



Extended Learning and Achievement Visit Report Burrelton Primary School 13 and 14 November 2018



BACKGROUND

The purpose of this visit was to support the school in the process of self-evaluation. The visit was conducted by two Quality Improvement Officers from Education and Children's Services, Service Manager for Inclusion, one Education Support Officer and one peer Headteacher. The themes subject to scrutiny were based on core Quality Indicators from 'How good is our school?' (4th edition).

Information was gathered from visits to classes, scrutiny of data, records and children's work, discussions with children, parents and staff, and other evidence of learning

In Burrelton Primary School the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) comprises a Headteacher and Principal Teacher. At the time of the visit the school had a pupil roll of 76 pupils, organised across 4 classes. Pupil attendance for session 2017-18 was 93.4% and therefore below the Perth and Kinross average of 94%. The school is working with parents to increase attendance.

ACHIEVEMENT

At Burrelton Primary School there is a welcoming ethos and a strong sense of community. Staff describe the school community as the 'Burrelton Family', where teamwork between staff and between children is strong and pride in the school promotes high expectations and shared standards. Relationships across the school are positive, and staff know children and families well. The school motto of 'Bee all you can be' is shared and aspirational and encourages children to always try their hardest and aim high. All children asked, said they feel safe and cared for in school and all confirm there is an adult to whom they can go and speak should they have any concerns.

At June 2018 the majority of children in Primary 1 achieved early level in listening and talking, reading, writing and numeracy. Most children in Primary 4 achieved first level in listening and talking and reading and the majority in writing and numeracy. Most children in Primary 7 achieved second level in reading and numeracy, the majority achieved writing and all children achieved the second level in listening and talking. Information available shows that attainment is variable over time.

The school is using the Perth and Kinross system to track and monitor pupil attainment over time. SLT and teaching staff report that it is proving to be a useful tool for analysis of pupil progress against predicted targets. It provides a focus for teachers to engage in discussions with the SLT about the attainment levels and progress of children in their class. The SLT should further review approaches to planning and tracking meetings to increase impact on learning.

Class teachers use assessments, including formative and diagnostic assessment to evaluate the progress of learning for individuals. Work should now be undertaken to ensure that there is a wide range and variety of assessment evidence gathered for each area of the curriculum. In addition, to support teachers to have a shared understanding of achievement of a level, regular opportunities for collaborative planning and assessment should be organised.

The school has identified a number of individual children and small groups to receive targeted support through planned interventions. Some of these are supported by the Pupil Equity Fund. Staff work well

together and in partnership with other agencies to help support individuals. This could be further improved by involving partners in more robust assessment of individual children's needs to ensure there is a holistic understanding of their strengths and needs and to help further remove potential barriers to learning. The school should review existing processes and planning for children with additional support needs to ensure that plans have outcomes that are specific, measurable, agreed, reviewed and time-based. Outcomes for children should be closely monitored to demonstrate planned interventions are resulting in positive progress for individuals.

Children are encouraged to talk about achievements gained from clubs and activities and have opportunities to share these in their Learning Journeys and at Together Time assemblies. There are a variety of school clubs for children of all ages which are well attended. They are led by staff, parents and volunteers. Opportunities for learning across classes have been developed this session. A well-established Committee System, involving all pupils, focuses on key themes which include the Eco Committee, Digital Learning Committee and the Rights Respecting Schools Committee. Not only is this system giving opportunities for the application of skills being learned in class but is also a contributing factor to the strong sense of community that the school has. Such opportunities should be evaluated regularly to ensure that children are clear about how they are extending their curricular learning and skills development when participating in Committee work.

Parents consulted told us that their children are happy at school and that there is a warm ethos. They said that the staff are approachable and supportive of them and their children. Parents know how to access information about the work of the school. There are a wide range of opportunities to be involved in the life of the school as a parent. Parents make some use of the learning folders which come home each term and would welcome more information about how their children are progressing with their learning. Parents appreciate the range of opportunities provided for their children for example the cycling club, reading club, ski trip and Christmas show. They told us they would like to see a wider range of opportunities for younger pupils.

LEARNING

The children at Burrelton Primary School are articulate, respectful, enthusiastic and polite. Children have access to a variety of play areas in the school grounds and nearby woods, which support creative play and outdoor learning very well. Children's work is displayed throughout the school; this is most effective where displays make clear what children were learning and how their ideas and creativity have been used. In all classes, consideration should be given to the purpose of classroom displays, ensuring they support and evidence high quality learning.

In all classes, children are actively engaged in interesting and relevant learning experiences. The quality of teaching observed was consistently very good across all classes. Almost all children are eager and interact well during paired and group work. Resources are well organised and digital technology is used in some lessons to enhance and motivate learning. In all lessons observed, explanations and instructions were clear and they built upon previous learning and real-life experiences. The learning was well planned and children's motivation and attention were sustained due to high quality verbal feedback and well-earned praise. In all lessons the learning intentions were made clear and effective questioning by all staff allowed children to think and build their curiosity. In the best lessons observed there was clear differentiation, support and challenge for all learners.

Feedback is constructive and supports children in achieving their next steps. In a few classes, children are assessing and evaluating their own work and that of their peers. Further approaches should be developed across the school to provide children with increased opportunities to talk about their learning, the strategies they use and the skills they are developing. This will support all children to develop a shared language of learning and to build their skills in leading their own learning. Learning Journeys are used in school to evidence achievements and learning undertaken. Pupils are involved in the process of identifying work to go in and they are shared with parents termly.

The curriculum rationale has been developed with the school community and articulates the school's vision, values and aims. It is attractively displayed on a poster and is evident in all classrooms. The school uses the local community and environment well to enhance learning, including very effective use of outdoor learning. There is scope to review the curriculum offer to further plan for career education, enterprise, global and sustainable education and skills for learning, life and work. The school has identified resources which support planning for progression in maths. Literacy and Numeracy progressions have been shared with the school and will support planning and assessment on both areas.

Class teachers use a range of assessments to track the progress of learning in different areas of the curriculum. Staff plan assessment to be integral to learning and teaching. Teachers have engaged in moderation of their professional judgements with other schools. Professional development opportunities such as peer observations and learning and teaching sessions on in-service days, have had a positive impact on the quality and consistency of learning and teaching across the school. Effective approaches are identified and shared regularly. Staff should continue with their plans to set up a range of further moderation activities within the school and with other schools. As planned, teachers should engage in further peer observations and good practice visits.

LEADERSHIP

The headteacher, principal teacher and staff are committed to the school and its community. They have high aspirations and expectations for all and these are effectively communicated and shared. They ensure relationships are strong and have worked hard to develop effective partnerships with all staff and partners. They work effectively together as a senior leadership team, having the highest expectations for all children at Burrelton Primary School.

Staff have engaged in professional dialogue and self-evaluation to evaluate the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The feedback from a recent Local Authority Learning and Achievement Visit has focused improvement activity over the last session. Commitment to improvement and the effective leadership of this has resulted in considerable change and impact in identified areas.

Parents have the opportunity to provide feedback at parent contact meetings, curriculum events and through questionnaires. Some parents have been involved in parent working groups, on areas for improvements such as homework. The senior management team should continue to develop approaches to ensure that all staff, parents, and children are involved in the planning and self-evaluation processes of school improvement. This will ensure the identification of priorities is accurate, robust and evidence based. The impact of improvements should be evaluated regularly by staff, pupils and parents using rigorous processes and robust data.

Staff are encouraged to and show commitment to take forward projects to help achieve improvement, with all class teachers leading or working on an area of the curriculum or learning and teaching. There needs to be a more strategic approach to planning this work to ensure that all improvement planning and activity supports the identified improvement priorities and is rigorously evaluated to measure impact.

The newly formed pupil School Improvement Group have a detailed knowledge of the improvement priorities for the school. They have met with the SLT to discuss these and learn about them. This group should now have opportunities to contribute further to the improvement work within the school through the cycle of self-evaluation.

Strengths

- The children in Burrelton Primary School are articulate, respectful, enthusiastic, polite and proud of their school. They are engaged in their learning.
- There is strong sense of team and community amongst the children, staff and community, supporting an ethos of collaboration. This is promoted by the effective leadership of the headteacher and principal teacher.
- The vision, Bee All You Can Be, is shared and understood by all. It is aspirational and promotes high expectations.
- The consistent, high quality of teaching which motivates and engages learners.

Areas for improvement

- Review and refresh the curriculum, ensuring pathways are in place and aligned with the Benchmarks (from Mar 19)
- Increase opportunities for children to lead their learning, through promoted talking about learning and skills development (from Mar 19)
- Review approaches to identifying barriers to learning and appropriate interventions for children with additional support needs, to include all partners and to ensure needs are appropriately planned for and impact of intervention measured (from Mar 19)
- Review school improvement planning and self-evaluation approaches to include all partners in the identification of improvement priorities, improvement planning and evaluation of impact and progress (from Mar 19)

Children, staff and parents at Burrelton Primary evidence a pride in their school. Building on the key strengths identified, the school should now address the areas for improvement, including them in the planned improvements for session 2018-19. Education officers visit the school again within a year of the publication of this report to validate the school's own report on how well it has taken forward the main areas for improvement.

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