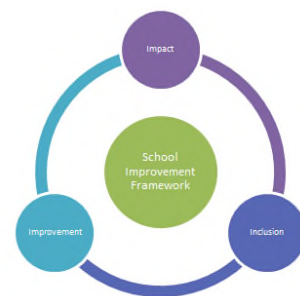




Perth and Kinross Council Education and Children's Services

Extended Learning and Achievement Visit Report Ratray Primary School 14 & 15 March 2018



BACKGROUND

To support the school in the process of self-evaluation, a team of officers from Education and Children's Services visited Ratray Primary School on 14 and 15 March 2018. 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).

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

Ratray Primary School is led by a Senior Management Team (SMT) of a Headteacher and a Depute Headteacher. At the time of the visit the school had a pupil roll of 232 organised across ten classes and a nursery with a total of 74 children across the morning and afternoon sessions. The school has an attendance level of 93% which is just below the Perth and Kinross Council (PKC) and national average. The school has plans in place to improve attendance, including liaising with parents and identifying support for children where that is appropriate.

ACHIEVEMENT

Across all areas of Ratray Primary School staff provide caring and nurturing learning environments. There are positive relations between staff and pupils and the pupils we spoke to reported that on almost all occasions they felt that their opinions were listened to and that their views are taken into account. The parents we consulted felt that their children were well supported and that the headteacher and staff are approachable. In the nursery, parents are fully involved in understanding their child's progress and are valued partners in identifying and reviewing progress and achievements. Work undertaken with a focus on relationships and positive behaviour at Ratray Primary School has been instrumental in the development of a more positive and respectful ethos.

Attainment trends in literacy and numeracy have been variable over time. This year effective use of assessments along with moderation of literacy and numeracy, both within school and across the Local Management Group (LMG), has improved teachers confidence in making professional judgements against the national standards. Current predictions evidence improvement, at all stages, of attainment.

Teachers use the Perth and Kinross Council (PKC) tracking system to track and predict children's attainment over time in literacy and numeracy and this is supporting analysis of pupil progress against predicted targets. The school should now ensure that a robust system is in place to monitor and record actions arising from tracking meetings held

between class teachers and senior management team (SMT). Across the school pupil's additional support needs are identified effectively. Staff are motivated to meet the needs of all learners and pupil support staff deliver specific programmes of targeted work on an ongoing basis. Most staff have worked collegiately to gain understanding of the Dyslexia Pathway. Children and families have been involved in this process and children identified with dyslexia are being supported with a range of effective strategies. Staff know children well and are aware of children who are at risk of not meeting their expected levels of attainment. Some identified pupils have planned opportunities to access nurturing activities for example breakfast with adults who know their needs.

Pupil Equity Funding has been used to provide targeted interventions in literacy across the school and early indications are producing positive results in raising attainment for these groups.

Staff plan and record a range of experiences within and beyond the school, promoting equity of experience and wider achievement for all. The newly introduced house captain system is providing leadership opportunities for all P7 pupils. Children consulted spoke positively about the breadth of experiences offered such as the school House System, Pupil Council roles and a range of educational excursions including a P7 residential trip and a variety of school clubs.

LEARNING

In all the learning episodes observed, there was an ethos of inclusion, pupils were treated respectfully and their responses were valued and encouraged. In most lessons learning intentions and success criteria were shared and in the majority of lessons these were effectively created with pupils and referred to throughout learning. In the best lessons observed, careful questioning by the teacher was effective in extending learning and in the majority of lessons a range of formative assessment strategies were used effectively. Across the school almost all pupils engaged well in their learning activities. There is a clear focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing and evidence of joint planning across stages. This practice should now be further enhanced by continuing to develop a more consistent approach to Formative Assessment and in particular Success Criteria to ensure differentiation and to support pupils to identify and understand next steps in their learning.

The school is focussing on improving reading to give the pupils a sense of enjoyment, a greater range of vocabulary and now there is access to a wider variety of genre. This year they have also introduced 'Active Literacy' in P1 and P1/2 and, teachers have reported a positive impact. As planned, they should build on these developments with an aim to improve attainment in writing. The school should continue their development of curriculum pathways to ensure progression and consistency in literacy and numeracy across the school. Planning for skills for learning, life and work and digital learning should also be developed in a progressive way across the curriculum to ensure that children's knowledge and skills are developed appropriately over time.

Children are familiar with language of the wellbeing indicators and reference this in classes, helping to develop an understanding of the vocabulary. Parents consulted were also aware of the wellbeing indicators and their significance. The school is now working collaboratively with other schools in the Blairgowrie Local Management Group (LMG) to develop a shared Health and Wellbeing Improvement Plan.

The learning environment in the nursery allows all children and parents to feel welcome and included. Achievements are celebrated with children linked to the wellbeing indicators. Quality appropriate early language, mathematics and health and wellbeing experiences are planned for the children to achieve, with a strong emphasis on communication and language. Staff praise and encourage children well through high quality interactions to support them to recognise their achievements.

LEADERSHIP

The headteacher and depute headteacher know the families and community well. The school have worked on developing staff leadership roles to improve experiences for pupils, engage parents and raise attainment in spelling, reading and French learning. Almost all staff in the school and nursery undertake aspects of leadership and have responsibility for taking forward identified developments. There is a structured, planned approach to evaluating school leadership developments and staff use their skills and talents to support improvements. The majority of staff are using research to support their own learning and are reflecting on the impact of their interventions. They are committed to self-reflection and professional development.

All members of staff make contributions to evaluating the work of the school and provide information to guide school improvement. However, there needs to be a more consistent and strategic approach to this and the Senior Management Team should continue to develop more active involvement of staff, pupils and parents in this process.

The school community contributed to reviewing and redesigning the curriculum rationale. As planned, this now needs to be shared with all stakeholders to ensure that there is clarity of the ambition and a shared understanding of the values that underpin the life and work of the school.

The parents consulted reported their satisfaction with opportunities for being involved in the school. They stated that the school and Parent Council keep them informed through a variety of methods such as Twitter and social media. Some parents also reported that they would value more opportunities to attend 'learning events' or have more information about curricular information shared electronically. They welcome opportunities to attend school events such as learning open days. Parents also spoke positively about the school Family Club. The focus for this has changed, in response to parental feedback, to include aspects of curriculum as well as the existing healthy eating focus.

An individual Nursery Improvement Plan clearly shows areas for improvement and details how improvements will be achieved; this was annotated, shared and reviewed with staff. On-going self-evaluation, using How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare (HGIOELC), with all stakeholders should be further developed. Effective leadership in the nursery ensures that the families are well supported through strong links with partners such as the Incredible Years Programme and families have given positive feedback around the impact of this. Children are empowered to lead their own learning through play and the structure of the day ensures activities are self-directed; leadership for children could be increased through further developing creativity and skills for life and learning.

At Rattray Primary School and Nursery the commitment to working together with families to get it right for the children and young people in their care is evident.

Strengths:

- Inclusive ethos where pupils are treated with equality, fairness and respect
- The commitment of the senior management team supported by a motivated staff team who participate in a range of leadership opportunities
- High expectations of behaviour and the development of relationships policy which are resulting in a positive ethos within the school
- Consistent teaching approaches which provide a positive climate for learning
- The impact of partnership working with other agencies

We discussed with the Headteacher and the Senior Management Team 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:

- Set targets to ensure that children reach expected levels of attainment in literacy and in numeracy during session 2018-19.
- Across the school and nursery develop a rigorous self-evaluation process that feeds into school improvement planning and leads to focussed outcomes for pupils. From June 2018
- Evaluate the impact of 'Pupil Voice' in their learning and school improvement planning and implement identified actions. From June 2018.
- Ensure that Learning and Teaching Policies are in place to ensure continued consistency in all classes.

CONCLUSION

The Headteacher, staff, pupils and parents should continue to work together to support future improvements in order to enable all children to develop and achieve their full potential. Officers from Education and Children's Services will continue to work with the school to ensure sustained progress and will return for a follow up visit within 12 months.

Responsible Officer: Jennifer Sorrie
Email: JenniferSorrie@pkc.gov.uk