



Extended Learning and Achievement Visit Report Goodlyburn Primary School 22nd and 23rd November 2016



BACKGROUND

To support the school in the process of self-evaluation, a team of officers from across Education and Children's Services (ECS) visited Goodlyburn Primary School and Nursery Class on 22nd and 23rd November 2016. The themes for the review were Achievement, Learning and Leadership. These themes were subject to scrutiny through core Quality Indicators from *How Good is Our School? (4th Edition)* and by using the most recent Education Scotland Advice Note. It outlines the raised expectations in relation to all schools' implementation of all aspects of Curriculum for Excellence.

Goodlyburn Primary School is led by a Senior Management Team (SMT) of a Headteacher (HT) and Depute Headteacher (DHT) who are both non-class committed. At the time of the visit the school had a pupil roll of 251 organised in 10 primary classes, 2 Gaelic Medium Education classes and a Nursery class with a total of 48 children across the morning and afternoon sessions. The school also has provision for nurture support in the Happy Hive. The school has an attendance level of 91% which is below the Perth and Kinross Council (PKC) and national average. The school is working closely with parents and support agencies to increase attendance.

Information was gathered from class visits, scrutiny of data and evidence of children's learning, discussions with children, parents/carers and staff, and displays of children's work around the school.

ACHIEVEMENT

Across the Nursery and Primary stages we found children to be happy; they enjoy their learning and are very proud of their school. Children benefit from positive, caring and respectful relationships with staff and peers. Children talk very proudly about their achievement of receiving the Level 2 Rights Respecting Schools Award and feel that their focus on rights has made the school a better place, where everyone feels included, respected and treated fairly by all.

Attainment data reviewed in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy indicates that most children are currently making good progress, in line with national expectations, in Numeracy and Mathematics, listening and talking, reading and writing. A few children exceed national expectations across the stages in these areas. Overall, attainment trends in Literacy and Numeracy indicate an improving picture.

Class teachers meet each term with the Senior Management Team to look closely at assessment data and evidence of learning, attainment levels and predictions particularly for those children requiring additional support or challenge. Together they are able to talk about the strategies, interventions and resources which have impacted positively on learning. These rigorous discussions are leading to early identification of barriers to learning and effective and targeted approaches for individuals.

A whole school approach to teaching Numeracy and Mathematics, 'Big Maths', has recently been introduced. It is used by all teachers to plan and assess learning in Numeracy and

Mathematics. This approach provides a clear structure for staff, which reinforces core skills and develops a common language for Numeracy and Mathematics. Class teachers express greater confidence in planning and teaching lessons which have appropriate challenge for all children and describing the progress of learners.

A similar whole school approach should now be used to provide the same structure for improvements in English and Literacy. The staff team should develop a whole school understanding of the progression of skills in reading, writing, talking and listening so that there is clarity in identifying and planning the next steps for learning in these areas. This would ensure that there are regular opportunities for children to write for a variety of purposes and at length across all curricular areas, ensuring that expectations and standards for writing are ambitious and aspirational for all learners.

Health and Wellbeing is core to Goodlyburn Primary School's culture, ethos and curriculum. Staff and partners working with the school are committed to ensuring all children are supported to have the skills and confidence they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future. Children use the wellbeing indicators to reflect on their feelings and emotions in class and in the playground. The school plans to further develop the understanding of the term 'wellbeing' with children and to continue to share wellbeing and resilience approaches with parents.

Children are encouraged to talk about achievements gained from clubs and out of school activities with learning profiles being used to share these. The school website and whole school assemblies are used to celebrate and recognise successes and achievements. There are regular opportunities for children to engage in activities which are supported by partners and the community. There is scope to further develop opportunities for intergenerational working and the school has plans for this. Consideration should now be given to ways of monitoring children's participation in wider achievement activities in and out of school to ensure all children have equal access to these valuable opportunities.

Opportunities for learning across classes is becoming embedded. Children talk very proudly about their involvement in Committees such as the Eco Group, the Rights Respecting Schools Group, the Pupil Council, the Junior Road Safety Officers group and the Junior Community Wardens Group. Not only are these committees giving opportunities for the application of skills being learnt in class but they are also a contributing factor to the strong sense of community that the school has.

LEARNING

Children at Goodlyburn have access to a variety of play areas in the school grounds which support creative play and outdoor learning. Particular care is given to displaying children's work creatively throughout the school. Corridor displays are of a high standard. They share learning across the school as well as school improvement work.

Across the school, learners are treated with fairness and respect by all staff. In almost all lessons, explanations and instructions are clear and they build upon previous learning and real life experiences. Classrooms are stimulating learning environments and class teachers make good use of resources, including ICT to enrich and support learning. Learning is well planned and children's motivation and attention is sustained through high quality verbal feedback and praise. Staff know children well and are able to make sound judgements during lessons which support learning.

Teachers across the school have engaged in Tapestry Teacher Learning Communities to share and develop effective teaching and learning strategies. In most lessons effective questioning by staff allows children to think, build their curiosity and express their own

opinions. Staff should ensure that when planning lessons they are clear about what the learning will be and that this is clearly expressed in the learning intention. Consideration should be given to differentiating learning intentions and success criteria to reflect the range of abilities in classes. Children should now start to take on more responsibility for assessing their own learning and that of their peers, using success criteria. Learning profiles should be used to share children's reflections and assessments of their learning, showcasing their progress and supporting discussions about learning with others, including parents.

Children's rights and entitlements are core to Goodlyburn's drive to provide children with an environment which motivates and supports them to want to learn and do well. Throughout the school, almost all children were observed engaging well in a variety of activities. Most children are able to work independently and cooperatively. A focus on growth mindset and the language of learning has had a very positive impact on pupil engagement, attitude towards learning and persistence with tasks. The school plans to extend this work across all classes, developing a shared language for learning and positive growth mindsets for all children. This should then be shared with parents to ensure understanding and enabling them to support this work at home.

There is a strong 'team' approach to meeting the needs of all at Goodlyburn. The Senior Management Team, class teachers and support staff share their skills, expertise and very good understanding of individual children to plan to meet individual needs. They work closely with a wide range of partners, including parents, to ensure all barriers to learning are identified and interventions to support learning put in place. The Happy Hive provides a nurturing, supportive space for children to receive the individual care and targeted support they each require. The school plans to continue developing practice in this area by involving relevant support staff in the termly attainment meetings.

The school recently worked with all staff and children to review their curriculum rationale and to create "The Goodlyburn Way". This process involved revisiting the school's vision, values and aims and ensuring that the rationale reflected these. There are plans to now redesign the curriculum ensuring that it reflects the uniqueness of Goodlyburn, whilst also continuing the focus on raising attainment.

LEADERSHIP

The Headteacher and Depute Headteacher are well-respected by staff, children and parents. They have a clear vision for what requires to be done to take the school forward. They work together very successfully with a clear focus on school improvement, learning and teaching and getting it right for every child. They know the children and families very well and work effectively with the community and partners to provide valuable support at all levels.

Staff lead on a number of programmes. For example; one class teacher is a trained Restorative Champion and provides training for all staff in the school. Throughout the school several class teachers piloted Big Maths, before launching it across the whole school. They ran collegiate sessions and supported other staff in their teaching and planning. Two Early Childhood Practitioners in the Nursery have lead responsibility for the Strong Start 2s provision; the success of this work is being shared nationally on the Education Scotland website.

Parents consulted find current communication methods to be generally effective and particularly appreciate advance notice of upcoming events. They feel well informed about their children's learning through the variety of methods used by the school. Parents are keen to support learning at home and welcome the information about learning given to them in class newsletters. They value class teachers and find them all very approachable. Parents described the school as being welcoming and having a nice, warm feeling.

Goodlyburn staff are committed to self-reflection and professional development. There is strong team work and a collective desire to secure best outcomes for all learners. Staff training opportunities, joint planning approaches and observing each other whilst teaching are increasing teachers' professional knowledge and expertise.

Self-evaluation and quality assurance approaches provide accurate information to inform school improvement planning. Developments taken forward through this process are having a measureable, positive impact on learning, teaching and children's attainment.

Strengths

- Confident, happy children who are proud of their school and who engage enthusiastically in their learning.
- The inclusive, respectful, caring school ethos which has Children's Rights, positive relationships and wellbeing at its core.
- The whole school approach to raising attainment in Numeracy and Mathematics.
- The effective and inclusive staff team who work flexibly and responsively with improvement in children's learning and wellbeing at the heart of all they do.
- The Headteacher and Depute Headteacher's strong leadership in enabling a culture of continuous school improvement at Goodlyburn.

We discussed with staff how they might continue to improve the school in light of their own self evaluation and feedback from the Extended Learning and Achievement Visit team. The following areas for improvement were agreed:

- Develop a whole school approach to the learning and teaching of Literacy ensuring there is a clear skills progression and consistency in practice. Use the Benchmarks and PKC Indicators to support this work. (By Dec 2017)
- Continue to develop consistency in the use of learning intentions and success criteria to ensure they reflect learning and are differentiated. (By Apr 2017)
- Continue to develop opportunities for children to engage in self and peer assessment, developing profiles to showcase learning and assessment. (By Aug 17)
- Develop processes to monitor and track engagement in wider achievement activities in and outwith school. (By Aug 17)

Conclusion

Goodlyburn Primary School provides a safe, respectful, nurturing environment for children to develop and learn. The Senior Management Team and staff are committed to ensuring they take the school forward on its improvement journey and ensure that all children are given the opportunity to reach their full potential.

As part of the normal ELAV follow up procedures, ECS officers will return within a year to evaluate the school's progress towards taking forward the recommendations for improvement.

[Goodlyburn HMI Inspection Report](#)

[Goodlyburn HMI Follow Up Report](#)

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