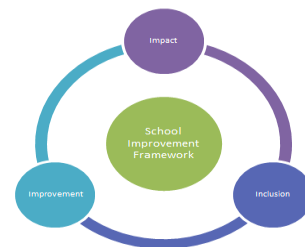




Perth and Kinross Council Education and Children's Services

Extended Learning and Achievement Visit Report Kinloch Rannoch Primary School 29 and 30 October 2019



BACKGROUND

To support the school in the process of self-evaluation, a team of officers from Education and Children's Services visited Kinloch Rannoch Primary School and Nursery Class on 28 and 29 October 2019. The themes for the review were Achievement, Learning and Leadership. 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.

Kinloch Rannoch Primary School is led by a headteacher. At the time of the visit, the school had a pupil roll of 18 children within 2 multi-composite primary classes and a nursery class of 6 children. Pupil attendance for 2018 -2019 was 93.9% which was below the Perth and Kinross average. The school is working with parents to increase attendance.

ACHIEVEMENT

Across the nursery and primary stages at Kinloch Rannoch Primary School there is a nurturing, supportive and caring environment for children and families. This ethos has been supported by a commitment to utilising the Solihull Approach. This approach is a supportive, research-based initiative designed to build resilience through positive health and wellbeing learning experiences for both learners and their families. All staff know children and families very well. Staff describe the school community as one big family, where teamwork is strong, and relationships are positive and nurturing. The care and welfare of children and families is at the centre of the school's work. 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.

Attainment data reviewed from June 2019, in the areas of literacy and numeracy for Primary 4 and 7, indicates that all children are achieving expected levels of attainment in listening and talking and reading, in line with national expectations. In writing and mathematics, a few children achieved expected levels. As discussed with the school, there needs to be a clear focus on raising attainment for all children.

The school can provide historical data showing the achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels over a number of years for individuals and classes of children. However, due to the variation in the size of cohorts and a changeable school population no valid patterns in data could be drawn from the school's overall attainment data.

Robust systems are in place to track individual children's progress over time. Class teachers and support staff meet regularly with the headteacher to look closely at assessment data and evidence of learning, attainment levels and predictions. These discussions support teachers to identify next steps and resources for individuals in their learning and are leading to early identification of barriers to learning and effective and targeted approaches for individuals.

In the nursery a variety of approaches are used to assess and track children's progress, including developmental milestones, language and numeracy assessments, gross and fine motor skills assessments and Child's Plans. The results of these assessments are shared with other stakeholders such as speech and language colleagues and parents. These assessments then lead to targeted development work with individual children or groups.

As identified by the school, all staff would benefit from identifying and agreeing a range of approaches to assessment to track the progress of learning across the year in different areas of the curriculum. They should also ensure there is a consistent approach to gathering a range of evidence to make robust judgements on the achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence level. Staff have engaged in some moderation of their professional judgements with other schools. They should continue with their plans to set up a range of further moderation activities within the school and with other schools. This will ensure that all staff are confident in their judgement of achievement of a level and are planning learning experiences to accurately challenge all learners.

There is a strong team approach to meeting the needs of all at Kinloch Rannoch Primary School. The headteacher, class teachers, pupil support assistants and support workers share their skills and good understanding of individual children to plan to meet individual needs. They work closely with a wide range of partners like community link workers and speech and language therapists to ensure all barriers to learning are identified and interventions to support learning put in place. Parents are included in discussions about learning at all stages. A focused review of the process in place for identifying levels of need and associated planning documentation will help ensure appropriate levels of need are set.

Parents consulted expressed a high level of satisfaction with the school. They appreciate the genuine interest and care that all staff have for their children and commented favourably on the nurturing ethos of the school. The school operates an open door policy and parents feel staff are welcoming and approachable. Parents consulted agree that staff know their children well as individuals. All parents feel that they have opportunities to engage in their children's learning through regular Family Learning Sessions and 'Sharing the Learning' Events.

To support wider achievement the school provides opportunities for children to take part in after school clubs. In the summer there is a Young Firefighting Club, supported by the local fire brigade and an Activity club providing children with opportunities to take part in archery, orienteering, abseiling, Bikeability and touch rugby. Local secondary children also have the opportunity to take part in these activities. The Active Schools co-ordinator supports the school with activities. The school has a number of leadership groups including an Eco Group, Digital Leaders, Leadership Group which meet fortnightly. As discussed with the school, teachers should begin to track children's engagement in wider achievement activities in regular learning conversations. This will support the school in planning opportunities to ensure equity. Children should be further encouraged to reflect on the skills for learning, life and work which they are developing through engaging in these activities.

The school has commendably started a number of community groups which are growing in numbers attending and are run by volunteers. A parent and toddler group, Little Acorns, as well as a Play start Crèche run weekly. A community club called Connections is run every Wednesday afternoon and these sessions are provided to reduce isolation in the community and are planned in response to what the community want to learn or trips they would like to attend. These are supported by staff and partners such as Perth College and the Community Learning Team. Activities planned include book binding, PKC food hygiene, a Cook it programme, the history of Kinloch Rannoch and knitting. These initiatives should continue to develop existing leadership opportunities for community members and families.

LEARNING

Kinloch Rannoch Primary School's grounds are expansive and provide access to a variety of play areas which support creative play and outdoor learning well. Primary classrooms are well organised, stimulating learning environments. They provide children with motivating and supportive spaces in which to learn. There has been a focus on developing play in Primary 1 and 2 and the development of the classroom environments has been supported by the Pupil Equity Fund. Children's learning is displayed very effectively throughout the school. Nursery children have access to their own garden as well as the playground. As discussed with the school, there is scope to enhance the nursery learning environment, reducing the resources in the room to further extend the opportunities for play and learning.

Relationships across the school are strong. In all classes, including the nursery, interactions between staff and children and between children are positive and supportive. In all classes, children are actively engaged

in interesting and relevant learning experiences. To support learner engagement, the school has introduced the 'Kool K9' initiative. Trained dogs visit the classrooms regularly to support the development of self-efficacy and self-esteem. Children have engaged in learner-led research, supported by the headteacher to evidence the impact of the Kool K9s. An increase in learner engagement, confidence and self-regulation is also evident.

Almost all children are eager and interact well during paired and group work. Resources are well organised and digital technology is used where available 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. 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. As discussed with the school, there is scope to further extend learning by increasing pace and challenge and raising expectations for the quality of their work.

Children are given verbal feedback during lessons which supports them in understanding their next steps. Further approaches should be developed across the nursery and primary classes 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. Increased opportunities for self and peer assessment should be planned, using this shared language. Learning Journeys are used in school to evidence achievements and learning undertaken. Children are involved in the process of identifying work to go in and they are shared with parents regularly.

Children at Kinloch Rannoch Primary School experience a rich and relevant curriculum which reflects the unique context of Kinloch Rannoch. The curriculum is designed to provide children with a sense of identity and to equip them with the skills for their future lives. Children have a strong voice in the planning of the curriculum and there are regular planned opportunities for personalisation and choice. This is evident on the learning walls in classrooms. The school works very effectively with partners to enhance and extend learning opportunities. For example: a range of partners support interdisciplinary learning, such as other local schools, Atholl Estates, local businesses and the University of Dundee. These links should continue to be built upon as part of career education programmes.

LEADERSHIP

The headteacher is highly respected by staff, children and parents. She is committed to the school and the community. She works well with all stakeholders to develop shared aspirations for school improvement, learning and teaching and getting it right for every child. She knows the children and families very well and works effectively with the community and partners to provide valuable support at all levels. Recent work on refreshing the vision, values and aims of the school has engaged all stakeholders and has been a welcomed development. Parents also value the work of the staff team and feel that all staff are fully committed to meeting the needs of their children.

Kinloch Rannoch staff are committed to self-reflection and professional development. There is a strong ethos of teamwork within the school and a shared accountability and responsibility to secure best outcomes for all children. There is a positive and proactive approach to professional learning which is inclusive of all staff. Staff share a desire to be innovative and creative and seek out opportunities to lead and attend professional development events. Staff training opportunities, joint planning approaches and engagement with research are increasing all staff's professional knowledge and expertise. There is a clear plan for self-evaluation across the school year, which involves partners and links to school improvement. Within this small team, there are regular activities to monitor standards of learning and teaching. All staff work effectively to continually review and refresh the school environment and approaches to learning and teaching.

There is a programme of Family Learning events shared with the community annually, this is communicated through social media and local businesses and partly funded by the Pupil Equity Fund. These events are planned responsively using the Solihull approach and reflect the needs and interests of learners and their families as well as the community. Examples of family learning include children teaching their parents to bake

bread rolls, learning about world currencies, learning about GLOW and developing digital literacy skills. Planned events have also included a global cook-off, a shared learning experiences around architecture and oil painting. These are supported by the police, local nurse, and the community link worker. These sessions are giving parents an opportunity to learn and are leading to enhanced learning experiences at home for children and families.

Strengths

- The leadership of the headteacher, who is committed to improving outcomes for learners and families. The headteacher values staff and inspires them to be creative and innovative.
- The nurturing and supportive relationships between staff and children and between children. Wellbeing, care and welfare are central to the work of the school.
- The strong team approach to school improvement and meeting the needs of all learners. There is true collaboration and leadership at all levels.
- The curriculum and learning experiences which are engaging, relevant and take full advantage of the unique context of Kinloch Rannoch.
- The school's approaches to family and community learning. This approach has promoted a sense of community in the school, supported by extensive partnerships and intergenerational learning.

Areas for improvement

We discussed with the headteacher 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:

- Raise attainment for all children, with a specific focus on increasing the pace of learning and the challenge in classwork. This includes having higher expectations and standards for all children, including those in the nursery, to attain more in their learning. (From Jan 2020)
- The headteacher should work with the staff team to develop clear, consistent approaches to assessment and moderation. The staff team should consider creative approaches to collaboration to support moderation in their rural location. (From Jan 2020)
- Increase consistency in the approach used to give feedback to all children, to support them to be able to talk about their learning. This includes a strong focus on talking about learning and skills for learning, life and work. (From Jan 2020)

Children, staff and parents at Kinloch Rannoch 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 2019-20. 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.

[HMI Report](#)

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