



**Perth and Kinross Council
Education and Children's Services**



**Extended Learning and Achievement Visit Report
Stanley Primary School
17-18 March 2016**

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this visit was to support the school in the process of self-evaluation and it was conducted by three officers from Education and Children's Services: two Quality Improvement Officers and a peer headteacher. The themes subject to scrutiny were based on core Quality Indicators from 'How Good is Our School?' (3rd EDITION) and reflected the most recent advice note from Education Scotland which outlines raised expectations in relation to schools' implementation of all aspects of Curriculum for Excellence.

Information was gathered from visits to classes, scrutiny of data and children's work, discussions with children, parents, staff and displays of children's work around the school.

Stanley Primary School is led by a non-class committed headteacher with the support of a Principal Teacher. At the time of the visit the school had a pupil roll of 82 children, organised across four composite classes and a nursery with 20 children accessing the morning sessions and seven "Strong Start twos" in the afternoons. Pupil attendance is in line with the national average.

ACHIEVEMENT

Children at Stanley Primary School are proud of their school and talk enthusiastically about the opportunities that they have of working together. They enjoy a positive and inclusive school ethos. Attainment data reviewed at whole school level in the areas of literacy indicates fairly consistent levels of progress over time, with learners meeting or exceeding national standards. In mathematics there is a less consistent picture of progress over time at a whole school level: currently the majority of learners are meeting or exceeding national standards in line with national expectations. Staff recognised gaps in the rate of progress in mathematics attainment in line with national expectations. As a result they have reviewed the delivery of the mathematics programme and have increased the emphasis on the teaching and learning of number bonds. Children in the nursery class are developing early literacy and numeracy skills through a range of play-based learning experiences. They were "mark-making" using the variety of well-placed writing and recording tools in the play provision set up both indoors and outdoors.

Children have a good understanding of the wellbeing wheel and its relevance to their life and learning. Staff track and monitor rates of progress in health and wellbeing.

All primary children are involved in weekly Citizenship Groups. Such opportunities add breadth to their school experiences and provide an opportunity for them to influence the work of the school. Children in the upper stages were observed to be developing skills

for learning, life and work as a result of experiences afforded by leading Citizenship Groups. They are aware of, and can talk about, the skills they are developing. The school now needs to ensure that all children are given opportunities to effectively contribute and achieve in these groups. We have asked the school to develop a robust approach to the planning, assessment and evaluation of these experiences. This will ensure that the learning through Citizenship Groups is of a consistent high quality and that pace and challenge is more appropriately matched to meet the needs of learners.

Parents consulted recognised the school's work in providing leadership opportunities for older children, notably supporting the early years. They spoke favourably of the opportunities afforded them to comment on their child's/children's achievements out of school. Children spoke positively about the breadth of experiences offered which includes an annual ski trip, P7 Residential, the school House System and the variety of after school clubs. They value the Learning Profiles and the opportunities that they and their parents/carers have to note their wider achievements and aspirations. Children would like to have more of a say in setting their own targets.

Staff and pupils need to be clearer on the main purpose for capturing achievements and aspirations and how this supports the development of the whole child. We have discussed with the school the need to review the Learning Profile process in ensuring that these aims and objectives are met.

LEARNING

The learning environment is generously proportioned for the current school roll. The external environment evidences the commitment of the school to outdoor learning and the focus on health and wellbeing. The school has secured its fourth Eco Green Flag, has recognition status as a Rights Respecting School and has implemented the Daily Mile.

All staff work together to support children in their learning. Children are comfortable working in different groups with any of the school team.

In the learning episodes observed children were treated respectfully. Learning intentions were shared and revisited in the majority of these sessions and success criteria were shared in less than half. In the majority of cases explanations and instructions were clear, connecting previous learning with resources used appropriately to support and engage learners. There is scope for staff to ensure that activities are better matched to the different learning needs of children, particularly when planning whole-class and vertical group approaches. In planning learning, teachers should reflect on the purpose of any task or activity to ensure meaningful learning.

The nursery environment allows for free flow play between the indoors and outdoors. Children were observed playing independently, supporting each other to build towers using building bricks and playing imaginatively together in the role-play area. Programmes for literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing are in place which support the planning, profiling and assessment approaches used by the nursery staff.

Nursery children were eager to share their Learning Profiles and could talk about the photographs in them, demonstrating the range of experiences that they have enjoyed. The Learning Profiles are an important point of reference for transitioning into primary.

Across the school, children write for a range of purposes however the quality of children's writing is not of a consistently high standard. The intended learning within all written tasks must be made explicit to the children, with teacher written feedback being more detailed and linked to this learning. The school should review its Assessment for Learning approaches to ensure consistency and clarity of practice.

LEADERSHIP

The headteacher and Principal Teacher have worked together well as a Senior Management Team for a considerable length of time. They are committed to the life and work of the school and know the school community well. Parents consulted expressed their satisfaction with the information they receive from the school and find the "Friends of Stanley Primary School" social media site useful. They welcome opportunities to attend school events.

Staff in the school have leadership roles, which bring about improvements for learners. The headteacher has processes in place to support improvements through self-evaluation. However, there needs to be a more effective system in place to ensure that teachers' evaluations of classwork are based on learning and not of tasks and activities. All staff should ensure that evaluations of learning lead to improvement.

All children contribute to the life and work of the school through participation in the Citizenship Groups. They have worked over time to develop the school grounds.

Key Strengths

- Children who are happy and are keen to be involved in improving their school
- A staff, parent and pupil group who have a sense of pride in their school and a collective commitment to work together to secure best outcomes for all learners
- A focus on developing skills for learning, life and work

Areas for Improvement

- By August 2016 review the purpose of Learning Profiles ensuring they support children to identify what they do well and what they need to do to improve
- From August 2016 ensure that tasks, activities and resources are matched to the different learning needs and targets of children, particularly when planning whole-class and vertical group approaches
- By December 2016 revisit the Assessment for Learning theme of effective feedback with all staff so that there is improved practice in the giving and recording of feedback for all learners

Conclusion

We are confident that the school is well placed to continue its improvement journey. Officers from Education and Children's Services will follow normal procedures and return for a follow up visit within 12 months.

[HMI Report](#)

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