



Extended Learning and Achievement Visit Report Perth and Kinross Council Education and Children's Services



Logiealmond Primary School
3 May 2016

BACKGROUND

To support the school in the process of self-evaluation, a Quality Improvement Officer and a Headteacher across Education and Children's Services (ECS) visited Logiealmond Primary School and nursery class on 3 May 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? 3rd Edition* and by using the most recent Education Scotland Advice Note which outlines the raised expectations in relation to all schools' implementation of all aspects of Curriculum for Excellence.

Logiealmond is a small rural school located just outside the village of Harrietfield in the Almond Valley in Perthshire. The headteacher has a teaching commitment of 3.5 days. She is supported by two teachers working one day and a half day respectively. At the time of the visit the school had a pupil roll of 12 which is organised in one multi-composite class.

The school has an attendance level of 97.9 % which is above the PKC average.

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

Children are lively and enthusiastic learners who are very proud of their school. Relationships are very strong in Logiealmond. There is an ethos of care, interest and respect. Adults and children work very well together. Children are supported as individuals to achieve within a safe, secure and happy environment which sets appropriately high standards. Children describe Logiealmond as a school where they feel cared for and where making friends is easy. They feel that their ideas and opinions are listened to and taken seriously by staff.

The school has maintained good standards of attainment in recent years. Most children are currently making good progress, in line with their levels of ability, in mathematics, reading and writing. Children's listening and talking skills are very good. A few children are making very good progress in their learning and exceed national expectations across the stages.

A range of assessment approaches is used to monitor progress and to identify areas for further improvement. Recent evaluations have identified the need to focus on children's reading comprehension skills. Plans are in place to take forward a range of approaches to support this work which include reciprocal reading and developing family reading strategies. The school should continue to develop processes to enable the layers of information from tracking and monitoring to be shared more easily.

Across the school, children's knowledge about their own health and wellbeing is very well developed. The current learning context of food was helping them to understand the importance good choices in their diet and in leading healthy and active lives. Children are supported in learning

how to keep themselves safe and well. They have regular opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in using the internet safely and managing their social relationships and interactions.

Children talk proudly about the work that they are involved in to improve their school and contribute to their community. In particular, all children are very proud of their annual plant sale which enables them to develop and demonstrate their leadership and organisational skills very well by planning all aspects of this annual event. Children are also extremely positive about the range of activities they participate in, enabling them to work regularly with children from other schools, and the opportunities they have to develop their interests and talents through events such as the Fringe Poster Competition.

LEARNING

Children at all stages respond very well to the active approaches to learning. At the upper stages, children demonstrate a responsible and independent attitude to learning and are naturally supporting the younger children in the class to develop these skills. They really appreciate the range and quality of learning experiences at school, especially the frequent opportunities to learn outdoors. The school grounds provide a variety of spaces for free and creative play. The pupil support assistant supports children to sow and grow a range of plants in the school's greenhouse.

The purpose of lessons is shared and reviewed routinely as part of learning. Almost all children demonstrate their independence well and can organise themselves efficiently and quickly during their individual or group tasks. Teachers ensure that resources are well organised, they skilfully scaffold learning with an appropriate range of technology and written prompts. This allows children to settle to tasks quickly and confidently. Wherever possible, teachers should increase opportunities for children to record feedback and lead class discussions.

Children are able to talk with staff on a daily basis about their learning. Teachers and the pupil support assistant provide them with helpful feedback on how they can improve their work. As a result, almost all children can talk about how well they are doing, what they want to know and be able to do, and can identify their next steps in learning. Staff should now ensure that the good quality of feedback given on children's writing is provided in all curricular areas.

Children's involvement in the planning of their learning is evident. For example, the recent context of space gave opportunity to explore areas of personal interest as well as planning together how to find out more about the British astronaut, Tim Peake. Children take responsibility for maintaining their individual snapshot jotters which document and exemplify their progress in learning and encourage children to celebrate their achievements. They are keen to share their successes in learning in and out of school and appreciate being able to capture these on the achievement wall.

There are interesting displays of children's learning throughout the school. There needs to be an area within the main classroom dedicated to capturing the current context for learning. Consideration should also be given to involving children in decisions about the layout and organisation of their learning environment.

Staff use questioning effectively to stretch children's thinking and extend their responses and contributions. Almost all children are able to write independently and for a range of purposes. Older children are developing their skills in redrafting and refining their extended writing. "Talking and Thinking" books enable children to record and annotate key learning events. There should now be a focus on ensuring that comments reflect skills development and that spelling and presentation are of a high standard.

Children say they enjoy mathematics. They appreciate the active and varied approaches that their teachers use to introduce and consolidate different aspects of mathematics work. Children are developing an appropriate awareness of how mathematical and numeracy skills are used across their learning and in real life. For example, the different challenges set for children on the theme of

maps enabled children at all stages to interpret questions, use appropriate mathematical vocabulary, justify choice and strategy and discuss the accuracy of their calculations.

Digital technology is used well. Children at all stages have created their own animations and are particularly positive about their work using the Lego Moviemaker. The use of different kinds of technology is evident in children's art work and in displays of learning. The digital skills that children have acquired should now be used to enhance and add value to the process of gathering and sharing evidence of progress for their individual profiles.

Children requiring additional support are making steady progress in their learning. This is achieved through carefully planned, appropriately differentiated approaches to learning and teaching and well-judged assistance from teachers and support staff.

This year the school has taken effective steps to enhance parents' understanding of progression in learning using the PKC Skills Framework. Parents have also been involved in work to develop homework strategies to provide a variety of tasks whilst maintaining the reinforcement of core literacy and numeracy skills.

LEADERSHIP

Logiealmond Primary School demonstrates strong capacity to continuously improve. The headteacher shares her aspirations and ambition for all children effectively with the school team and the wider community. All staff are clear of the aim of the school's curriculum to equip and prepare children to be confident as they move through school and into the world of work.

Together, the head teacher, teachers and support staff successfully promote a culture of teamwork which is clearly leading to improvements for children. Teachers are reflective about their own classroom practice and keen to research good practice out-with their school. They actively seek the views of children, parents, staff and community partners as a core part of their work.

Staff are developing systems to predict, track and monitor children's progress as they move through the school. The headteacher monitors learning and teaching activities throughout the year to check on standards. These monitoring activities include observing lessons, and ensuring there are frequent opportunities for professional dialogue amongst staff. The team should now identify key milestones in learning from stage to stage, using the significant aspects of learning and progression frameworks to support this development work.

Children in the upper stages see themselves as leaders who take on responsibilities, set a good example and treat all children, regardless of age, as equals. All children are confident and articulate, which helps them to develop independence and foster a positive ethos. High quality learning experiences across the curriculum enable children to develop their skills in leadership, enterprise, problem solving and working with others

Parents have regular opportunities to contribute to the work of the school and to use their professional skills and talents and expertise to enhance learning experiences. Parents are also positive about the efforts made by the school to ensure a good balance of formal and informal communication. They appreciate the responsiveness of the headteacher and staff to their suggestions and the range of ways with which these are sought.

Key Strengths:

- Children's involvement in decision-making and in the life of their school and community.
- The high quality of learning experiences that enable children to experience success and achievement in learning across the curriculum.
- Strong partnerships with parents and community partners, which enhance the curriculum and children's experiences.
- Staffs' commitment to working together to ensure improved outcomes for children.

- The leadership of the headteacher and the dedication of all staff to providing a caring and motivating ethos for learning.

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 (ELAV) team. The following areas for improvement were agreed:

- Taking account of current local and national guidance, the school should further develop processes for tracking and monitoring in order to succinctly tell the story of children's progress and achievement over time from August 2016.
- Continue to develop successful approaches to developing children's skills for learning, life and work and ensure these are reflected in snapshot jotters and evaluation records as of August 2016.
- Teachers should provide written feedback for all areas of the curriculum from June 2016 which will build on effective practice in place for extended writing.
- As part of the school improvement planning process for session 2016-17; further develop partnerships and business links to increase their involvement in planning learning experiences.
- In preparation session 2016 -2017; involve children in a review of the main classroom area to better reflect learning contexts.

Conclusion

Logiealmond is a well led school. There is a strong sense of cohesion and purpose between staff and children who work very well together. Overall, children are making good progress in their learning and demonstrate a keen interest in their school and wider community.

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.

[HMI Report 2009](#)

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