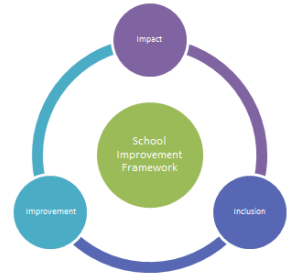




## Extended Learning and Achievement Visit Report Fossoway Primary School 4 and 5 September 2019



### BACKGROUND

To support the school in the process of self-evaluation, a team of officers from across Education and Children's Services (ECS) visited Fossoway Primary School and nursery class on 4 and 5 September 2019. 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? (4<sup>th</sup> Edition)*

At the time of the visit the school had a pupil roll of 114 children, organised in 5 classes. The nursery class had capacity for 16 morning and 16 afternoon places, being accessed by 33 children. The school is led by the head teacher and supported by a principal teacher post. This is currently being shared by two teachers on a temporary basis.

In session 2018-2019 the school had an attendance level of 96% which was above 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

Children at Fossoway Primary are well mannered, polite and come to school ready to learn. They were welcoming to visitors and enjoyed sharing their achievements. The children were very proud of their school and report that they feel safe, are listened to by staff and know they can get help when they need it.

Attainment data reviewed in the areas of literacy and mathematics indicates that a majority of children are achieving in line with national expectations. In June 2019 most pupils in Primary 1 were achieving in line with national expectations in reading, writing, listening and talking, and numeracy. In Primary 4 the majority of pupils were achieving in line with national expectations in reading and writing, and most were working at this level in listening and talking and numeracy. In Primary 7 almost all pupils were working in line with national expectations in listening and talking and most pupils were performing at this level in reading, writing, and numeracy. Almost all children in the Nursery were making very good progress in their learning.

The school uses the Perth and Kinross tracking and monitoring system to support professional dialogue and to track and record pupil progress against national expectations. This should now be further developed to ensure fully informed planning of targeted interventions and universal approaches. Approaches to assessment of learning are currently being revisited to ensure consistent methods are in place. These will enhance whole school evaluation of progress, strengths and next steps for targeted groups and across year groups.

Outdoor learning is a prominent feature of learning in Fossoway Primary School. The children are supported at all stages to access learning outdoors on a regular, planned basis. The school benefits from extensive varied grounds which are used to provide experiences

lending themselves to creativity and exploration. Activities include den building, fire building, and a range of seasonal outdoor activities. Staff should continue to develop the range of experiences offered, building on the good practice being established.

Pupils are able to access a range of opportunities for wider achievement. Parents, carers and members of the local community participate in delivering activities including bridge, football, chess, netball, Scripture Union, art, charity work, guitar group and Glee club. Multi-skills activities have been offered for younger children and further planning will develop these opportunities over the coming session.

Parents and carers have also supported a range of activities including reading, yoga, running, and digital clubs. All children are members of a House group which meets regularly to develop the ongoing work of the school. Further opportunities for pupil voice are offered between P4-P7 in groups which focus on taking action to support the UN Global Goals. The pupils also share school improvement work through the Learning Council which has representatives from every stage in the school.

The school is now in a good position to develop approaches to track and monitor wider achievement, map the range of activities available, and target planning to support those children who would benefit from further experiences to develop their skills for learning, life and work.

Fossway Primary School has a well-established inclusive and caring ethos. Respectful relationships are evident between pupils, and between staff and pupils. Children report that staff are caring and help them to solve problems. They ably described how staff and older pupils are available over the course of a day to help them. Parents 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. Members of the parent focus group highlighted the positive approach to communication taken by the head teacher, specifically praising the way behaviour is managed.

## **LEARNING**

Staff, pupils and parents have identified the need to review the school vision, values and aims and this work is being led by the Learning Council with the support of one of the Principal Teachers. This work should form the basis for developing a relevant curriculum rationale that describes the experience offered at Fossway Primary School across the four contexts for learning.

Staff currently plan using the experiences and outcomes and are beginning to use the benchmarks to support moderation and assessment. The school have identified the need to review approaches to planning and incorporate the use of numeracy and literacy pathways to ensure better curricular continuity and progression of learning. In most lessons observed the learning was appropriate, effectively shared, understood and referred to. In the majority of lessons observed, explanations and instructions were clear and built on previous learning, with a range of teaching approaches being used. These included examples of skilful use of questioning and discussion to enable learners to think, express their views and ask questions. In all lessons observed, learners were treated with equality, fairness and respect.

Across the school almost all children engaged well in their learning activities and most were given opportunities to achieve within their activities. Learners need further opportunities to lead their own learning at a pace which responds to the needs of the learners. In the best of learning episodes observed, learning intentions were shared and understood, success criteria were created by learners and systems were in place for learners to self and peer

assess against those criteria. Staff would benefit from a further focus on developing inclusive classroom practices which address any barriers to learning. Clear guidance and a shared understanding of teaching, learning, and assessment would support teachers to be more consistent in their practice and ensure high quality learning and teaching.

Learners were able to talk about the tasks and activities they were involved in. They spoke positively about their learning journey jotters which they are currently developing as an approach to target setting and sharing their learning. This will enable children to be better placed to recognise their own strengths and next steps in learning as well as provide useful information to parents about their child's progress. Parents spoke positively about a newly introduced school app which gives relevant and current information linked to their child's learning journey.

Warm positive relationships are evident within the Nursery and examples of very positive interactions between adults and children were evident. The environment has well developed areas and effective use is made of the outdoor space. All children appeared to be happy, feel valued and transitioned smoothly between activities as they played. There is further opportunity to promote numeracy and literacy skills through embedding these within the range of activities offered. Staff should further consider how good practice in planning for learning through play can be shared between Nursery and P1 to P3.

Parents report that the app used to share the learning experiences within the nursery is valued. There is a focus on the development of children's skills in early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing although there is scope for this to be developed further.

The school is planning to use wellbeing indicators more extensively and are introducing aspects of this at assembly. The school would benefit from establishing robust processes for review and update of child concern folders as part of a review of school child protection policy and procedures, including raising awareness of these processes with parents.

## **LEADERSHIP**

The Headteacher and Principal Teachers are establishing themselves as a new team, and are benefitting from strong support from the school community in engaging in self-evaluation to identify areas for improvement. The staff team is committed and motivated to work collegiately. All staff spoke positively about the development of the School Improvement Plan and the engagement of stakeholders in identifying priorities for the future. All members of staff take on a leadership role and speak positively about the collaborative approaches introduced which promote greater shared responsibility for improvement work. Staff identify and recognise the importance of developing consistent approaches and will benefit from further opportunities to establish and share effective practice around planning and assessment at all stages.

Pupils value and appreciate the range of opportunities available to 'have a say in what goes on'. The Learning Council is led by senior pupils and they speak positively of the impact they have on improving their school, including enhancing the outdoor learning space, adding to the range of clubs offered, and the emerging development to work towards the Global Goals. Learners are given the opportunity to celebrate their successes in school and out with through assemblies and the recognition wall.

The school has an active Parent Council and separate fundraising group. Parents we talked to were very supportive of the school's work commenting on the high levels of engagement and involvement which is actively promoted by the school. Key strengths were identified which included the high level of responsibility given to children to lead aspects of the work of the school, and of the positive relationships between staff and pupils. Parents also spoke

positively of the school's willingness to try new approaches, commenting on the development of play in the early years as an example. A few parents of primary one pupils felt they would benefit from more regular reminders in relation to routines during the first days of school. Parents agreed that the school could involve them more in school improvement activities.

The following strengths were identified:

- Warm and welcoming ethos created by the Headteacher, where children feel safe and are encouraged to develop their skills and interests
- Positive and respectful relationships between pupils, staff, and parents, and strong engagement with the community
- Opportunities for meaningful learner engagement in the development of school priorities, promoting leadership and pupil voice
- Outdoor learning opportunities which provide rich learning experiences for children across the school to good effect

## **Conclusion**

Whilst there are many positives in the life and work of the school which have been recognised in this report; the following areas for improvement will build on and extend the overall quality of the learning. Under the leadership of the Headteacher, the following areas for improvement should now be addressed:

Areas for improvement:

- Review approaches to planning, tracking and monitoring including the development of approaches to meeting learning needs, wider achievement, and planned interventions ensure that planning is responsive and involves all learners.
- Further develop play in early years ensuring a clear rationale and purpose of this approach leading to raised attainment.
- Provide further opportunities for children to lead their own learning at a pace which responds to the needs of the learners, and supports appropriate levels of challenge within each class.
- Build on work staff have previously undertaken through practitioner led enquiry to develop a shared understanding of the key elements which underpin high quality learning and teaching.
- Review school Child Protection Policy and procedures and make this available to staff and parents.

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 2013](#)

[HMI Progress Report 2014](#)