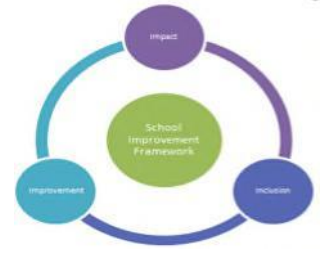




Extended Learning and Achievement Visit Report Craigie Primary School 29 and 30 May 2018



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, one Education Support Officer (0-8) and two peer headteachers. 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 Craigie Primary School the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) comprises a Headteacher and Depute Head Teacher. At the time of the visit the school had a pupil roll of 206 pupils, organised across 8 classes. The school has a nursery class with a roll of 53 over the morning and afternoon sessions. Pupil attendance for session 2016-17 was 96% and therefore above the Perth and Kinross average of 94%.

ACHIEVEMENT

At June 2017 most children in Primary 1 achieved early level in listening and talking and the majority in literacy and numeracy. Most children in Primary 4 achieved first level in listening and talking and the majority in literacy and numeracy. Most children in Primary 7 achieved second level in listening and talking and the majority in literacy and numeracy. Information available shows that attainment is variable over time. Nursery staff track and monitor children's progress using the developmental milestones and almost all are making good progress in this area.

The school is using the Perth & 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. There is also a range of information available to staff regarding pupil progress over time including data from assessments on spelling and writing. Work should now be undertaken to ensure that this information is used in a more focussed manner to support teachers in planning appropriate next steps in learning. The school's approaches to tracking and monitoring should be further developed to ensure relentless focus on securing appropriate challenge at a pace. This will support consistent and appropriate progress in literacy and numeracy for all children.

Children at Craigie Primary are well mannered, polite and come to school ready to learn. They are very proud of their school and reported that they felt safe, were listened to by staff and could get help when they needed it. Overall learners demonstrated that they were successful learners and effective contributors when they spoke about the range of experiences they take part in at Craigie Primary School. They were able to talk about how they transferred their skills through projects such as completing the Seed project (£1 money challenge). Learners access a wide range of experiences including Safe Taysiders, a RSPB at Quarrymill, planting at the leisure pool and Fun Fridays Learners we talked to said there were lots of exciting things happening in Craigie Primary School.

The school is building a good understanding of the needs of pupils. Pupil Equity Fund monies have been used to support targeted work to raise attainment. Early indications show that interventions used to support literacy for targeted groups is having a positive impact on learners.

The nursery is situated in a building separate to the school and makes the most of the space available; with very effective use made of the outdoor area. Staff use the local environment to further extend the children's learning well. Children within the nursery are confident and articulate and happily engage with visiting adults.

LEARNING

The school has recently developed a curriculum rationale involving staff and pupils which is aspirational and future looking. A visual has been created to ensure that all stakeholders have a clear understanding of the vision for the school. They should continue their work to ensure that this is fully reflected in the experiences offered at Craigie Primary School

Currently the school has developed a pathway in Numeracy that allow for progression of levels with Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). They now need to agree consistent effective use of these to ensure there is an appropriate pace for all learners. The school plan to develop pathways in literacy and health and wellbeing. CfE experiences and outcomes have been grouped together by staff to provide relevant contexts for learning experiences. Learners said that they were motivated when given the opportunity to influence the choice of topics and really enjoyed being involved in decision making in this way. Learners we spoke to all talked positively about their experiences.

Recent work to develop a growth mind-set approach throughout the school has resulted in pupils developing their understanding of resilience. Whole school staff training and development in this area has raised the awareness of the importance of having a "can do" attitude to learning across the school. The team observed evidence of reference to growth mind-set and children were able to talk about learning pits. Staff were able to identify the reason this had successfully impacted on pupils. Future improvements would benefit from this planned and focused approach to improvement.

In almost all the learning episodes observed learning intentions were shared with learners and explanations and instructions were clear; they built on previous learning and real life experiences. In most lessons learners were treated with equality, fairness and respect and in the majority learning was well planned and sustained motivation and attention. The learning environment was stimulating with displays that reflected pupil input. In the best lessons observed, children were actively involved in their learning and knew how to be successful through the use of success criteria. They were challenged in their thinking by quality questioning and encouraged to be independent and curious through investigation. This practice should be shared and embedded across the school. Learners told us that they liked when the teacher used success criteria as it helped them know what the teacher was looking for and therefore helped them achieve. It would be beneficial to agree consistent approaches to involving children in planning their learning; supported by assessment for learning approaches such as use of success criteria, peer and self-assessment and target setting.

In the most effective classrooms children have an opportunity to discuss their learning and reflect on their strengths and next steps, the VIP jotters and use of a digital platform for this practice should be embedded across the school. This would allow staff to ensure that they are effectively planning to meet the needs of learners, working with partners where appropriate. Across the school most children engaged positively in their learning activities. In the most effective lessons tasks, activities and resources were effectively differentiated to provide support and challenge. Greater consideration should be given to differentiation at the point of planning to ensure that all learners are being appropriately supported and challenged. Learning targets are in place for specific children where appropriate, further assessment of wellbeing and specific difficulties will enhance the targeted planning and allow children to celebrate even more success in their progress and development.

Most children benefit from universal support. Staff are able to identify children who are presenting with challenging behaviour, identify potential barriers to learning and plan support for individuals. Staff should now reflect on their practice to ensure that all learning environments are inclusive and meet the needs of all learners. Learners complete a Wellbeing Web each year and this is helping them to talk and about their health and wellbeing. Parents we talked to stated the school has a "family feel" to it. They reported that staff are very open and supportive. Learners from Primary 3-7 told us almost all

pupils behaved well in classrooms and the playground and that there were good relationships across the school. Relationships strategies to support low level behaviour and the promotion of high standards would be beneficial across the school. Staff have developed their practices in relation to promoting positive behaviour; they should now link this to the work undertaken around restorative practices and the schools vision, values and aims.

Across the school identified staff respond to the needs of individual children well and support their wellbeing, this could be strengthened by each class teacher having full responsibility for the wellbeing of all children, supported by key people. The school works with a range of partners to meet the needs of learners; staff would benefit from professional learning and development to support them in “Getting it right for every child”.

Approaches to targeted support are developing. The school have put into practice planning and communication for groups and individuals following on from a child’s plan or Individual Educational Programmes. Individual plans for children should be further developed to ensure that holistic assessment of needs clearly identify children’s strength and barriers with identification of targets that are most appropriate to focus on within a planning block. Parents are involved in the planning for children; this could be further enhanced to involve parents in the assessment of their child’s wellbeing using the national practice model. The school should ensure that the child is at the centre of assessment and planning and pupil voice is evident in their plan. Tracking and evaluation of outcomes for children is allowing the school to reflect on the impact of plans. The school should now work on developing personalised support to remove barriers to learning in both a universal and targeted way. Planned learning should take greater account of individual learning targets.

Child protection, additional support needs and safeguarding policies are in place which reflects the most recent legislation. Staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures and risk assessments are in place, where appropriate, to ensure young people are safe and secure whilst at school.

The nursery is providing a wide range of learning opportunities in all curricular areas for all children attending. The nursery staff have created a nurturing, calm environment that supports children’s learning. Children are very proud to share their learning portfolios. The nursery team provide challenge and pace through the good use of open ended questions. Nursery pupils are fully engaged with the wellbeing indicators through the use of named puppets.

LEADERSHIP

The Headteacher and Depute Headteacher work well together as a team. The staff team is committed and motivated to work collegiately together as a group.

Staff have engaged in evaluating progress towards outcomes within the School Improvement Plan through professional dialogue and have started to use How Good Is Our School? 4 (HGIOS? 4) to support evaluations of practice and impact on learners. They now require to engage with HGIOS? 4 in a more systematic way with all stakeholders to ensure evaluations are robust and evidenced based. This would allow the school community to agree upon a small number of improvement outcomes that will positively impact on learners. The impact of improvements should be evaluated regularly by staff, pupils and parents using rigorous processes and robust data.

Staff have recently undertaken moderation of teacher planning folders to identify good practice across the school. They have also undertaken collaboration across the Local Management Group to moderate standards in writing through professional learning networks. Development work to improve how teachers involve pupils effectively in their learning through the use of assessment is for learning procedures, as agreed at whole school level, has led to improved practice in most classrooms.

The SLT and staff should now work together to ensure collegiate working that mirrors the values of the school. Teacher leadership is an important feature of school improvement and this needs to become more consistent across the school to ensure positive impact on learners.

The Pupil Council work with the Depute Head on areas agreed at the start of each year. The pupils described mainly supporting the school's charity work and were proud of their achievements in this area. The group is well placed to run more independently and engage frequently in aspects of planning and evaluating school improvement. Learners are given the chance to celebrate in school and out with through assemblies and display boards. The Eco Group have successfully led a litter campaign and have addressed community concerns about parking around the school by running a campaign giving feedback to safe and unsafe parkers. The committee has compiled an application to retain the Green Flag from ECO Scotland. Where learners are given responsibility they take up this opportunity well. There is scope for pupil leadership across the school to be further developed.

The school has an active Parent Council and fundraising group. These currently work as separate bodies. As part of the visit we talked to members of the parent forum including members of the fundraising committee. Parents we talked to were very supportive of the school's work however they would like to see more consistent approaches in home/school communication, learning and teaching, homework and trips out of school from class to class. They stated that they knew there was a school improvement plan however they were not involved in self-evaluation and decision making around how the school could be further improved. They agreed they would welcome this opportunity.

Strengths

- The warm and welcoming ethos of the school
- Staff who are committed to the school and know their learners and community well.
- Learners who are confident, well mannered, ready to learn, motivated to do their best and can talk confidently about their experiences.
- The learning experience to develop independence, curiosity and creativity within the nursery setting.
- Recent developments in growth mind-set that are having a positive impact on learners.

Areas for improvement

- The whole school cycle of self-evaluation and quality assurance should involve pupils, parents and partners and be planned in a strategic way to ensure robust evidence of impact of learners' achievement and attainment. (by November 2018)
- Further develop practice to ensure the aspirational curriculum rationale and vision, values and aims are consistently reflected across Craigie Primary School. (by May 2019)
- Develop effective learning and teaching strategies across the school to ensure differentiation and pupil voice to further to meet the needs of all learners, building on and sharing the identified good practice to further develop learner engagement across all stages. (by April 2019)
- Provide further staff training to enhance the existing practice in restorative approaches and supporting children with additional support needs. (by December 2018)

Children, staff and parents at Craigie 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 will provide support and 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.

Responsible Officer: Bernadette Scott, Quality Improvement Officer

Email: BMScott@pkc.gov.uk

Telephone no: 01738 476332