide range of interventions in place ensuring they are impacting on raising attainment and achievement for all children.

- The school engages very well with a wide range of partners to support children's learning and well-being, for example, ensuring children leaving and arriving at school throughout the year settle well, and children in P7 transferring to different secondary schools are supported through the 'Aiming High' project. Working with partners, the school is involved in national research related to the General Teaching Council for Scotland standards. As part of this research, the headteacher has worked with children in P4 and P6 gathering their views on 'what makes an ideal teacher', and will share the outcomes from the report with staff once it is published.

## 2.1 Safeguarding

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

## 3.2 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

### Raising attainment and achievement

- The school has attainment data for literacy and English language, and numeracy and mathematics. Overall, this data indicates that most children at the early level attained expected CfE levels in literacy and English language, and numeracy and mathematics. The majority of children at the first level attained expected CfE levels in literacy and English language, and numeracy and mathematics. However, less than half of children at the first level attained the expected level for English writing. The majority of children at the second level attained expected CfE levels in literacy and English language, and numeracy and mathematics.
- The school uses a range of data, including formative and summative assessments, to help teachers determine and understand children's on-going progress and learning needs. Teachers are also monitoring and tracking children's progress regularly against CfE experiences and outcomes (Es and Os). This ensures that children are supported well and continue to make good progress. Teachers are developing their skills in using the national benchmark guidance and speak positively of moderation work they have undertaken in school and across the cluster to develop further their understanding of standards. The school also uses termly planning and attainment meetings between school leaders and teachers to review the effectiveness of the school's strategies in supporting children's learning.
- All staff know the children well and are committed to providing effective support for them. However, great care is given to supporting those with additional support needs, those for whom English is an additional language and those who may experience barriers to their learning as a result of their socio-economic background. Enhanced transitions are managed effectively by the school and staff intervene appropriately when children require additional support to help them achieve and attain. Targeted interventions, which are planned carefully according to individual children's needs, are enhanced considerably by close working between the school and many partners. The school is working with partners, including parents, to continue to seek ways to better meet the needs of all children for whom English is an additional language.
- Teachers are working hard to ensure there is greater coherence and consistency in learning, teaching and assessment across the school. This is helping children to understand the purpose of their learning more effectively and is leading to them being motivated and engaged in class.

## **Attainment in literacy and English**

- Overall, children's progress in literacy is good.
- Overall, most children are developing good skills in aspects of literacy and English. They articulate confidently the range of strategies they are using to learn. Children also make good use of technology regularly to further motivate and extend their learning. There is a high percentage of children across all classes with English as an additional language. This is currently 65% of the school roll. School data from targeted interventions for literacy show a positive impact on children's attainment.

## **Listening and talking**

- Overall, children are developing and applying skills in listening and talking across their learning well. Children across the school are developing their skills in interacting with others through, for example, class presentations and co-operative group work activities. Almost all children listen attentively to their teachers, are respectful when listening to their peers and most offer helpful feedback when requested. The development of growth mindset is beginning to have a positive impact in enabling children to talk about their learning more effectively.
- At the early level, most children respond to instructions and ask questions to demonstrate understanding related to their learning well. Programmes to support the extension of children's vocabulary are used effectively at the early level. At the first level, children use vocabulary in discussions well, and ask and respond to different types of questions to show understanding. At the second level, technology is used effectively to motivate learners in consolidating and extending their skills for talking, listening and presenting. Across all stages, 'Assessment is for Learning' strategies are positively supporting the development of children's talking and listening skills. A more consistent approach in developing children's higher order thinking skills across all stages will support continued improvement of this area.

## **Reading**

- Across the school, reading for enjoyment and for information is actively encouraged in all classes. There is a well-stocked library, which children regularly access to read and are encouraged to borrow books from. There is a progressive reading programme in place across the school to ensure that skills and knowledge are developed appropriately.
- Children working at the early level are developing their phonic skills well following a structured programme. They can sound out and blend words, apply skills and use technology and games to actively practice their letters, words and phrases. Children at the early level would benefit from further challenge in applying and developing their learning through their play activities.
- Children working at the first level enjoy reading aloud and can talk confidently about the books they are reading. When reading aloud, most children do so clearly and with expression. By the end of the first level, children are very confident in explaining their preference of authors, the features of different reading genres and can confidently contribute to discussions about the purpose of a text.
- At the second level, almost all children are able to use their knowledge of language to read unfamiliar texts for pleasure. Children explain strategies to support them with their understanding and take notes to help to develop their thinking well. By the end of the second level, children speak about their favourite authors and discuss knowledgeably the writers' use of language to influence the reader with confidence. They make effective use of technology to research information and evaluate the reliability of sources.

## Writing

- Across all stages, children are writing for a variety of purposes and audiences. The writing programme offers a progressive and structured approach in the development of the children's writing skills. Staff monitor children's progress in writing twice annually to ensure progression. Staff training in spelling and phonics is reported to be impacting positively this year on the quality of children's written work. At all stages, most children have a good understanding of the tools they need for writing, for example, they know about and apply appropriate punctuation, spelling and have a sound knowledge of parts of speech. 'Assessment is for Learning' is used across the school to share learning intentions and to create success criteria with children. Almost all children regularly peer and self-assess written work.
- At the early level, almost all children are enjoying playing with sounds and patterns. They are aware of the different sounds made by single letters and blends, and are attempting to apply these in their writing. Children in P1 are enjoying exploring with different writing materials, for example cotton bud writing, creating words using magnetic letters and using electronic tablets to develop cursive script. Most children are attempting to write leaving a space between words, and are aware of capital letters and full stops.
- At the first level, the majority of children are writing using a variety of styles. They are using vocabulary appropriately for the specific writing purpose when creating their own texts. The majority of children are applying their skills in independent pieces of writing and evidence being able to work through the process of writing including planning, drafting and editing.
- The majority of children working at the second level use appropriate vocabulary, punctuation and layout when creating texts. Children's descriptions and use of language in written work evidences progression from prior levels. They show increasing confidence in experimenting with pieces of independent writing. Children are writing at length across a range of genres and styles. Planned moderation and using holistic assessments of writing should aid teacher confidence in predicting achievement of CfE levels, and in assigning levels earlier where appropriate. This will promote the increased pace of learning and level of challenge for those children who are capable of further challenge.
- The quality of children's writing across the school is variable overall. Teachers give oral and written feedback regarding areas for improvement and most children across the school are aware of learning targets. However, they are not yet confident to recall them or explain what steps they need to take to achieve them. Targets identified in some writing jotters are often generic. Planned approaches to develop learner conversations, the development of child-friendly writing criteria as well as the continuation of the development of 'small steps for success' will aid increased achievement in writing.

## Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, most children are developing good skills in aspects of numeracy, and they articulate confidently the range of strategies they are using to learn. Children also use electronic tablets regularly to further motivate them in their learning.

## Number, money and measurement

- At the early level, children can count forwards to 30 and backwards from 20. They are identifying and recognising numbers from 1 to 20 and are learning to add and subtract mentally to 10, and split a whole into smaller parts. Most children at early level are coping well with learning to count money.

- At the first level, most children are confident with many aspects of adding, subtracting and multiplying. They can count forwards in 2s, 5s, 10s and 100s with ease. Children are also developing their skills well in using money and telling the time using 12-hour clocks. They would benefit from additional practice on counting backwards, giving change within £10 and identifying 24-hour notation. A few children show skill in providing reasonable estimates of length.
- At the second level, most children show confidence in many aspects of number, money and measurement. In the upper stages, they are able to read and record times in both 12-hour and 24-hour notation successfully, and use common units of measure with understanding. A few children are able to calculate perimeter, area and volume easily. The majority of children can articulate the difference in size between fractions, and a few children are able to use the equivalent forms of fractions, decimals and percentages to help them solve problems. Children would benefit from on-going work on division, and angle, symmetry and transformation. Children are motivated by the opportunities they are given to use their numeracy skills in everyday contexts, such as in carrying out activities related to the 'Daily Rigour'.

### **Shape, position and movement**

- Across all stages, children have some understanding of 3D objects and 2D shapes. At the first and second level, children are able to identify and describe 3D objects and 2D shapes in the environment. They are developing their use of language to describe them effectively. Children at the upper stages talk about 3D objects and 2D shapes confidently.

### **Information Handling**

- At the first level, children are beginning to develop their understanding of how to collect, organise and display data. At the second level, children show a good understanding of how to collect, organise and display a range of data, and they are learning to interpret it successfully. The majority of children are able to talk articulately about how bar graphs, line graphs and pie charts can be used to display data.

### **Attainment over time**

- From the school's evidence of attainment over time, tracking data shows a positive trend overall for literacy and numeracy. Overall, most children are making good progress from their prior learning in literacy and numeracy, and particularly those with English as an additional language as a result of the planned interventions in place. Dalry Primary School has a high percentage of children who remain with them for varying lengths of time. The school indicates that this constant movement of children across the school year is reflected in the school attainment data.

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

- Across the school, children benefit from accessing the wide range of activities on offer through their 'Master Class' programmes before, during and after school. The programme of activities is monitored to ensure children's interests and participation are sustained. The school has worked to significantly reduce barriers to children accessing these activities. Most children are now accessing these on a regular basis. Children at P7 are encouraged where relevant to lead these classes, for example making loom bands. However, there is scope to extend opportunities for children's leadership within this further.

- Achievements are tracked for children in P2 to P7. All children complete an 'All about Me' booklet in September, which enables the school to gather information about children's interests as well as areas where children may need to widen their experience.
- Children's achievements in school are recognised and celebrated in assemblies, in class and on the whole school achievement tree. Children could explain the different coloured leaves on the tree and the types of things they would have to do to achieve a leaf, for example, good cooperation, helping others and being a good role model.
- Children are developing skills for learning, life and work. There are opportunities for them to take on responsibilities for leadership, such as Junior Road Safety Officers, pupil council and clan chiefs. Children are involved in organising events to support charities. Children at P2 organised a bake sale to raise money for 'Children in Need', and children at P7 organised a toy sale. Children are encouraged to be involved in making decisions and sharing ideas, such as the development of the playground.
- Wider experiences are actively planned across the school. Children at P5 to P7 benefitted from working with Scottish Opera to create and put on a performance. Children in P4 to P7 children enjoyed the visit of a Scottish poet. Children in P3 and P5 benefit from outdoor learning in their forest school work. These experiences along with planned educational visits for all stages, such as the early years visit to the zoo, provide children with opportunities to extend their learning and apply their skills and knowledge in different contexts.
- The school has a foundation of mutual respect and strong values based on respect for each other. Overall, children are confident when talking about their school, and their sense of belonging and pride in their school is clearly evident. Children across all stages are responsible and effective contributors with children leading assemblies, for example about the Chinese New Year, reading poetry with 'The Sorries' as part of their Burns assembly and the children's involvement in the opening ceremony of the 'Confucius Hub'.

### **Equity for all learners**

- The school is using its PEF to support various initiatives well. These include providing additional support for families, and providing targeted interventions for individual and groups of children to improve their health and wellbeing, and skills in numeracy and literacy. The initiatives are being led by a newly-appointed development officer and a range of staff who are working closely with children, families and partners to reduce barriers to learning, participation, inclusion and engagement.
- PEF has also been used to provide opportunities for all children to experience and benefit from outdoor learning, to develop a culture of resilience and learning in the school, to promote reading, and to provide play boxes. Teachers speak very positively about the ways in which the school provides different opportunities for children who may not otherwise be able to experience them. For example, through school visits and engagement in Forest Schools' work. Staff should continue to monitor regularly the impact of these initiatives on raising the attainment and achievement of individual children. This will help to ensure that on-going initiatives are appropriate and meet the needs of children who would benefit most from them.
- The school is diligent in ensuring that the cost of the school day is minimised, for example, by funding school visits to enable access for all, and by providing a free school breakfast club for children and their parents.

## Explanation of terms of quality

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quality 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.