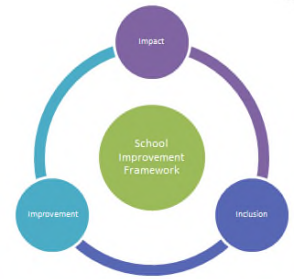




Extended Learning and Achievement Visit Report Tulloch Primary School 14 and 15 March 2017



BACKGROUND

To support the school in the process of self-evaluation, a team of officers from across Education and Children's Services (ECS) visited Tulloch Primary School and nursery class on 14 and 15 March 2017. 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.

At the time of the visit the school had a pupil roll of 354 organised in 13 classes. The nursery class had capacity for 25 morning and 25 afternoon places, being accessed by 55 children. The specialist classes support 14 children and the school also has provision for nurture support in the Dynamic Den class. The school is led by the acting headteacher who is supported by two deputy headteachers (one substantive postholder and one acting) and a principal teacher with responsibility for additional support needs. The construction of a new school was underway within the school grounds. This is due for completion in January 2018.

The school has an attendance level of 95% which is in line with the Perth and Kinross Council (PKC) and national 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

Attainment data reviewed in the areas of literacy and mathematics indicates that most children are currently making very good progress in their learning. In June 2016 almost all pupils in Primary 1 and Primary 4 were making very good progress or better in reading, writing, listening and talking and maths. At Primary 7 almost all pupils were making very good progress or better in listening and talking and most children were making very good progress or better in reading, writing and maths.

Over the past four years, data shows an improving trend in terms of children meeting expected levels of attainment in reading, writing, listening and talking and maths in relation to national targets. There are effective approaches to tracking and monitoring pupil progress in these curricular areas using available data. Staff in Tulloch use Perth and Kinross tracking and monitoring spreadsheets to support professional dialogue and to track and record pupil progress against national expectations. The headteacher meets with class teachers on a regular basis to discuss progress and plan for interventions for those children requiring additional support or challenge. This has resulted in staff demonstrating sound knowledge of pupil progress within their learning and interventions in literacy and numeracy being targeted towards particular groups of children or individuals.

Health and wellbeing is an evident part of the culture and curriculum in Tulloch Primary School. Staff are committed to ensuring all children are supported to have the skills and confidence they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing. In the nursery and across the school children can talk with confidence about the wellbeing wheel, also

known as SHANARRI. Children have regular opportunities to discuss their wellbeing with adults and use their individual portfolios and class displays to record their thoughts and feelings using the wellbeing wheel. Staff act on pupil feedback and put necessary supports in place when required. This approach is supported at a whole school level through assemblies and displays around the school. Restorative Approaches and self-regulation strategies are being developed to support children to reflect upon their feelings and emotions in class and the playground. School staff have already identified the need to further engage parents to support understanding of approaches to developing pupil resilience and wellbeing.

Pupils are provided with a varied range of opportunities for wider achievement across the curriculum. All P4 – P6 pupils have the opportunity to develop skills in a range of areas through the 'Masterclass' sessions which offer activities such as art, cooking, sport and bush craft. Some pupils have the opportunity to link directly with the new school build as Roving Reporters, taking part in site visits and reporting back to the school community. There are a wide range of educational and sporting trips and activities available to children throughout the year. These include sports, a Glee choir and a dance group. The school has strong links within the community with pupils playing an active part in many groups and local events. Consideration should now be given to monitoring and tracking children's participation in wider achievement activities in and out of school to ensure all children have equal access to these valuable opportunities.

Tulloch Primary School has a well-established inclusive and caring ethos. Respectful relationships are evident between pupils and between staff and pupils. Children talk with a sense of pride about their school. They report that they feel listened to in school and that the staff are caring and help to solve problems. They talked about staff and older pupils being there to help them. Parents consulted spoke positively of their satisfaction with the school. They appreciate the genuine interest and care that all staff have for their children and commented on the evident positive relationships which exist. Parents feel that the staff know their children well and are confident that concerns raised by them are dealt with effectively.

LEARNING

The staff make best use of the current school building which clearly presents as a 'learning school'. There is a range of well organised learning environments within the school. In the nursery and all classrooms the learning walls and other displays are consistently of a high standard. They demonstrate pupil involvement in the planning of learning and effectively reflect and support learning in all classrooms.

Across the school, learners are treated with equality, fairness and respect. In almost all lessons their responses are valued, encouraged and built upon. Explanations and instructions are clear and they build upon previous learning and real life experiences. In most lessons learning is well planned and sustains pupil motivation and attention. Learners have opportunities to achieve within the activities and are given feedback and praise which progresses their learning and motivates individuals. In the best lessons learning intentions and success criteria are appropriate, referred to throughout and support children to achieve. Children are involved in planning their learning and are clear about the purpose and desired outcomes of lessons. There is scope for success criteria within lessons to be further differentiated to support and challenge all learners.

There has been a focus on the teaching of literacy this year in order to raise attainment across the school. Staff have been involved in learning about and using a more active approach to teaching reading in all classes as well as introducing some approaches to support individuals and groups of learners. In addition there has been a focus on increasing children's vocabulary in nursery and Primary 1 classes. Support staff work effectively across

the school with teachers to support the delivery of literacy interventions. The school should continue with their literacy work and now measure the impact of this over time.

All children in the nursery and school have regular conversations with staff about their progress in learning. Learning walls, pupil portfolios and jotters are used in all classes to evidence progress for individuals and groups of children. Children are aware of their strengths and able to talk about their next steps in learning. They have a sense of pride in their classrooms and wider school. They are motivated and engaged in their learning and clearly enjoy and appreciate the opportunities which are available to them. They are attentive, well behaved and supportive of each other.

Appropriate planning is in place across the school for pupils with identified additional support needs. Individual barriers to learning are identified and interventions are planned with parents and key staff involved. Pupil friendly individual educational plans (IEPs) are in place as appropriate and most children understand their targets within these. Support staff are deployed across the school to provide identified and targeted support and all are valued members of the school team.

Within the nurture and specialist classes there are very good relationships established between staff and pupils. Support staff and teaching staff work together effectively to create nurturing and secure learning environments. Children were observed to be able to use effective self-regulation strategies to support their health and wellbeing. They were able to talk reflectively about their Learning Journals and share their written comments within these. The pupils demonstrated a clear knowledge of their individual learning targets and how to achieve these. Parents commented positively on their involvement in meetings to plan for their children's next steps through their IEPs.

In the nursery children were observed to be fully engaged in their learning. Staff effectively encouraged children to engage in and extend their conversations and use of vocabulary. This builds on the weekly vocabulary focus on 'Sparkle Words'. Those nursery parents we consulted spoke positively about the opportunities for them to be involved in their child's learning. The use of story sacks and the focus on language development was highlighted by parents as being particularly useful. Opportunity to attend the nursery Brunch and Blether sessions should now be extended to a wider group.

LEADERSHIP

The headteacher, depute headteachers and principal teacher know Tulloch Primary School and the community well. Together as a new Senior Leadership team, they are committed to ensuring continuous improvement in line with the Tulloch vision of helping children 'come on in leaps and bounds'. It is evident that the procedures established to monitor and evaluate progress with improvements impact positively on school improvement. The leadership team are focussed on sustaining consistency across the school and should continue to focus on their roles in taking forward key improvement priorities for the school.

The Senior Leadership team has the support of a staff team who demonstrate a drive to get it right for the children. There is a strong ethos of teamwork among the staff. All members of staff make contributions to evaluating the work of the school and are involved in school improvement planning. Teachers take responsibility for leading developments within the improvement plan contributing to working groups. Staff have built on their previous approach to developing the teaching of phonics and are now developing reading across the school. Teachers share practice with each other and moderate their work across classes.

Pupils enjoy a range of leadership roles which contribute to the work of the school. From P4 to P7 these roles include junior road safety officers, librarians, playground friends, house captains and monitors. Pupils have recently developed a pupil friendly school improvement

plan which has been shared across the school. Within the classroom pupils demonstrate skill in contributing to planning and reviewing their learning across the curriculum. The school should now extend the availability of leadership opportunities to increase the extent to which children in the early years are involved.

Conclusion

Tulloch Primary School provides a safe, respectful and nurturing environment for children with learning at the heart of it. Staff, pupils and parents have a sense of pride and ambition for the school. There is a shared approach to working to get it right for the children in their care and to make sure they all reach their full potential.

Strengths

- Confident, happy, respectful children who are proud of their school and who engage enthusiastically in their learning
- The teamwork and commitment of all staff to ensure continuous improvements for all children
- The wide range of experiences and opportunities available to pupils within the class and the wider life of the school which support them in their learning and development
- The quality of the classroom environment where there is a consistently clear focus on learning, creating a culture where children are confident, motivated and engaged
- The inclusive and supportive ethos across the school and nursery, built on positive relationships where children are happy, respected and proud of their school

We discussed with the headteacher and 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:

- With support from the local authority, continue to build the new Senior Leadership Team with clearly defined roles identified by September 2017, focussed on taking forward key improvement priorities
- During session 2017-18 develop approaches to monitoring and tracking children's participation in wider achievement activities in and out of school
- During session 2017-18 continue with plans in place which will further develop improvements in literacy across the school to raise attainment
- During session 2017 – 2018 review approaches to ensuring differentiation and challenge for all pupils with a particular focus on the use of success criteria

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.

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[HMI Report 2010](#)