



## High Mill Primary Validation Report

Validation Report	
<b>School Name:</b> High Mill Primary	<b>Name of Validator:</b> Beverley McCormick
Market Road Carluke ML84BE United Kingdom	<b>Date of Validation:</b> 21/02/2022
<b>Head Teacher / Principal Name:</b> Kirstine McDonald	<b>Digital Technology Co-ordinator:</b> Lianne Hughes

This report includes validator's comments based on a review of the online submission and the validation visit.

- We are happy to share this report with Education Scotland: Yes
- Would you be willing to be contacted by the programme with the view of contributing an article/blog or other materials to help other schools on their digital journey?: Yes
- We are happy for Education Scotland to contact us to highlight our practice: Yes
- We are happy to share this report with the local authority: Yes

## **Leadership and Vision 83%**

High Mill Primary School has developed a strong vision for the education of its students when using digital technologies. This was evident both during the validation visit and as detailed on the accompanying school development documents that were shared with me (Technologies overview of levels and benchmarks). The school maintains its policies in line with the Digital Education Strategy for South Lanarkshire Council's guidance and uses this document as the basis for their delivery of Digital Literacy skills. Staff use South Lanarkshire Council progression planners across ICT/Technology and are in the stages of planning to create progression planners which are more specific to the school's needs and resources. This provides opportunities to infuse digital skills across the curriculum, embedding digital learning in sustainable ways for all students and creating opportunities for engagement with the wider education community. The leadership of the school works diligently to enhance teaching and learning and encourages good practices when using digital technologies. They also actively seek out ways to involve parents in raising an awareness of the use of digital technologies.

The school has a child centred approach to education with students seen as partners in their education; this was clearly demonstrated during discussions. There is an established digital leadership program with two digital leaders in each class. Digital Leaders support the effective delivery of learning in their classes and are responsible for making sure the technology is ready to use during lessons by tidying, charging and monitoring all the devices. Digital Leaders from senior classes support the younger children with logging onto devices before lessons. A novel practice that the school has established is the celebration of a 'TWEET OF THE WEEK'. Photos of the Digital leaders are proudly displayed with their responsibilities on a Digital Leader display board alongside a copy of the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child articles which apply to digital learning. The Digital Leaders also take part in assemblies utilising digital tools to share assemblies throughout the school. Recently, they led a whole school virtual assembly on Safer Internet Day.

## **Use of Digital Technology to Deliver the Curriculum 82%**

During the validation, it was evident that ICT was not an add-on but was a central consideration for curriculum and assessment delivery in all year groups and curriculum areas. Digital skills are carefully integrated into learning experiences and lessons are planned to ensure that students develop a full range of digital skills from those associated with basic IT skills to those linked to communication. Teachers plan for and provide students with exciting learning experiences, encouraging independent learning with digital technology. Teachers embraced technology during the pandemic and used it as a way to engage and motivate learners. The school successfully uses Google Classroom as its VLE.

During the first lockdown all classes were provided with daily Numeracy, Literacy and IDL lessons and activities through Google Classroom. Pupil engagement was tracked daily during this time and pupils received individual feedback on their work. In the second lockdown, pupils who did not have access to a digital device were provided with a device and MiFi dongle to ensure equality of access. Staff used Google Meet to 'check-in' with their classes, supporting wellbeing themes at least 3 times a week. A consistent approach was implemented across the school to ensure live direct teaching for all classes in Literacy and Numeracy using Google Meet. Teachers use Mote to provide accessible verbal feedback to pupils. A separate website to support parents with digital skills was launched to support remote learning.

During the validation, students led the conversation about the impact of digital technologies on their learning experiences. They spoke confidently about exploring film making themes. They also shared with me experiences that they have had using coding devices to develop computational thinking capabilities through Minecraft, Pivot Animator, CS First and Scratch. The school also provides opportunities to use digital technology across all areas of the curriculum including the use of Nessy Reading and Spelling, Book Creator, Oxford Owl, IDL Numeracy and Literacy and SumDog along with safe internet searches. One interesting example of collaboration was through the use of Jam Board to create online learning and social spaces for students.

## **School Culture 75%**

The school actively seeks opportunities to engage parents and ensure that parent participation is high. The school uses a range of apps and internet sources to keep parents and students engaged and informed. It has invested in School App for Parents which is linked to the school website and ensures that all content is kept up to date. Newsletters, messages and photos are shared on these platforms and further information is shared via their Twitter feed (@HighMillPrimary). The Twitter feed is embedded in the school website enabling parents who do not use Twitter to access the same information. Google Classroom Guardian Email Summary has been set-up with parents signing an agreement to enable them to monitor their child's progress and homework. Links to apps such as ThingLink are shared which easily provide students and parents with a range of information relating to current topics such as internet safety. Sway is also used as a method of communication and Mrs Hughes provided me with a Sway which illustrated some of the excellent practices that are taking place in the school. <https://sway.office.com/nXJUpUDxqtTvEDa6?ref=Link>

The students that I spoke with were confident when sharing their experiences with digital technologies to assist their learning. They knew how to keep safe whilst online and were able to share some top tips as good digital citizens.

The school considers the impact of wellbeing on student outcomes and uses digital technologies to create safe spaces for students to share their emotions and concerns with teachers through the use of a wellbeing survey on Google Forms. Students can privately communicate with staff, adding comments, sharing their feelings and requesting assistance as and when needed. Those students who teachers are concerned about can be tracked for emotional wellbeing and interventions provided when needed. This mode of support has been so successful that staff have also adopted it as a way to monitor their own wellbeing on a biannual basis.

## **Professional Development 80%**

The school places great value on ensuring that all staff are well trained and comfortable in the use of digital technologies to support teaching and learning. Support for teachers is available and the school actively seeks opportunities for involvement in ICT based projects within the school and beyond. The school has chosen to adopt the use of Google Classroom as its VLE to support distance learning. This practice was adopted during the first lockdown, but has been a practice that has been maintained and expanded to now include homework activities, enabling the school to provide paperless homework activities. To enable the best possible experience for students and staff, at least half of the teaching staff have now undertaken Google Educator

training at Level 1 and one member of teaching staff has been awarded Level 2 and is currently training to become a Google Certified Trainer. This will certainly be an asset to the school and to the wider community. During stages of the pandemic the staff also provided support for staff in digital technologies and students to enable home learning through device loans.

## **Resources and Infrastructure 90%**

High Mill Primary is an excellent example of a school who uses a smaller number of devices to create meaningful learning experiences for their students. They clearly illustrated to me that the value of digital technologies in education is the way in which they are deployed. Students have opportunities to develop 21st century digital skills and talked confidently about how these resources enhance and support their learning experiences. The school has also been investing in adding additional devices to their resources and the addition of Chromebooks have transformed the use of digital technology in teaching and learning. The schools also has a number of iPads and are awaiting delivery of a 'group set'. The staff at High Mill make great use of their website and Twitter account to keep parents and the wider community updated with what's happening in the school and the learning achievements of its students. Staff confidently use OneDrive to store and share planning information and there is a good practice of sharing resources with colleagues. The school uses a range of equipment to enable staff and students to communicate, collaborate and manipulate information electronically and this includes access to a range of computer devices and the use of internet and email.

The school has a well-resourced computer suite which is used for whole class teaching. The school is focused on increasing access to interactive boards. Over the last year, they have started to replace the obsolete interactive whiteboards with Clever Touches. All classes now have access to a C-Touch and this capacity will soon increase as they are awaiting delivery of a second device. All classrooms have a computer, iPad and Wi-Fi internet access. The school has a networked ICT system with classrooms availing of a desktop computer, Chromebooks and iPads that use a managed Wi-Fi system. This ensures that the appropriate level of filtering is in place to protect students whilst online.

## **General Recommendations:**

It was a pleasure to virtually visit High Mill Primary School, and meet the Head Teacher, Mrs Hughes and student Digital Leaders. The staff have a strong passion for infusing digital technologies in fun and meaningful ways across all levels of learning and, as a result, students are able to speak clearly about their experiences and how digital technologies can be used to enhance learning. High Mill Primary School actively seeks to live out its vision of encouraging, supporting and challenging its students to be the best they can be.

High Mill Primary School, is on a positive digital journey and it is clear that their journey will continue on this positive trajectory. It is my recommendation that High Mill Primary School has achieved the Digital Schools Award.

Signed

B. A. McCormick

**Beverley McCormick**  
External validator

