

One of EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2025

Report by Director of Education

EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT ON ST THOMAS' PRIMARY SCHOOL

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To inform Education Committee of the report by Education Scotland on St Thomas' Primary School.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. Education Committee is asked to:

- a) recognise and comment on the achievements of St Thomas' Primary school as outlined in Education Scotland's report; and,
- b) approve the action plan to address the agreed areas for improvement.

**BACKGROUND**

3. St Thomas' Primary School was inspected by a team from Education Scotland in September 2024. The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school and identified particular strengths and areas for improvement using the Education Scotland six-point scale and the self-evaluation framework *How Good is our School?*

4. Since August 2016, Education Scotland use 2 models of school inspection. The full and the short model.

5. The full model evaluates 4 quality indicators, with the short model focusing on 2. Both models include an evaluation of Learning, Teaching and Assessment and Raising Attainment and Achievement.

6. The school was inspected using the full model, with an evaluation for 4 quality indicators and a short report which details the strengths and areas for improvement. The report was published in January 2025 and is attached as Appendix 1. It has been issued to staff, parents, local elected members, the Convener for Education, Equalities, Culture and Leisure and made available to the local community.

**REPORT**

7. In assessing the indicators of quality in the school, Education Scotland found 2 aspects of the work to be very good: leadership of change and ensuring wellbeing, equality, and inclusion; and 2 areas to be good: learning, teaching and assessment and raising attainment and achievement.

8. This is a positive report on an East Renfrewshire establishment, with the evaluations and report matching the department's evaluations and the improvement journey of the school.

9. The particular strengths highlighted by the inspection team included:

- The new head teacher has brought stability and cohesion to St Thomas' Primary School through her effective leadership within a short timeframe. She led the school admirably through the transition to a new shared campus, where staff and children feel settled and motivated in their new environment.
- Senior leaders have very clear approaches to understanding children's learning and wellbeing needs. Staff focus on children who need extra support and working as a team, they meet children's needs very well.
- Almost all learners across the school demonstrate the school values consistently. Across the school there is a strong, positive and inclusive ethos, where children benefit from respectful and caring relationships with their peers and with staff.

10. It was particularly pleasing that the leadership by the relatively new head teacher was highlighted by the inspection team, along with the effective use of data to bring about improvement, especially for those experiencing poverty:

- *Since her appointment, the new head teacher has successfully implemented a period of stability, evidence-based school improvement and effective strategic leadership. Her appointment shortly preceded the school's move to a new shared campus and significant changes to the teaching team. Through her organised, calm and industrious approach, she has quickly created a cohesive, highly motivated and professional team.*
- *All staff understand clearly the social, cultural and economic context of the school community. Using careful and detailed analysis of school data, the head teacher carefully tracks the progress of key equity groups to help identify where targeted additional support is necessary. This process strengthens teachers' understanding of learners' needs and informs decisions on how to maximise the impact of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF).*

11. The inspection team identified 2 areas for improvement:

- Staff should raise attainment further by setting all learning experiences at the appropriate pace and level of challenge. This should ensure that all children make the best possible progress.
- Senior leaders should extend the range of moderation opportunities for staff to participate in, beyond the school. As staff develop their experience, this should lead to increased breadth and depth in children's learning.

12. Appendix 2 of this paper includes the action plan to address the agreed areas for improvement. The Quality Improvement Service will work closely with the St Thomas' leadership team to support its implementation.

13. The letter to parents/carers and more detailed summarised inspection findings is available on the [Education Scotland website](#).

14. Education Scotland will make no further reports in connection with the inspection of St Thomas' Primary School.

15. Within 2 years of the date of publication, the Quality Improvement Service will revisit the school to review the impact of the improvement (action) plan in addressing the agreed areas for improvement and to provide a progress report to parents.

## **FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY**

16. There are no financial or efficiency implications related to this report.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

17. Education Committee is asked to:

- a) recognise and comment on the achievements of St Thomas' Primary school as outlined in Education Scotland's report; and,
- a) approve the action plan to address the agreed areas for improvement.

Mark Ratter  
Director of Education  
6 February 2025

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### **Appendices**

1. [Education Scotland Report on St Thomas' PS](#)
2. St Thomas' PS Action Plan



# Summarised inspection findings

St Thomas' Primary School

East Renfrewshire Council

21 January 2025

## Key contextual information

St Thomas' Primary School is a denominational primary school serving the community of Neilston in East Renfrewshire. The associated secondary school is St Luke's High School in Barrhead. In March 2024, the school re-located to new, purpose-built premises. St Thomas' Primary School now shares Neilston Learning Campus with Neilston Primary School and Madras Family Centre. The current role is 146, arranged across seven single-stage classes.

The headteacher was appointed in June 2023. She is the fourth headteacher, including acting headteachers, in six years. During the 2023/24 session, there were significant staffing changes within the school. In August 2024, four new class teachers were appointed. At the same time, four members of staff, the acting deputy headteacher and the acting headteacher left the school. The senior leadership team now consists of the headteacher and one principal teacher.

38.2% of children live within Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles 3 and 4. The remaining 61.8% live in deciles 7 to 9. The school reports that 32% of children have additional support needs. This compared with 21% in primary schools in the local authority and 30% in primary schools nationally.

### 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

- Since her appointment, the new headteacher has successfully implemented a period of stability, evidence-based school improvement and effective strategic leadership. Her appointment shortly preceded the school's move to a new shared campus and significant changes to the teaching team. Through her organised, calm and industrious approach, she has quickly created a cohesive, highly motivated and professional team. Together they ensure that children benefit from an organised, welcoming, pleasant and comfortable environment. The commitment and professionalism of the staff reflect well the school values of love, faith and understanding.
- As the school community moved towards their relocation, senior leaders consulted effectively with children, parents, staff and partners on all aspects of the move, including the design of the learning environment. Children discuss confidently how they helped shape the new school and made short films about the new building to share with parents and partners. They celebrated the opening of the new shared campus with the community. Children, parents and partners praise the smooth transition, facilitated by all members of staff. Children settled well in the new environment. They had a good understanding both the layout of the school and the expectations of sharing a campus with a much larger group of children.
- Senior leaders reviewed the school's vision, values and aims in collaboration with the school community. Almost all children can articulate confidently the school values of love, faith and understanding and the school 'dispositions' of creativity, resilience, independence, curiosity, and bravery. Children and young people worked in partnership with the learning cluster to

create video presentations where children discuss and share their values. The aim of the learning community is to nurture every child's unique God given talents to enable them to flourish in a climate of high expectations, innovation and creativity. This belief underpins the work of everyone in the school.

- All staff understand clearly the social, cultural and economic context of the school community. Using careful and detailed analysis of school data, the headteacher carefully tracks the progress of key equity groups to help identify where targeted additional support is necessary. This process strengthens teachers' understanding of learners' needs and informs decisions on how to maximise the impact of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). Senior leaders include information from the needs analysis in plans which enable teachers to respond effectively to children's needs. Key partners in the Joint Support Team include educational psychologists and relevant professionals from health or social work. They ensure a continued focus on improving outcomes for children who require additional support.
- Senior leaders use PEF very effectively to provide targeted support for identified children. They invite consultation with parents and discuss how they plan to spend PEF with members of the parent council, who are satisfied that it is spent wisely. The headteacher guides those staff leading on specific projects to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions. There is clear evidence of a positive impact on identified children. For example, baseline measures were taken before children's involvement in a forest-based outdoor learning initiative, then after participation, throughout a school session. Children experienced improved relationships in school, increased confidence and engaged more enthusiastically in learning across the curriculum.
- At all levels, staff improve their own practice through critical reflection, by assuming leadership roles and professional learning. This includes training in areas such as trauma-informed practice, daily literacy learning, child protection and safeguarding. A few teaching staff undertake post-graduate study in areas which are relevant to children's needs. They identify masters-level courses and use their skills to work towards improved outcomes for children. All teachers engage in practitioner-enquiry research projects. They establish baseline measures and aim to measure the impact of specific interventions or teaching approaches. This is helping teachers to identify which aspects of their practice are having the most positive impact on children's learning. For example, teachers led on a recent initiative to provide identified children with access to outdoor learning incorporating bushcraft skills. Practitioner enquiry showed evidence that participation in learning across the school week improved. Participating children developed skills in teamwork, cooperation and increased their respect for and connection with the environment.
- Teachers link clearly their professional learning to the school improvement plan, which is relevant, appropriate and reflects the collective vision. Senior leaders worked with teachers and consulted with parents and children to identify appropriate improvement priorities for the school. Priorities have a strong focus on improving consistency across learning and teaching, promoting individual and collective self-evaluation and developing and sustaining the strong culture of inclusion.
- All teaching staff engage in regular self-evaluation through dialogue with the wider staff team and during individual discussions with the senior leaders. The highly-reflective teaching team are receptive to professional critical evaluation and are keen to work collaboratively to share expertise and best practice. The headteacher has protected time for collaboration within the teaching team. As planned, senior leaders should consult with staff on how this will best meet the needs of the newly formed team. Staff should work together to capitalise on the range of expertise and enthusiasm which is evident in the teaching team.

- Working with the school community, the headteacher has devised a strategy to raise attainment and achievement, which includes reviewing systems for quality assurance. She has implemented effective core systems to track and monitor children's progress. This is helping the newly formed team to understand and address gaps in children's learning. All staff demonstrate a focus on raising attainment for identified children. The headteacher should continue to monitor the effectiveness of this strategy to raise attainment of all.
- Children and families are involved in leading change within St Thomas' in a variety of ways. The transition steering group included children, parents and staff from both primary schools on the campus. They represented pupil and parent forums and influenced decisions about the new building. Working with the neighbouring school, this has developed into the new pupil parliament. This new representative group is fostering effective collaboration between the two school communities and provides a platform to enhance children's rights. Senior leaders have also introduced participatory budgeting, allowing children and parents to decide democratically on how portions of school funds should be spent. Within the school improvement plan, the headteacher has identified the need to establish further pupil leadership opportunities. As planned, senior leaders should work with children to use the 'How good is OUR school?' resource to help strengthen children's confidence in directing and supporting change.



**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

- Across the school, all staff create and maintain a very positive and nurturing ethos which is underpinned by the school's values. There is a strong focus on children's rights and promoting positive relationships. Links with neighbouring establishments are very positive and benefit the whole school community. Children behave well and are polite and respectful to each other, adults and visitors to the school.
- Almost all learners across the school demonstrate positive behaviour consistently. The ongoing development and application of the school's promoting positive relationships policy is supporting improvement in this area. Most children enjoy the tasks they are set and are respectful when they approach adults with questions or concerns. The positive ethos in the school reflects children's behaviour in lessons and at play times.
- Most children are enthusiastic and keen to learn. Across all stages, children experience a balanced combination of whole class lessons, independent working and opportunities to work in groups and with other children. All children benefit from class discussions and respond positively by contributing with relevant ideas and opinions. Teachers should ensure that all lessons are sufficiently challenging and provide children with more responsibility to lead their learning. This will allow children to learn at a quicker pace and support them to extend their learning in line with their interests and curiosity.
- In most lessons, teachers' explanations and instructions are clear. Almost all teachers share learning intentions and how children can be successful in their learning. In a minority of lessons, teachers are beginning to encourage and support children to co-create success criteria. Senior leaders should continue to support staff with this to ensure there is consistency and effectiveness in this area of teachers' practice.
- Children contribute effectively to the life of the school and wider community in a range of well-planned activities. In the 'Mini-Vinnies' group, children work together to help others in their school and local community. The group gathers items for distribution to those in need and helps to entertain local older adults at events held at the church hall. In Laudato Si, children take action to care for nature and learn about social and environmental issues. All staff value children's contributions and respond positively to their suggestions. Children know that their views are sought, valued and acted upon.
- Most teachers meet the learning needs of children well, in particular for those children who require additional support. However, a few teachers are not yet providing learning activities that meet the needs of all children in the classroom including the most able. In most lessons, teachers set interesting work, at an appropriate level. In a minority of lessons, teachers spend too much time consolidating learning without giving children extra challenge.

- Most teachers use questioning well to assess children's understanding and build on prior learning. They should now enrich their questioning to include the use of higher order questioning and thinking time to scaffold, extend learning and challenge all learners.
- In the early stages, staff are beginning to use play pedagogy in line with national guidance. They are developing teaching approaches using play to support children to practise their skills in a range of contexts. Senior leaders support this well by providing time for professional learning and teacher collaboration. At the early stages, children would benefit from increased pace and challenge to support them to develop fully their learning. Teachers should add depth to learning by observing children playing, then providing well-timed interactions to develop and enhance children's learning.
- Teachers make appropriate use of technology to support children's learning. For example, they use interactive whiteboards to enhance learning activities. Children use digital tablets to take photographs and play games which reinforce learning. Teachers should continue to increase children's use of digital technologies across learning. For example, they should provide opportunities for children to undertake research and to develop their presentation skills.
- Teachers routinely take children's learning outdoors. There has been a particular focus on using outdoor skills to build children's resilience and emotional regulation. Staff use local woodland well to support identified children with their social, emotional and learning needs.
- In most lessons, teachers use formative assessment strategies to check for understanding. Staff provide children with feedback which supports their engagement and understanding. Across most classes, staff share written and verbal feedback to help children improve their work and inform next steps. As planned, senior leaders should continue to develop a consistent approach to what high-quality effective feedback looks like. This should improve the consistency of approach across the school and further strengthen children's understanding of themselves as learners.
- Staff plan appropriately over different timescales to meet the needs of learners and use a well-established assessment overview. Teachers should continue to explore and develop approaches to planning to ensure consistently high-quality learning experiences across all areas of the curriculum. Senior leaders use national benchmarks in professional dialogue with teachers, to support and challenge staff in moderating their professional judgements. Staff are beginning to work with colleagues within their cluster to inform moderation of their judgement of a level. As they develop their understanding and experience, this should lead to increased challenge, pace and depth in children's learning.
- Senior leaders meet regularly with teachers to discuss children's progress, achievement and attainment in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. They use robust processes to monitor and evaluate children's progress. They identify effectively individuals and groups of children who have gaps in their learning. They plan well to provide effective interventions strategies and appropriate additional support. This includes planning for children facing additional challenges, for example children whose home language is not English and those living with financial hardship. Senior leaders and teachers evaluate the effectiveness of interventions designed to improve outcomes for identified learners. This helps to provide an accurate picture of children's attainment over time.
- Teachers are beginning to engage with colleagues across the cluster in the moderation of writing activities. This is helping staff to become more confident in their professional judgements in literacy. As planned, senior leaders should now support a wider range of moderation opportunities across all curricular areas within the cluster and campus settings.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- The curriculum is shaped by the school's vision and Catholic ethos. Across all stages, children receive a broad and balanced curriculum. Teachers use a range of local authority learning pathways to ensure progression in learning in literacy and English, numeracy and mathematics and health and wellbeing. Teachers plan for coverage and progression across the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) across all subjects. The curriculum supports children to build on their prior learning and allows teachers to tailor pathways to meet the needs of children who require additional support. Teachers should continue to ensure children have access to high-quality learning in relevant contexts, capitalising on opportunities for skills progression, challenge, personalisation, and choice. They should continue to make appropriate links across the curriculum with literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing to help raise attainment.
- Learning which makes links across different subjects is well-planned in line with national guidance. The school's specific 'Big Question' approach supports personalisation and choice, through contextualised learning in an area of interest to the children.
- All teachers have a shared understanding of good quality outdoor learning and plan meaningful opportunities for this across the curriculum. Staff use a range of outdoor spaces well to facilitate outdoor learning experiences for children. This includes targeted wellbeing interventions in local woodlands. Teachers provide two hours of physical education each week, following local authority progression pathways.
- Well-planned transition work begins in P6 and continues into P7 in partnership with other schools in the cluster and the local secondary school. There are well-received, effective enhanced transition programmes in place for children who require additional support.
- There is a progressive programme of learning in French from P1 to P7. In P5-7, children are beginning to learn Spanish. Children learn their language skills in discrete lessons, then apply these throughout the week in other areas of the curriculum.
- Children in all classes receive regular religious education linked to 'experiences and outcomes for religious education in Roman Catholic schools' and the school follows guidelines for religious observance. Children learn about other faiths through a progressive learning pathway.
- Children in the upper school are beginning to link learner dispositions to skills for learning, life and work. As planned, staff should now introduce this across the school to ensure consistency and links to the world of work for all children.
- Learning for sustainability is embedded well across the curriculum through a focus on children's rights, global citizenship opportunities and environmental justice through Laudato Si.

## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Senior leaders and staff have developed highly effective partnerships with parents. They develop positive relationships with families, based on mutual respect and trust. Staff are fully committed to supporting all children and families. Parents appreciate that staff know their children very well as individuals, and that this contributes to the welcoming, nurturing ethos. Almost all parents report that they feel their child is safe. They recognise that the school offers a supportive learning environment for children.
- Staff communicate effectively with parents through newsletters, weekly spotlight emails, a website, an online learning tool and social media. Parents support the school well by attending planned events. These include Meet the Teacher, class Masses, workshops about learning and Health and Wellbeing and 'Tea, Toast and Prayers.' Parents enjoy these events, and a few would like further opportunities to learn alongside their child at school.
- Parents receive information about the work of the Parent Council through social media and email. The Parent Council engages well with the school. They raise funds to enhance learning opportunities and to reduce the Cost of the School Day. They are consulted about and support school improvement priorities.
- A few parents would like further advice on how their children's progress is assessed and would like more information about what their children are learning within the 'Big Question' approach.

## 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

- Across the school there is a strong, positive and inclusive ethos. Children benefit from respectful and caring relationships with their peers and with staff. As a result, children are nurtured and safe. Almost all children are proud of their school and have a sense of belonging to the school community.
- Children's wellbeing is supported well by strong relationships, which are built on trust and respect. Children feel valued and safe at school. Almost all children and parents either agree, or strongly agree that staff treat children fairly and with respect. Almost all agree or strongly agree that the school helps children to feel confident and that staff know the children very well. Children understand the school's commitment to upholding their human rights and have received accreditation for their work in this area. Older children articulate their knowledge of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and why it is important to be kind and show respect.
- Supportive and patient staff work with a few children who struggle to maintain a full day in the busy classroom environment. Staff create interesting, high-quality experiences for children who require support to regulate their behaviour and maintain positive interactions with their peers. During 'community connections', identified children spend time learning key life skills in the community. For example, they practice socialising in public spaces, using public transport and paying for services with money. For children who require this additional support, their learning is divided well to ensure a balance of classroom-based activities and healthy outdoor experiences.
- Children appreciate the benefit of maintaining loving, caring and understanding relationships. All staff have a collective understanding of the wellbeing indicators. Children understand and use the language of the wellbeing indicators to explain how they feel and what they need. Teachers effectively monitor children's wellbeing and protect times throughout the week where there is a special focus on how children are feeling. Every child engages in sessions known as the Monday Motivator, Wednesday Wonder and Friday Focus. They discuss how they are feeling in relation to the 'dispositions' of creativity, resilience, independence, curiosity, and bravery. Every child experiences a nurturing environment, enabling them to flourish in a climate of high expectations, innovation and creativity.
- Senior leaders have an analytical and systematic approach to understanding children's needs. They invite families to contribute their ideas about how the school can help improve children's wellbeing. Families regularly approach the school to discuss concerns about their children and feel that they receive prompt responses, helping to resolve any issues. Children participate in a wellbeing audit once per term. This measures the extent to which children are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, respected, responsible and included. Senior leaders analyse the results

and devise targeted plans in response to any concerns. Identified children receive emotional support to improve their wellbeing. They participate in wellbeing group sessions, engage with agencies such as ‘families first’ or have individual check-in sessions with staff appointed to lead on wellbeing. As a result, children have a space to talk about any adversity or problems they face and are learning coping skills for their future.

- All children benefit from universal support through a responsive wellbeing curriculum, relevant policies and nurturing practice. Targeted support is planned using detailed Children’s Wellbeing Plans (CWPs), which are reviewed and updated termly, or more frequently as necessary. Senior leaders collaborate with class teachers to produce CWPs, which document and plan for the needs of individual children. Staff collaborate with partners in social work, educational psychology, allied health and local voluntary organisations. Partners are carefully selected to meet the needs of children as detailed in their CWPs. Senior leaders employ a wide range of interventions to support learners’ wellbeing needs. These include small group support for social communication, emotional regulation and fine and gross motor skills. Forest-based outdoor learning, mindfulness sessions and individual check-ins help children increase emotional security and learn skills to regulate their emotions.
- Wellbeing is a key component of the transition process. Senior leaders ensure that relevant information about children’s emotional and social development is shared between stages as well as early years establishments and secondary schools. This helps staff to give children the best possible start in their new surroundings.
- Staff have a very good understanding of their statutory duties and responsibilities to improve outcomes for children. Through annual mandatory training, all staff are familiar with key documents and policy guidelines about child protection, professional codes of conduct, and data protection. Clerical staff share child protection guidance with staff and visitors. Senior leaders provide adults with relevant key information for working with children who have specific needs. This leads to staff supporting children confidently, keeping them safe and protected. Senior leaders record any wellbeing and safeguarding concerns, and any related actions are undertaken timeously and effectively.
- The inclusive, nurturing atmosphere helps children feel a sense of belonging. Children feel valued, included and involved in the life and work of the school. Across the school, children celebrate diversity and promote respect for all faiths. Children independently explore concepts such as resilience, culture and religion through a variety of interesting books, which are prominently displayed in classrooms.
- School staff liaise closely with colleagues from the Carlibar Communication Service to plan jointly for a few children who attend both establishments. This ensures that staff from both establishments understand and meet children’s needs well. It also supports teachers to build on progress made in both settings and to review and set relevant targets for children’s learning. A few identified children enjoy time in ‘The Nest’ where they benefit from small group learning and an enhanced nurturing environment.
- All staff have established very positive partnerships within the community and these have a positive influence on the experiences children receive. Senior leaders and staff work very well with a wide range of agencies and community partners to support both children and families. Senior leaders have forged effective partnerships with the local uniform bank, St Thomas’ Parish, Society of Saint Vincent De Paul (SVDP), the local Credit Union and East Renfrewshire Council Money Advice and Rights Team. These partners support senior leaders to minimise the cost of the school day. Families can access advice on areas such as financial benefits,

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healthy sleeping patterns and positive parenting. Across the school, staff value and respect the dignity and privacy of all families within the school community.



**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

- Overall, children's attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is good. Most children are achieving expected CfE levels in reading, writing, talking and listening and numeracy. At all stages, a few children are working beyond expected levels of attainment. Most children who require additional support are making good progress from their prior levels of learning. A few children at each stage could make better progress if learning was consistently set at the right level of difficulty for them.

**Attainment in literacy and English**

- Overall, children make good progress in reading, writing and listening and talking.

**Listening and talking**

- At early level, most children listen well to instructions, for example in following the class routines. Most listen and chat to each other with interest and take turns, as they play and learn in small groups. A few children at early level need prompted to listen well to others and respect others' viewpoint. They should continue to develop further their skills in listening and talking through play. At first level, most children are developing the skills of turn taking in group work. They understand the difference between fact and opinion. They are ready to learn more about how to decide if a source is reliable. At second level, children share their opinions well and are respectful. They build on the ideas of others and can present effectively at assemblies and in short films.

**Reading**

- At early level, children are developing their knowledge of initial sounds. They are beginning to use their knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns to read simple words. At first level, children are developing their sight vocabulary of common words and their dictionary skills. They practice 'choral reading' to enhance their confidence reading aloud. Most children are keen to have more opportunity to read aloud as an individual. At second level, children use key reading skills such as predicting, inferring and summarising well. They read with fluency, understanding and expression using appropriate pace and tone.

**Writing**

- At early level, children are mark-making and have opportunities for emergent writing through play. They create drawings to share their stories and feelings. They should practise forming lowercase letters legibly using a pencil, to increase their control and confidence. At first level, children check their writing to ensure it makes sense. They should continue to make use of spelling strategies when spelling familiar and unfamiliar words. At first and second level, children plan their writing and use feedback to improve their writing. At second level, they use grammar and punctuation skills appropriately to enhance their writing. For example, they understand similes, metaphor and use alliteration to enhance their writing.

## Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, children make good progress in numeracy and mathematics.

## Number, money and measure

- At early level, almost all children recognise, write, count and order numbers within 10. All children are developing their number bonds to 10. A minority of children at early level are developing number bonds beyond 10. Children should now work on counting back from 10 and beyond and writing numbers beyond 10. They should focus on developing the formation of the numbers correctly. At first level, children confidently round to the nearest 10 or 100 and understand place value to hundreds, tens and units. They would benefit from more practice of written calculations with exchange and in recalling times tables. They are confident with money and have a good understanding of budgeting in real life contexts. At second level, children confidently partition numbers and understand place value well. They are confident in multiplication and now need to apply this knowledge to understand better division calculations. They have a good understanding of budgeting and how technology has changed the way we pay for items.

## Shape, position and movement

- At early level, children are developing their understanding of simple two-dimensional shapes and identify them in their environment. At first level, children identify right angles, and the main features of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. They would benefit from further challenge in this area. At second level, children identify right, acute and obtuse angles. Teachers should help them develop further their knowledge of complementary and supplementary angles and use this knowledge to calculate missing angles.

## Information handling

- At early level, children are developing their knowledge of colour, shape, size and other properties to match and sort items in a variety of different ways. At first level, most children understand well different types of information handling and how to use these appropriately. They organise and display data effectively using tables and bar graphs. At second level, children collect, organise and display data accurately in a variety of ways, for example, creating surveys, tables, bar graphs, line graphs, and simple pie charts.

## Attainment over time

- The headteacher is closely tracking the progress and attainment of children who face single and multiple additional barriers to learning. Senior leaders make good use of this data to allocate PEF efficiently to accelerate progress for these learners. A few of these learners make very good progress in their attainment over time. School data indicates that attainment has been steady for most learners. Children with additional support needs make good progress in their attainment and achievement over time.
- In session 2022/2023, there was 90.7% attendance, which was in line with the national average. There were no exclusions during that period. The headteacher closely monitors attendance and takes appropriate action to address absence. She works proactively with families to ensure attendance issues are addressed. This helps improve outcomes for children as they are in school more often. Attendance in the school has improved over the past year. This is most notable for identified children receiving support. There is a focus on working with families to support improved attendance and staff have introduced robust processes and procedures to maintain improvements.

## Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Children are proud of their achievements and celebrate these at whole school events and within classes. Staff encourage families to recognise and celebrate children's achievement

through online platforms and through the weekly 'spotlight' communications. Parents can click on a link in the weekly newsletter to inform school staff of their child's achievements at home and in the community. Monday morning assemblies provide a space to celebrate children's achievements and for them to practise their faith.

- Learners in P4 and P7 celebrate receiving sacraments which are important milestones in their spiritual development. In P6 and P7, learners are actively involved in the Pope Francis Faith Award. Across the school, the strong focus on learning for sustainability provides children with opportunities to be responsible citizens and effective contributors by improving the environment.
- Children achieve success in a variety of sports across the community, winning awards over the last few years at the Neilston Cattle Show. Children's participation in sport and after school activities is tracked and there are successful efforts to target those who are not as active. Staff are beginning to track and monitor the skills children are developing from these activities. Children are increasingly taking up new opportunities. In session 2023-2024, the uptake rose from 43.5% the previous year to 69.1%. Senior leaders plan to ensure this continued tracking of achievement leads to all children applying skills learned at school in a different context.

### **Equity for all learners**

- The headteacher consults with staff and parents on how to use PEF effectively. She uses PEF to provide additional staffing to support successful, targeted interventions in health and wellbeing, literacy and numeracy. Through careful analysis, the headteacher can demonstrate that interventions are helping to accelerate progress towards closing the gaps in learning for identified children.
- All staff know children and families very well and have a good understanding of the socio-economic background. They are aware of their personal circumstances and potential barriers to learning. They ensure the cost of the school day is reduced through initiatives such as 'pre-loved' stalls. A breakfast cart is available for children at the start of the school day. Children and families have been involved in participatory budgeting, allocating money for educational trips. This supports all children to be included in the life of the school. Senior leaders assist families to access resources and agencies that can provide the right support.

## 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.



Area for Improvement	"Staff should raise attainment further by setting all learning experiences at the appropriate pace and level of challenge. This should ensure that all children make the best possible progress."				
Impact/Outcomes	Action	Personnel	Timescale	Resources	Monitoring/Evaluation
<p>Effectively differentiated learning experiences, with appropriate pace and challenge for all learners.</p> <p>The needs of all learners being met, including the most able, leading to accelerated progress and the raising of attainment</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Engage staff in systematic data analysis to identify next steps in learning for all</li> <li>2. Develop collaborative forward planning across levels to ensure consistent expectations and appropriate pace at all stages</li> <li>3. Develop an approach which ensures rigorous tracking of the progress of more able pupils</li> <li>4. Ensure a discreet focus on differentiation, pace and challenge within quality assurance through triangulation of SLT and peer learning visits, learner evidence, professional dialogue etc.)</li> <li>5. Include 'Fact, Story, Action' Model as part of ongoing professional dialogue and target setting process</li> </ol>	<p>Teaching Staff</p> <p>SLT</p> <p>M. Kane (HT)</p> <p>SLT</p> <p>Teaching Staff</p> <p>SLT</p>	<p>January 2025</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>April-October 2025 (Transition)</p> <p>Tracking Periods</p> <p>January 2025-December 2025</p> <p>Termly</p>	<p><a href="#">Education Scotland Moderation Cycle</a></p> <p>Filemaker Pro</p> <p><a href="#">HGIOS</a></p> <p><a href="#">GTCS Professional Standards</a></p> <p>National Benchmarks</p> <p>Forward Plans including ERC Skills Planners</p>	<p>Assessment and Performance Information</p> <p>Data Analysis</p> <p>Forward Plans</p> <p>QA Procedures</p>
<p>Enhanced practitioner capacity to design and implement differentiated playful learning experiences that meet the diverse needs of all learners</p> <p>An increase in pupil engagement, motivation and progress within Early and First Levels</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Focus on differentiation, observation techniques and the effective use of floor books within a playful pedagogy framework</li> <li>2. Establish a common language and shared understanding of differentiation, observation and assessment amongst P1 and P2 staff through collaborative planning and reflection</li> <li>3. Implement a structured observation system for observing children's play</li> <li>4. Establish a floor book protocol with guidelines that effectively document children's learning and progress over time</li> </ol>	<p>P1 CT</p> <p>P2 CT</p> <p>C. Kearney (PT)</p>	<p>Termly Focus</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>January 2025-June 2025</p> <p>June 2025 – December 2025</p>	<p><a href="#">Play Scotland Realising the Ambition</a></p> <p><a href="#">Education Scotland: Early Years Toolkit</a></p> <p><a href="#">Froebelian Principles</a></p> <p>ERC Early Years</p> <p>GLOW Site</p>	<p>Short-Term Target Setting</p> <p>Sharing of Practice – particularly Madras FC</p> <p>Quality Assurance Procedures</p> <p>Floor Books and Observation Schedules</p>

Area for Improvement	“Senior leaders should extend the range of moderation opportunities for staff to participate in, beyond the school. As staff develop their experience, this should lead to increased breadth and depth in children’s learning.”				
Impact/Outcomes	Action	Personnel	Timescale	Resources	Monitoring/Evaluation
<p>A culture of professional learning and collaboration.</p> <p>Increased consistency of professional judgement of learners’ progress towards, and achievement of, a level.</p> <p>Increased breadth and depth in learning experiences.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduce ‘Solution Circles’ to encourage dialogue and support amongst staff</li> <li>2. Moderate learner progress across levels in collaboration with Neilston Primary School and Madras Family Centre (Early Years Transition)</li> <li>3. Peer learning visits aligned with whole-school focuses on differentiation and effective questioning and feedback</li> <li>4. Engage in peer and cluster moderation of Writing</li> <li>5. Campus moderation of performance information to ensure equity of experience within the community</li> <li>6. Engage in ERC’s Collaborative Learning Networks (CLN)</li> </ol>	<p>Teaching Staff M. Kane</p> <p>Teaching Staff</p> <p>Teaching Staff SLT</p> <p>Cluster Colleagues Campus Staff SLT</p> <p>Teaching Staff</p>	<p>From January 2025</p> <p>From January 2025</p> <p>January-June 2025</p> <p>August 2025-June 2026</p> <p>January-June 2025</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p><a href="#">Solution Circles – Forrest, Pearpoint and Colleagues</a></p> <p><a href="#">Education Scotland Moderation Cycle</a></p> <p>PM Writing Performance Information PowerBi</p>	<p>Learning Visit QA Evaluations Moderation – Process and Outcome Documentation Samples of Writing Analysis of Performance Information through Power Bi</p>