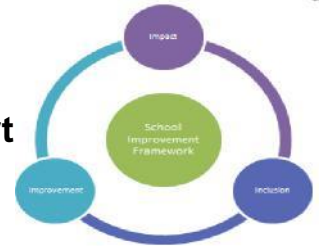




Extended Learning and Achievement Visit Report Dunbarney Primary School 17 and 18 April 2018



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 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 Dunbarney 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 188 children, organised across 8 classes with 27 attending the Nursery class. At 97%, pupil attendance for session 2016/17 was above the Perth and Kinross average of 94%.

ACHIEVEMENT

At June 2017 all learners in Primary one were achieving expected levels in listening and talking, reading and writing, with almost all achieving in mathematics. Most of Primary 4 learners were achieving expected levels across literacy and mathematics and at Primary 7 the majority were achieving expected levels in listening and talking, reading and writing and less than half in mathematics. It is evident that over time attainment trends vary however, attainment information for end of school session 2017/2018 shows that levels of attainment of attainment have been maintained or increased.

There is a range of information available to staff regarding pupil progress over time. Phonics and numeracy baselines are supporting teachers to plan appropriately for learning and teaching. The Perth and Kinross tracking and monitoring spreadsheet is being used and work should now be undertaken to ensure that this information is used in a more focussed manner to support staff in planning appropriate next steps in learning. The school's approaches to tracking and monitoring should be further developed to ensure focus on ensuring appropriate challenge at a pace for all learners.

Learners in Dunbarney Primary School are confident and motivated to do their best. Where they are given the opportunity to exercise responsibility and contribute to the life of the school, the wider community and as global citizens they do so well. The eco committee are dedicated to their role and have made positive steps in working towards gaining their green flag status. The recent whole school development in growth mind-set has raised the awareness of the importance of having a can do attitude to learning across the school. Children talked enthusiastically and knowledgeably about the importance of taking a positive approach to tackling a task and could describe strategies that they use to overcome challenges.

LEARNING

The learning environment is generously proportioned and learners benefit from open spaces within the school and extensive grounds for outdoor learning. Learners are offered a range of experiences to enhance their learning such as cross country, coding, bikeability and forest schools. Staff, pupil and parents can identify and endorse the four school values of honesty, ambition, respect and kindness. The values are well known throughout the school community. These should form the basis for developing a relevant curriculum rationale that describes in detail the experience offered at Dunbarney Primary School across the four contexts for learning. The pupils we talked to told us that their views were sought, valued and acted upon. The ethos and culture of the school reflects a commitment to children's rights and positive relations. The work on Rights Respecting Schools has had a positive impact on the school. Staff members support children to feel safe and secure and almost all children demonstrate a readiness to learn.

Staff currently plan using the experiences and outcomes and are beginning to use the benchmarks to support moderation and assessment. The school have identified the need to review approaches to planning and these are currently under review. Some staff are trialling a visible planning approach to ensure that planning is responsive and involves all learners. The school now needs to agree the principles behind this new approach to ensure it is consistently implemented across the school to benefit learners. The Headteacher identifies the need to revise learning pathways for Literacy and Numeracy to reflect the design principles of Curriculum for Excellence and curricular continuity and progression. This work should continue to refresh the curriculum to offer children enhanced relevance in their learning and support them to develop skills for life learning and work.

In most lessons observed explanations and instructions are clear and build on previous learning; learners responses are valued, encouraged and built upon and learners have the opportunity to achieve within an activity. In the majority of lessons observed, learning is appropriate, effectively shared, understood and referred to and learners are treated with equality, fairness and respect. Across the school almost all children engaged well in their learning activities. In a few lessons the level of teacher talk should be reduced as learners would benefit from greater active engagement in their learning. Clear guidance and a shared understanding of pedagogy and assessment would support teachers to be more consistent in their practice and ensure high quality learning and teaching. In the best of learning episodes observed, learning intentions were shared and understood, success criteria was created by learners and systems were in place for learners to gain feedback from the class teacher or through peer and self-evaluation. Sharing this practice across the school would support consistent approaches in assessment for learning. This would maximise opportunities for learners to be fully involved in their learning and identifying next steps. Summative assessments should be in line with benchmarks and shared appropriately with pupils to help them reflect upon their learning.

Recent developments to improve writing across the school offer weekly opportunities to write. The learners we talked to told us that, as a result of the recent improvements; they now enjoyed writing and were motivated to write more independently and for longer. Assessment needs to be established as an integral part of learning and this information should be used more effectively to inform how well children are progressing. So that learners can understand more about what they need to do to improve their writing, the school needs to gain consistent approaches to providing feedback.

Learners were able to talk about the tasks and activities they were involved in. They should now be involved in talking and reflecting on their learning within a whole-school framework for profiling and target setting. This will enable children to be better placed to recognise their own strengths and next steps in learning as well as provide useful information to parents about their child's progress.

Warm positive relationships are evident within the Nursery and children are supportive of each other. All children appeared to be happy and feel valued. The nursery environment is attractive and well organised and allows the children to be independent and to have ownership of their learning space. High quality interactions were used to challenge children's thinking and check understanding of their learning. Children are given the opportunity to be independent and to make mistakes which supports learning. Observations in children's learning journals capture significant learning and are shared regularly with parents. The Nursery is well placed to move forward recommendations around planning for quality learning experiences.

Child protection and safeguarding policies are in place which reflect the most recent legislation and are scrutinised on a regular basis. The school is beginning to use wellbeing indicators and focus on aspects of this at assembly and adopt the language in classrooms, helping to develop an understanding of the vocabulary. They are encouraging children to have a healthy diet through initiatives such as "Fruity Friday". Pupils were also involved in "The Big Pedal" recently when all children were encouraged to bring their bicycle or scooter to school.

The school adhere to legislative requirements for additional support and recognises the important role of parents. As a result, parents are involved in the planning process to meet their child's needs. Learners with additional support needs are identified through teacher observation and assessment information. Relevant staff discuss learners' needs and appropriate targets and interventions planned to support progression in learning. Experienced and knowledgeable support staff use their skills and resources across the school well to deliver specific programmes of work to support development on an ongoing basis. Planned interventions should be tracked and monitored to ensure progress in learning and a positive impact on attainment and achievement. As part of universal support, school staff would benefit from developing their knowledge of barriers to learning and work to ensure that all learning needs are met through effective learning and teaching strategies within the classroom.

LEADERSHIP

The Senior Leadership Team are committed to the life and work of the school. Staff work effectively as a team. There is an ethos of sharing practice and of peer support. Staff are motivated and work collegiately together, with teaching staff undertaking leadership roles to improve experiences for learners and raise attainment. Teaching staff demonstrate a willingness and openness to improve and develop their professional practice. They reflect together and plan changes to improve outcomes for learners. Leadership at all levels has developed considerably over the past few sessions and has had a positive impact on progress on school improvement this session. The Senior Leadership Team should further develop a collaborative culture of learning across pupils and staff. The school now needs to share and consult more across development groups and consider participating in more whole school initiatives to ensure consistent approaches.

Self-evaluation and quality assurance approaches provide information to guide school improvement planning. The school has identified the need to consult more widely across stakeholders to ensure robust data collection that informs practice and impacts on learners. SLT undertake monitoring of learning and teaching across the school, provide feedback for teachers and agree targets for improvement on an individual basis. The whole school cycle of evaluation and quality assurance should involve pupils, parents and partners and should be planned in a strategic way to ensure robust evidence of impact of learner's achievement and attainment.

The school has made improvement priorities more accessible and understood through the use of a School Improvement wall displayed at the heart of the school. Staff learners and parents are being

encouraged to add to this as the year progresses. This work should be continued and move to more strategic approach to collecting and analysing evaluations of improvements

The Pupil Council is becoming involved in school improvement and increasingly taking responsibility. They have recently been involved in consulting parents about homework. Primary 57 have well established opportunities to undertake responsibilities through eco work, buddy systems and organising Friday afternoon activities for the school. Learners in Dunbarney Primary school are well placed to become more involved in influencing the work of the school and some told us they felt they could be listened to more.

Parents we talked to reported their satisfaction with information received from the school. They stated that the school keeps them well informed. Regular communication through newsletters and social media keep parents informed on the wide ranging experiences offered to the children.

Strengths

- Learners across the school are confident and are motivated to learn and proud of their school.
- The well-known school values of honesty, ambition, respect and kindness endorsed by staff, pupil and parents.
- The strong focus on the rights of the child in all areas of the school.
- The sense of team work and supportive culture across the school across teaching and support staff.

Conclusion

Whilst there are many positives in the life and work of the school which have been recognised in this report; the following areas for improvement will build on and extend the overall quality of the learning. Under the leadership of the headteacher, with support from ECS education officers, the following areas for improvement should now be addressed:

Areas for improvement

- Plan for the involvement of pupils, parents and partners in self-evaluation and school improvement to ensure robust evidence of impact of learner's achievement and attainment. (by August 2018)
- Improve levels of attainment, particularly in mathematics at Second Level. (by June 2019)
- Further develop the school's approaches to tracking and monitoring to ensure focus on ensuring appropriate challenge at a pace for all learners.(by November 2018)
- Develop a relevant curriculum rationale that describes in detail the experience offered at Dunbarney Primary School across the four contexts for learning. (by December 2018)
- Review effective learning and teaching strategies, including assessment for learning to improve differentiation and pace of learning. (by April 2019)
- As part of universal support, school staff would benefit from developing their knowledge of barriers to learning and work to ensure that all learning needs are met through effective learning and teaching strategies within the classroom. (by April 2019)

[HMI Report](#)

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