

CLACKMANNANSHIRE COUNCIL

Report to: People Committee

Date of Meeting: 16th May 2019

Subject: Education Scotland Inspection St Serf's Primary School and Nursery

Report by: Cathy Quinn, Improving Outcomes Manager

1.0 Purpose

1.0 To share the outcome of the inspection process at St Serf's Primary School and Nursery Class. (Appendices 1 and 2.)

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the People Committee notes the report, comments and challenging as appropriate.

3.0 Background

3.1 Education Scotland (ES), undertake an annual sample of inspections across Scotland (approximately 240 per year) covering nursery, primary, special and secondary schools. A letter to parents/carers on each inspection is published approximately three months after the inspection. On the basis of this letter the school, with the support of the authority, amends its improvement plan to take account of any agreed areas for improvement.

3.2 A team of Inspectors from Education Scotland made a visit to the school and nursery from February 4th to 7th 2019.

3.3 A letter has been issued to parents/carers, sharing strengths and development needs. (Appendix 3)

3.4 The review found the following strengths in the school and nursery

- Articulate, friendly children who are respectful towards each other and proud of their school.
- The staff's commitment to ensuring children are active. Children enjoy high quality physical education and can access a range of clubs to stay active. They participate in a wide range of sporting events. This is supporting children to be healthy, and has increased awareness of positive choices they can make to improve their wellbeing.

- The teamwork in the nursery. Staff use self-evaluation effectively to identify areas for improvement and strive to provide a caring ethos and positive learning experiences for children in the nursery class.

3.5 **The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the Headteacher and Improving Outcomes Manager.**

- There is a need for stronger strategic leadership and direction to the work of the nursery class and school. Senior leaders, and all teachers need to improve approaches to self-evaluation to ensure improvement priorities are based on the needs of the school and lead to improved outcomes for all children. Whole school approaches to monitoring and tracking children's work should be reviewed.
- The leadership team and staff need to ensure all learners experience high quality learning, teaching and assessment, with appropriate levels of pace and challenge. Approaches to assessment should be updated, embedded in planning, and inform next steps for learners.
- Improve children's attainment in literacy and numeracy and mathematics.
- Continue to ensure children experience progression and depth across all curricular areas within relevant contexts which take account of the school's local area and 21st Century Scotland.

3.6 Education services have worked with the Acting Headteacher to develop an action plan and will continue to monitor and evaluate progress of this plan.

3.7 Education Scotland will liaise with Clackmannanshire Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. They will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within one year of the publication of this letter.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 None

5.0 Sustainability Implications

5.1 The paper has no sustainability implications.

6.0 Resource Implications

6.1 None

7.0 Exempt Reports

7.1 Is the report exempt? No

8.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

(1) **Our Priorities** (Please double click on the check box)

Clackmannanshire will be attractive to businesses & people and ensure fair opportunities for all	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Our families; children and young people will have the best possible start in life	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Women and girls will be confident and aspirational, and achieve their full potential	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Our communities will be resilient and empowered so that they can thrive and flourish	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The Council is effective, efficient and recognised for excellence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

(2) **Council Policies** (Please detail)

Not applicable.

9.0 Equalities Impact

90.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?

Yes

10.0 Legality

10.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the council is acting within its legal powers.

Yes.

11.0 Appendices

1. School Report
2. Nursery Report
3. Parent Letter



12.0 Background Papers

None

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Approved by

NAME	DESIGNATION	SIGNATURE
Anne M Pearson	Chief Education Officer	
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Summarised inspection findings

St Serf's Primary School

Clackmannanshire Council

23 April 2019

Key contextual information

St Serf's Primary School is a non-denominational primary school located in the town of Tullibody in Clackmannanshire. The school's provision comprises ten primary classes. There is a nursery class with provision for children aged two to five. The headteacher is supported by one deputy headteacher, one principal teacher and one acting principal teacher.

1.3 Leadership of change

weak

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 headteacher, staff and children recently worked well together to create a refreshed vision and values for the school. Parents were consulted on this and feedback was used to inform the final format. Children played an active role in composing a school song to help everyone remember the new vision and values. Staff should now ensure the vision underpins the work of the school and becomes part of daily life at St Serf's Primary School. Realising the shared vision of inspired individuals, a love of learning and determination to succeed should be embedded across the life and ethos of the school. The school has plans to revisit their curriculum rationale. When undertaking this work the headteacher should ensure all stakeholders are involved in creating a curriculum rationale that reflects the unique context of the school and actively supports children to overcome barriers to their learning.
- The headteacher is keen to gather the views of parents and children through questionnaires and surveys. A recent questionnaire highlighted bullying as an issue. The headteacher responded to this appropriately by engaging with a national training programme and implementing a range of activities within the school to support children and staff in dealing with bullying behaviour. As a result, there has been positive change across the school. In pre-inspection questionnaires most children said they felt the school dealt well with bullying or they had never experienced bullying. The headteacher should continue to identify ways to involve all stakeholders in evaluating the work of the school and affecting positive change.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a good understanding of the social, economic and cultural context of their school community. Senior leaders and staff should use this knowledge more effectively to identify possible barriers to learning and focus on raising attainment for all. Over recent years the school has introduced a number of initiatives and interventions supported by Scottish Attainment Challenge funding within Clackmannanshire. There is an urgent need for the school to review the number of initiatives they are trying to implement. Robust and rigorous monitoring and evaluation with a clear focus on the impact these initiatives have on improving outcomes for learners must be central to the work of the school.
- Staff across the school are keen to take on leadership roles. All staff have an area of responsibility. However, there needs to be better processes and systems in place to support effective leadership of change at all levels. The leadership team should ensure priorities are

identified through rigorous self-evaluation and focus on improving outcomes for the children and families at St Serf's Primary School.

- The current school improvement plan has priorities linked to parental engagement, raising attainment in literacy and numeracy, health and wellbeing and digital literacy. In taking forward these priorities, promoted staff should ensure the impact of change is monitored and evaluated regularly using a wide range of evidence. This will lead to greater consistency of learning and teaching across the school.
- The school is in the process of implementing a new system to track attainment. Senior leaders should review the tracking and monitoring procedures in the school alongside this change. The leadership team meet with teachers across the year to discuss progress of individuals and groups of learners. There is a need to ensure these meetings focus on raising attainment and closing the attainment gap. Minutes should include clear next steps and action points. Evaluating progress and identifying next steps in learning for individuals and groups will guide staff in how to raise attainment.
- There is a professional review and development (PRD) process within the school for teaching staff. Stronger links should be made with the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) standards and school improvement priorities. This will ensure the PRD process leads to systematic opportunities for staff to review and refresh their practice. As part of the quality assurance process the headteacher and depute headteacher observe classroom practice. This is not yet securing high quality learning and teaching. There is great scope to broaden the range of quality assurance activities to improve learning and teaching and improve attainment across the school.
- Children have opportunities to apply for school jobs, for example, tour guides, librarians, tech team and playground squad. There is an application, interview and training process supporting children to make links with the world of work. Senior leaders and staff should build on this providing further opportunities for children across the school to take on meaningful leadership roles that lead to positive change in their school.
- The school is implementing its plans for pupil equity funding (PEF). The headteacher and staff need to monitor and gather robust evidence on interventions and the impact on outcomes for children. They need to ensure their approaches to improving equity result in closing the poverty related attainment gap.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

weak

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

- Most children are motivated to learn. Tasks and activities are planned using a learning context overview which is then linked to Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes. In a few examples, staff enable children to develop their own interests and promote group working. Staff should build on this good practice to create greater breadth and depth in learning.
- Children's involvement in planning learning is developing their understanding of themselves as learners. As planned, staff should continue to embed this approach and ensure children are confident in knowing their strengths and next steps. Children spoken to during the inspection are not always clear about the purpose of learning and the role they have in leading their learning. As this awareness develops, levels of engagement in learning should increase and support children to make the progress they are capable of. Across the school, children who require additional support with their learning have their needs identified using a variety of assessment processes. The support provided does not meet the needs and interests of most children sufficiently well.
- The quality of learning and teaching is too variable. It does not yet reflect the school aim of 'Always be the best you can be.' Overall, learning is too teacher-led with few opportunities for children to exercise choice, responsibility and independence. This is preventing children from experiencing appropriate challenge and support in their learning. The result is that most children's needs are not being met effectively and consistently.
- There is a need to develop an understanding about how high quality learning and teaching will contribute to improvements in attainment and equity. The impact of strategies to raise attainment for all and reduce the attainment gap is not yet evident. This shared understanding of effective learning and teaching at all stages in the school should be developed as a priority.
- In almost all lessons staff support children to understand what and how they are learning. In the best examples, most children can describe the tasks they are engaged in but a majority of children cannot yet identify the skills they are developing. There is scope for children to be more involved in how they understand their learning. As planned, professional learning linked to formative assessment approaches will support the consistency, quality and understanding of these strategies. This will support appropriate interventions and the use of effective feedback to ensure children progress in their learning.
- Most staff use interactive whiteboards effectively as a tool to support learning and teaching. Laptops and tablets are used regularly by children. Teachers have identified plans to further develop the use of digital technology across the school. This will support children's use of digital technology as part of developing skills for learning, life and work.

- In a few examples staff make effective use of questioning to encourage children to think and explain their learning. A more consistent approach to high quality questioning is now needed to support higher order thinking. This will ensure learning experiences provide opportunities for increased breadth, depth and application of learning.
- The school uses a variety of assessment information, including standardised assessments, and a number of summative tests in literacy and numeracy. Staff should ensure all assessment tools are fit for purpose. They should continue to develop consistency in using assessment data when planning next steps in learning for children. The school is aware of the need to have robust assessment processes supporting professional judgements on children's attainment. This will ensure accurate predictions, and improved progress and achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels.
- Planned participation in the moderation process within and out with the school aims to support staff understanding of expectations and national standards. Teachers have recently started to engage with national benchmarks for literacy and numeracy. They should continue to work with colleagues in the cluster to develop a shared understanding of standards.
- Teachers are at the very early stages of planning assessment as an integral part of effective learning and teaching. There is a need to develop approaches to assessment that evidence breadth, challenge and application in learning. As discussed, this will support staff to plan relevant and appropriately challenging learning for all children.
- Staff plan over different timescales including weekly plans and an annual learning context overview. Staff are developing their confidence in their use of progression pathways when planning learning. The school should continue to develop their collaborative approaches to planning across and within levels. This will ensure the needs of learners are met across all stages and areas of the curriculum. As learning and teaching approaches develop, it will be important to review planning systems and processes. This will ensure they are manageable and impact on children's progress allowing for the planning of more creative approaches to learning.
- Tracking procedures are at the early stages of supporting teachers' professional judgements and use of data. During tracking and attainment meetings barriers to learning are discussed. However, strategic monitoring and analysis is not yet reliable and accurate. Senior leaders now need to ensure all staff implement interventions in a well-planned way to ensure they raise attainment and achievement for all.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- There are curriculum pathways across all areas of the curriculum which have been developed taking account of local and national advice. Staff are aware that they now need to review these progression pathways to ensure they build on prior learning. This includes literacy to ensure the expectations are reflecting current national guidance
- There is a need for staff to review the curriculum rationale ensuring it supports children's learning across the school. Part of this work includes reviewing the whole school approach to interdisciplinary learning (IDL). This will allow the staff to consider the unique context of St Serf's Primary School and ensure the curriculum appropriately reflects the developmental stages of all the children. It should clearly incorporate national advice on the design principles and the four contexts for learning.
- The current learning pathways across the school are flexible and allow current interests and events such as the Burns' Supper and Christmas Fayre to be included. These are seen by children and staff as highlights in the school year. As staff continue to review and develop the curriculum they should ensure that these learning episodes are embedded into the learning pathways and are not seen as isolated events. Currently the range of IDL approaches do not allow all children to receive the same experiences. As part of the development work staff should ensure that across each year group all children are receiving their entitlement to learning in an equitable way.
- Across the school children have opportunities to learn outside. They are clearly benefitting from working out with the classroom. As part of the review of the curriculum, staff should consider approaches to outdoor learning ensuring it is regular and progressive.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Opportunities are planned for parents to attend events across the school year. Curriculum workshops, class assemblies and class events share with parents what and how their children learn. Active social media feeds, school and class newsletters and the school website keep parents up to date with school life. Parents who met with inspectors spoke positively about a pilot project to enhance home-school communication using an electronic application. The headteacher actively seeks the views of parents. They have been consulted on the new school vision and values and new reporting format.
- The headteacher attended training with cluster colleagues on parental engagement. The self-evaluation completed as part of this training identified strengths and areas for development. Current plans to work with a group of parents to create a parental engagement action plan will develop further opportunities for staff and parents to work together to support learners. The headteacher should identify partners to work with to provide parents and children opportunities to learn together.

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.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

satisfactory

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 school team is working towards ensuring a shared understanding of wellbeing across the school community. Staff use local authority health and wellbeing (HWB) pathways to support their planning of appropriate learning experiences at all stages. When used effectively this offers children good learning across the HWB organisers. However, senior leaders should monitor the delivery of HWB to ensure challenge is appropriate, and that children develop a broad range of HWB knowledge and skills. The over reliance on 'linking' learning within IDL should be reviewed.
- Most children are becoming confident in understanding and talking about the wellbeing indicators. To promote this, staff should continue to make explicit use of the wellbeing indicators in their learning and teaching, and link this with the HWB learning pathways. Most children feel safe in school. Most show respect to their peers. A recent focus on anti-bullying, including Respect Me training for staff, has led to children having increased confidence that any bullying or unpleasant behaviour will be resolved. A few children would like inappropriate behaviour to be addressed more promptly. A few children do not feel respected or valued by staff, and have a perception that they are not treated fairly or as equals. Children in focus groups talked positively about the regular opportunities to chat about their learning and life with their teacher during pupil voice slots. Children can explain how to keep safe online at school and at home. Across the school children talk with confidence about keeping healthy. They know they should make healthy choices in their eating and older children are vocal about avoiding too much sugar.
- Being active is an important feature of school life. All children experience two hours high quality physical education each week from a specialist teacher. All children are active participants in the lessons and are developing skills through a well-planned progressive pathway. In addition, the school is very well supported by Active Schools. Most children participate in active sports clubs. These include football, gymnastics and dance. This is having a positive impact on their wellbeing, and is supporting them to develop a range of physical skills as well as team work and leadership. Children also have regular opportunities to participate in Clackmannanshire Primary Schools Sports Association festivals and competitions. The school has achieved a Sport Scotland Gold Award. All staff involved recognise the need to track children who are not participating in clubs and events, and take action to ensure all children's needs and interests are being met, in particular those facing socio-economic and health challenges. Most of the staff team is aware that becoming a nurturing school will support improved relationships across the school and equip them to better meet children's needs. Staff have identified the need to refresh whole school awareness of children's rights.
- Senior leaders are aware of statutory requirements and codes of practice. There is a range of processes in place to support the identification and recording of children's needs. This includes the local authority approach to staged intervention. Staff make use of wellbeing indicators to

support targeted children to self-evaluate their wellbeing and in the Child's Plan. The quality of Child's Plans is variable. There needs to be a clearer focus on achievement and learning, and closing the poverty related attainment gap. There is scope for the staff team to be supported to reflect on the appropriateness of the language they use in plans and records, including children's chronology. Staff have identified children across the school who need additional support with their learning. Support staff and teachers are deployed to support individuals and groups. We have asked senior leaders to ensure these staff are supported to ensure children experience learning that is motivating and meets their needs. Children, particularly at early level, would benefit from play based learning.

- Senior leaders are aware that all staff would benefit from regular professional learning and updates around current legislation, for example the equalities act.
- We have asked staff to reflect on their approaches to inclusion and equality. Whilst there is a range of opportunities for children to engage in the life of the school, including discussing how issues like bullying can be improved, too many children experience low self-esteem and do not feel valued in school. A significant minority of children who face barriers to learning, or who need additional support with learning, do not feel included in class and are very sensitive about being treated differently. The staff use the religious and moral education curriculum, and regular assemblies and religious observance, to help children learn about diversity. As they continue to develop the curriculum there is scope to extend this across the curriculum within relevant contexts. There needs to be a continued focus on improving attainment and achievement for children facing barriers, including children living in areas of socio-economic challenge.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

weak

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

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

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Overall, children's progress and attainment in literacy and numeracy is weak.
- The data provided by the school shows that by the end of P7 the majority of children achieve second level in reading, writing and numeracy and most children achieve this level in listening and talking. Observations of learning, sampling work and speaking with children indicate that the majority of children in the early and first levels are working below expected Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy.
- Across the school, children's progress is inconsistent and variable. Data shared with the inspectors did not provide a clear picture of the proportion of children achieving appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels. Staff recognise the need to develop further their approaches to assessment to include the guidance provided by the benchmarks to ensure that they are able to make more robust and reliable judgements about children's progress. This will ensure children are working at the appropriate levels, receiving challenge and support as required. This will also enable staff to analyse the data of different groups of children in a more systematic and robust manner.

Attainment in literacy and English

Listening and talking

- Across the school, the majority of children listen well to instructions and are engaged during class activities. At the early level children require further support to develop their listening skills as a matter of urgency. Only a few children are able to listen and take turns to respond to adults and their classmates appropriately. At first and second level, the majority of children participate in class and group discussions well. By the end of second level a majority of children can make simple notes in their own words and a few are able to respond appropriately to a range of questions. There is scope to develop children's skills in listening and talking more progressively across the school. Commendably children across the school have been developing their knowledge of Scots language, learning new vocabulary and endeavouring to use this across the school.

Reading

- Over a number of years, the school has developed a range of approaches to foster a love of reading. They have endeavoured to encourage a reading culture involving children, parents and staff. Staff have successfully introduced a wider range of reading resources and initiatives across the school to engage all the children across the school. This includes The First Minister's Reading Challenge where a few children were fortunate to attend a reading celebration.

- Children access texts of their choice from the recently refurbished library areas and class reading areas. These areas could be developed further to ensure the most engaging and relevant books in a wide range of genres are available to all the children. Staff are enthusiastic about the recently adopted intervention to promote literacy. Careful monitoring and tracking of this new approach will be required to ensure it is impacting positively on children's attainment.
- A few children at early level, use their knowledge of sounds and letters to read short sentences. A majority of children are developing their knowledge of phonics to read simple words. They use illustrations to support their understanding of texts. As they progress through first and second levels a majority of children demonstrate increased fluency and effective expression. By the end of second level a few can talk about favourite genres, authors, characters and setting with confidence. A few talk confidently about figurative language and how it enhances the text. At second level a majority of children are benefitting from the focus on developing effective comprehension skills and strategies. Children would benefit from a wider range of reading materials. Boys who spoke to inspectors told us they found it difficult to find books to match their interests.

Writing

- Overall, a majority of children are making satisfactory progress in writing, a few make good progress. At early level, a few children are beginning to develop independence in writing. At first level, most children write independently, organising their writing in a logical order and appropriate format. A majority use simple punctuation accurately. They should now be encouraged to write at greater length and ensure that they check their work for accuracy. By the end of second level, a majority of children use sentences of differing lengths and vary sentence openings. They link sentences using a range of conjunctions, a few use paragraphs. There is scope to develop children's writing skills through applying these more frequently to a wide range of real contexts and greater variety of genres.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

Number, money and measure

- Overall, less than half of children at early level and a majority of children as they move through the school are making appropriate progress in number, money and measure. Pace through the Curriculum for Excellence levels needs to increase to ensure more children attain appropriate levels and do not have gaps in their knowledge and skills.
- Across the school children are developing their mental agility skills through a range of approaches and interventions. At early level most children are developing an understanding of numbers to ten. A few can count backwards and order numbers from zero to 20. A few can identify o'clock on an analogue clock. There is scope to consolidate children's understanding of number quantities, sequencing and ordering. Children working towards first level round numbers to the nearest ten and 100. They can identify the value of each digit in a whole number with three digits. A few can apply strategies to solve problems. At first level a majority can explain what a fraction is, a few can find the fraction of an amount. By second level a majority are making appropriate progress in number processes and mental agility. They articulate a range of mental and written strategies to support their learning. Teachers should plan opportunities for children to develop problem solving skills and to apply their knowledge at all levels.

Shape, position and movement

- Overall, a majority of children are making appropriate progress in shape, position and movement. At early level most children identify simple 2D shapes. At first level, a majority can use an analogue clock and a few can use 24 hour notation. They need opportunities to develop their understanding of right angles and symmetry. At second level children identify and classify a range of angles and use appropriate mathematical language. There is scope to expand

specific vocabulary to describe 3D objects and use this knowledge to support their understanding of nets.

Information handling

- Overall, a majority of children are making appropriate progress in information handling. Across the school a majority of children have an understanding of graphs and how to interpret data as appropriate to their age. There is scope to revisit this work to ensure children are confident in using a wider range of graphs. At early level children use tally marks and create picture graphs. At first level children interpret simple graphs and charts. At second level a majority display data appropriately. A few can discuss the reliability of data taking the audience into account. There is scope for the school to make increased use of digital technology to display information and gain skills in analysis and interpretation of data.

Attainment over time

- At the time of the inspection the school was unable to provide data on children's attainment over time as they progressed through the school. The limited data provided consisted of a range of summative assessments as well as teachers' professional judgements. The headteacher is aware of the limitations in this process and has indicated that the staff will be adopting a new approach. This needs to be implemented immediately to ensure there is a clear picture of children's progress over time.
- Through lesson observations, sampling children's work, focus groups and discussion with staff the inspection team would advise staff to carefully review the range of data across the school. They should refer to the most recent national guidance and ensure they can confidently assess children's attainment and progress accurately.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- The school recognises and celebrates children's achievements through weekly assemblies. There is scope for staff to track children's engagement in school, extra-curricular and community events to identify specific needs of individuals and groups of children. Through 'Developing Young Workforce' (DYW) a few children are provided with opportunities to play an active role in leading activities across the school. The librarians are enthusiastically encouraging children to read at lunch times, creating a space to read outside. We have asked the school to further develop this work to ensure a coherent approach to the development of skills and ensuring they impact on the most disadvantaged learners.
- Across the school children participate in World Impact Groups linked to Global Goals for Sustainability. The school has achieved a Level 1 Award from the Royal Horticultural Society. Commendably the school achieved Sport Scotland's Gold Sport award and children attend a range of sporting activities to encourage a healthy lifestyle. The school was awarded the Local Authority Scots Language Trophy. Children were selected to attend a celebration as part of the First Minister's Reading Challenge.

Equity for all learners

- Staff have a sound knowledge of the changing local community. Across the school there is a wide range of interventions being implemented to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy. Many have been coordinated by the local authority. Moving forward, as a result of careful self-evaluation approaches, the school should consider the most appropriate interventions which will impact positively on children's attainment. Careful tracking of these improvements will allow the school to evaluate the impact of the interventions.
- The school has used the PEF to develop digital skills across P5 to P7. At early and first level, children are receiving targeted support from additional staff in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Staff are aware of the need to develop systems to monitor the effectiveness of

these interventions, to ensure all children, particularly the most disadvantaged are achieving the best possible outcomes.

Choice of QI : 3.3 Creativity and employability

This indicator focuses on a range of significant skills for learning, life and work which children and young people should increasingly be able to demonstrate as they move through their learning pathways. A key feature is learners' ability to apply their skills in a range of contexts, including in unfamiliar settings. Learners understand the importance of these skills to their future lives and to local, national and global economies.

- Creativity skills
- Digital innovation
- Digital literacy
- Increasing employability skills

- Children at St Serf's Primary School increasingly experience learning activities that offer them opportunities to explore the world of work. Over the course of the school year staff plan a range of learning opportunities, often within IDL contexts, which support children to extend their knowledge and skills, particularly across enterprise, digital literacy and learning about the world of work.
- Older children benefitted from a visit to 'Sky Academy' and were motivated to create a news channel. Their achievements are on the school website.
- On an annual basis a class is responsible for planning and organising the schools' Burns Supper. This year P5 children had the opportunity to take ownership of their learning, develop organisational skills and manage budgets. A large number of children and their families attended and the class received very positive feedback about the event.
- Enterprise features in IDL across the school. For example the school Christmas Fayre promotes the development of creativity and enterprise skills. Children learn to take on a range of roles and to work together as a team. They produce a range of goods for the Fayre and manage events and budgets. There is scope to ensure, that this important feature of school life offers sufficient progression, depth and challenge in children's skills development.
- As the school continues to review the curriculum, they recognise the need to ensure children experience high quality, progressive experiences across Expressive Arts. This will offer children broader opportunities to develop creativity skills. The current approach to planning IDL does not ensure high quality learning in music, drama or art and design.
- The school is committed to ensuring children develop digital literacy. All children have access to a range of digital tools in classrooms and around the school. Learning is enhanced and supported by an increasing range of apps. PEF has been used to introduce a team of 'Digital Ninjas'. A targeted group of children have been trained to lead other learners in the effective use of GLOW, animation activities and coding. This group talk confidently about their learning and their role across the school. We have asked staff to monitor and evaluate the impact of this intervention on the targeted group, and on learners across the school.
- Older children have recently begun to complete homework tasks on line, through their GLOW emails. At present, the tasks comprise of spelling and maths activities. Children would welcome more interesting homework tasks online.
- All children engaged in the recent stay safe online day. Guidance is displayed in all classes and children at all stages can talk about how to be safe online. This includes knowing when to get an adult, and keeping personal information private.

- Children across the school are increasingly aware of future employment opportunities. Older children can talk about the reasons they would like to do a particular job and are beginning to understand the knowledge and skills they might need. Staff regularly organise 'world of work' events where parents talk about their jobs. As noted above, as the school continues to develop the curriculum we have asked them to consider how the DYW agenda can be embedded across the curriculum with a focus on skills progression. Children are not confident to discuss the skills they are acquiring through the curriculum areas, and in their wider achievements. Staff and children should work directly with the career education standard.

- Across the school year most children attending St Serf's Primary School experience a range of interesting episodes of learning. Next steps include ensuring all children have access to these learning opportunities and that creativity, digital literacy and skills for learning life and work are embedded across the curriculum. Children need increased opportunity to demonstrate and apply their skills and knowledge in real life, unfamiliar settings.

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.

Summarised inspection findings

St Serf's Primary School and Nursery Class

Clackmannanshire Council

23 April 2019

Key contextual information

St Serf's Primary School nursery class is located a short distance from the main school building. The nursery class is registered for 60 children at any one time for children aged two years to those not yet attending primary school, with a maximum of ten children under three years of age. A few full-day places are available. At the time of the inspection there were 12 children aged under three years on the roll. Children have access to a large playroom with an additional room for children aged two to three years. An attractive and secure outdoor space is accessible from the playroom. There have been significant changes to the practitioner team in the twelve month period preceding the inspection.

1.3 Leadership of change

good

This indicator focuses on working together at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which reflects the context of the setting within its community. Planning for continuous improvement change should be evidence-based and clearly linked to strong self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure that the pace of change is well judged and appropriate to have a positive impact on outcomes for children. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the setting and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- The senior early learning and childcare educator provides strong positive leadership and direction to the nursery class. She models good practice and supports practitioners to develop their skills through monitoring and well-judged feedback. Going forward, it will be important for senior leaders in the school to provide strong strategic leadership and management support to the nursery team.
- Values of trust and respect underpin all aspects of the work of the nursery.
- Practitioners are making good progress in developing a curriculum rationale. This reflects current research and thinking on quality early learning and childcare. Practitioners have consulted with parents and carers to find out what outcomes they value, and what they want children to learn. Based on this work, the nursery team have established guiding principles with a focus on family, play, belonging and relationships. This is helping to shape the work and life of the nursery. It would be useful now to review the aims of the nursery to prioritise future improvement.
- There have been significant changes to the practitioner team over a number of years. Despite this, they work together well as a team. They have begun to make increasingly effective use of national quality indicators and challenge questions to explore strengths and identify areas for improvement. We have asked them to involve children more in self-evaluation for improvement.
- There is an appropriate improvement plan in place in the nursery. We were able to see how this is helping to give direction and focus to improvement work. The team are keen to develop their practice and capacity for improvement through professional learning and partnership with other agencies. It will be important to embed newly developing skills over time.
- Practitioners are enthusiastic about opportunities to lead and develop improvements in the nursery. We were able to observe how this is having a positive impact on children's

experiences. Good examples of successful practitioner leadership include, enhanced provision for children aged under three years, and enrichment of outdoor learning experiences.

- Practitioners should continue to develop approaches to monitoring and build on the existing strong approaches to self-evaluation. This should include a strong focus on the quality of children's experiences and opportunities to develop and apply early literacy and numeracy skills.

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experience for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of interactions
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- The ethos and culture of the nursery demonstrate the team's strong commitment to securing positive outcomes for children and families. Relationships are positive throughout. Overall, children are secure, happy and settled learners.
- Children aged two to three years appear at home and increasingly confident in their playroom. They enjoy exploring the big playroom and benefit from their interactions with older children. Children engage well in a range of opportunities to have fun using their senses. They make choices and play together with adult support. Sensitive, and well-judged interactions, support children and ensure all are included and involved in appropriate learning experiences. As planned, practitioners working with younger children should continue to develop further relevant professional knowledge and understanding.
- Children aged from three years are confident and relaxed in their playroom. They make choices from available resources and can choose to play outdoors throughout the session. Outdoor experiences provide children with scope to lead their own learning in more challenging and creative ways. Access to a range of loose parts and open-ended play resources is helping children develop their curiosity and creativity. This provides scope for children to develop their ideas and plans over time.
- We observed that the level of children's engagement during indoor play is more variable. A few children need more support to remain engaged in play throughout the session. Experiences are sometimes too adult-led or do not provide children sufficient scope to develop their learning fully. We discussed with practitioners how they could enhance opportunities for independence, challenge and depth across all aspects of learning. Practitioners should carefully review the value of larger group sessions.
- Practitioner's interactions with children are consistently warm and supportive. As a result, most children are keen to engage with adults to share their ideas. Work across the team is helping practitioners develop interaction skills to promote children's listening habits. There is scope for practitioners to develop further their skills in supporting and extending learning as they respond to children in the course of play. In doing so, it would be helpful for practitioners to explore their use of learning intentions to help them to enrich further the learning potential of contexts for play.
- Practitioners need to have more conversations with children about their learning, individually and in small purposeful groups. This will enhance children's sense of themselves as active leaders of their learning. It will also help children develop vocabulary to talk about their learning and to evaluate and plan next steps in learning.

- Practitioners know children well as individuals and increasingly as learners. They document children's learning using floorbooks, attractive displays and individual electronic learning journals. Focused professional learning is helping develop practitioner confidence and is beginning to improve the quality and consistency of observations. Recent improvements to observation practice is helping build a clearer picture of children's progress in learning. This is contributing to the development of a useful approach to tracking learning.
- In planning, practitioners take account of children's interests. They now need to continue to develop further their use of observations of children during play to increase depth and challenge across learning experiences.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Practitioners have worked well to make improvements to the learning environment to meet the learning needs of children and their interests as they play. There is an appropriate focus on health and wellbeing across the nursery.
- Practitioners have begun to develop a curriculum rationale for the nursery. In developing this further, they should ensure that they take full account of the principles of curriculum design. This will help ensure greater depth and challenge in learning for all children.
- There is an increasing focus on the development of children's early talking and listening skills. Practitioners plan and promote literacy and numeracy through group time experiences. There now needs to be significantly increased opportunities for children to develop and apply their skills across the curriculum, through problem solving and play.
- Links with community partners, including the local fire service, enhance aspects of children's experiences. There is scope to develop this further to help children make better links between the skills they are learning in nursery and the wider world of work.
- Recently introduced home visits help ensure that practitioners have a sound understanding of children's care and support needs before they take up places in the nursery. Transitions into and through the nursery are well planned and effective. Primary 'buddies' support children as they move to primary one. It will be important for the school to develop a shared understanding of high quality pedagogy across the early level.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Partnership with children and families is a priority for all practitioners. There are close, trusting relationships between practitioners and families. Initial home visits, settling-in evaluations and daily informal dialogue provide opportunities to share and celebrate children's interests and achievements. Formal meetings, online learning journals and regular sharing sessions provide opportunities for parents and carers to find out about children's learning.
- Parents and carers enjoy regular stay and play, and coffee and chat sessions. As planned, the team should reinstate their popular family learning workshops and implement ideas suggested by parents. Recent sessions during which parents and children learned about healthy eating were popular and well attended. The team are exploring approaches to engage families who find it difficult to attend parental engagement sessions during the school day. This includes increased use of video clips and the creation of home learning bags.

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.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

This indicator reflects on the setting's approach to children's wellbeing which underpins their 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 each individual. A clear focus on wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all children to be the best they can be and celebrates their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- A good understanding of, and commitment to children's wellbeing underpins the work of the nursery team. Nurturing positive relationships with children and families is a priority for all practitioners. The team respect and interact with children as individuals. They take good account of children's individual preferences and needs. Children have formed strong attachments to keyworkers and other team members. As a result, children settle quickly in their play and demonstrate increasing confidence to try new experiences and ask for help or comfort if they need it.
- The team have worked with children to explore and create a nursery charter. This includes children's ideas about how they can play together in a way that keeps everyone safe and respects their nursery environment. Practitioners model positive interactions and support children to resolve issues over sharing space or resources. As a result, there is a positive ethos where most children play together well and are forming strong friendships.
- Practitioners have a sound understanding of the national wellbeing indicators. The drive to get it right for all children and families informs all aspects of their work. The wellbeing indicators are used to good effect to structure children's assessments and in conversations with parents and other professionals. Children demonstrate their developing knowledge of how to keep themselves safe as they risk assess the workbench, tools and materials.
- Practitioners celebrate children's achievements, for example through games and group times. They should continue to raise the profile of the language of wellbeing across all aspects of their work with children. The team recognise there is also scope to extend their work with families on the full range of wellbeing indicators.
- Children take responsibility for preparing snacks, setting the table and checking the safety of their outdoor play area. There is scope for children to influence the work of the nursery and to make decisions. Children share their views and enjoy exploring their ideas in small group discussions. Children are ready to take even more responsibility in their nursery. They would benefit from an increased range of opportunities to develop their early leadership skills.
- Practitioners have a sound understanding of statutory duties in relation to their work with children and families. They keep their skills and knowledge up to date through regular, appropriate professional learning.
- The nursery has a strong positive, inclusive ethos. Practitioners know children and families well and treat them all with respect and fairness. They make good use of information from home to inform decisions about the care and support of each child. Practitioners work with partner agencies to enable children and families to overcome potential barriers to wellbeing and

learning. They should consider how to support children to develop further their understanding of equality and diversity, for example by exploring gender based play across the nursery.

3.2 Securing children's progress

satisfactory

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success. The themes are:

- progress in communication, early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing
 - children's progress over time
 - overall quality of children's achievement
 - ensuring equity for all children
-
- Overall, children are making satisfactory progress in their learning in the nursery. Children benefit from the positive support of practitioners and the friendships they are developing. Practitioners should now build on existing practice to enhance opportunities for children to develop and apply literacy, numeracy and mathematical skills through play and daily experiences.
 - Children aged two to three years are confident, engaged and happy learners. Children are developing their early communication skills with adult support. Appropriate experiences, including cosy story times, encourage children's love of books. Children are developing early awareness of number and mathematical concepts through play.
 - The majority of children aged three to five years are making satisfactory progress in their literacy skills. They are keen to engage in conversations about their play. Children are developing good listening habits and vocabulary to enable them to talk about their ideas and interests. Children enjoy singing and are learning rhymes. There is scope to develop this further. Children are becoming familiar with a range of stories and are keen to interact during the reading of favourite books. A few children choose to look at books in the book area. Children are encouraged to experiment with mark making tools indoors and out. The majority of children are becoming more confident when writing letters of their name.
 - The majority of children aged three to five years are making satisfactory progress in developing their counting skills. They are learning counting words and counting strategies such as counting down from five. Children are learning to recognise numerals through play with number lines and number lotto games. A majority of children can recognise and name familiar shapes during adult supported activities, for example using cutters to make biscuits. Children are developing some appropriate language to describe size and position, particularly during outdoor play.
 - Children aged three to five years are making satisfactory progress in health and wellbeing. They are kind and show consideration for others in their play. Children are developing their understanding of how to support their own wellbeing through daily routines such as tooth brushing. Children benefit from opportunities to play outdoors. This is helping children develop

physical skills as they balance, climb and run. Children are encouraged to be aware of risks in their play and to begin to think how they can keep themselves and others safe.

- Children make choices in their play and are developing confidence in their playrooms and outdoors. Practitioners recognise children's individual achievements in the nursery. They are developing useful approaches to sharing learning with families. As planned, practitioners should develop this further. There is scope to increase opportunities for children to contribute effectively to the life of the nursery and wider school community.
- Practitioners treat children and their families with fairness and respect. They understand the challenges children and families face, and potential barriers to wellbeing and learning. Practitioners provide appropriate additional support to secure positive outcomes for children. Further improvement to assessment and tracking will ensure increasingly accurate evaluations of children's progress over time. This will enable senior leaders and practitioners to measure the impact of interventions to ensure equity and make decisions about future development.

Choice of QI 3.3: Developing creativity and skills for life and learning

- Developing creativity
- Developing skills for life and learning
- Developing digital skills

- The nursery team have worked to improve the learning environment of the playrooms and outdoor area. They have made a positive start by increasing the range of open-ended and natural resources throughout. Positive changes to the routine and structure of the session mean that children have increased time and space to begin to develop their curiosity and imagination. Outdoor experiences already provide good opportunities for children to build on their ideas and to develop projects over time. Practitioners now need to focus on how experiences and interactions consistently engage children in rich, creative learning opportunities. As a team, practitioners should continue to develop their shared understanding of what creativity means for children in St Serf's nursery class.
- Practitioners listen carefully to children's ideas and, in the best examples, use discussion and interaction well to encourage children to explore their ideas. Overall, children now need increased opportunities to lead their learning, make connections, apply skills and reflect meaningfully on their learning.
- The team recognise when individual children need more support to stay on task or are moving too frequently between activities in their free play. Children enjoy accessing their local community to enhance their learning. Regular visits to the local library and recent work with a nearby home for older people offer new contexts where children can extend their skills. Children should be helped to make useful links between skills they are developing at home, in the community, and in nursery.
- Children are becoming familiar with a range of digital resources. They are beginning to use these to enhance aspects of their learning. There is significant scope to develop this further. Looking forward, practitioners should develop a clear rationale for supporting children's skills in using and exploring digital technologies. This will support children to enhance, deepen and personalise their learning across the curriculum.

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.

23 April 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

In February 2019, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited St Serf's Primary School and Nursery Class. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- Articulate, friendly children who are respectful towards each other and proud of their school.
- The staff's commitment to ensuring children are active. Children enjoy high quality physical education and can access a range of clubs to stay active. They participate in a wide range of sporting events. This is supporting children to be healthy, and has increased awareness of positive choices they can make to improve their wellbeing.
- The team work in the nursery. Staff use self-evaluation effectively to identify areas for improvement and strive to provide a caring ethos and positive learning experiences for children in the nursery class.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from Clackmannanshire Council.

- There is a need for stronger strategic leadership and direction to the work of the nursery class and school. Senior leaders, and all teachers need to improve approaches to self-evaluation to ensure improvement priorities are based on the needs of the school and lead to improved outcomes for all children. Whole school approaches to monitoring and tracking children's work should be reviewed.
- The leadership team and staff need to ensure all learners experience high quality learning, teaching and assessment, with appropriate levels of pace and challenge. Approaches to assessment should be updated, embedded in planning, and inform next steps for learners.
- Improve children's attainment in literacy and numeracy and mathematics.
- Continue to ensure children experience progression and depth across all curricular areas within relevant contexts which take account of the school's local area and 21st century Scotland.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#) and [How good is our early learning and childcare?](#) Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for St Serf's Primary School and Nursery Class

Quality indicators for the primary stages	Evaluation
Leadership of change	weak
Learning, teaching and assessment	weak
Raising attainment and achievement	weak
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	satisfactory
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school? (4th edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale	

Quality indicators for the nursery class	Evaluation
Leadership of change	good
Learning, teaching and assessment	satisfactory
Securing children's progress	satisfactory
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	good
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our early learning and childcare? Appendix 1: The six-point scale	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:

<https://education.gov.scot/inspection-reports/clackmannanshire/5702224>

What happens next?

As a result of our inspection findings we think that the school needs additional support and more time to make necessary improvements. We will liaise with Clackmannanshire Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within one year of the publication of this letter. We will discuss with Clackmannanshire Council the details of this inspection. When we return to inspect the school we will write to you as parents/carers informing you of the progress the school has made.

Marion Carlton
HM Inspector

