**Improvement Plan 2024/2025**

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**St Bernadette’s RCPS 2024-25**

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**School Vision and Aims**

Our ethos is rooted in our Faith. All members of our school community are encouraged to live the Gospel Values, loving and supporting each other while striving to develop our unique gifts and abilities. We aim to enable each of our children to achieve their God – given potential.



Our vision for our children is that they;

* develop a strong connection to their environment and a determination to contribute to it;
* are empowered to make choices that enhance their health and wellbeing throughout their lives;
* develop the skills for learning, life and work that they will need to thrive in the workplace.

When we talk about this with our children, we talk about our 3Bs: **Belonging, Believing & Building Blocks**

We are working on the incorporation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into the life and work of the school. We are also learning about sustainability as a Laudato Si school. We work with the St Modan’s Learning Community and Lornshill Learning Community.

Our Gospel Values are the foundation of our school. All members of our community are encouraged to live these values and restorative conversations are structured around them:

* Love
* Hope
* Justice
* Gentleness
* Compassion
* Forgiveness

Our Gospel Values support us in our quest to be an inclusive and welcoming school for all of our children and families. We believe that our diversity is our strength. Our school is fortunate to include children whose families come from all over the world. 18% of our children have English as an Additional Language. Our reputation as a nurturing and inclusive school has led families to seek us out when their children have additional support needs, 45% of our children are on staged intervention. The National Autism Implementation Team Society report that ‘*2.6% of learners in Scottish schools are autistic’* but the rate of children in our school with an ASD diagnosis is 7.2% and we have a significant number of young people waiting for an a neurodevelopmental difficulties assessment.

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is the measure that the Scottish Government uses for identifying the places in Scotland where people are experiencing disadvantage across different aspects of their lives. According to this measure, 35 out of 97 of our children are living in SIMD 1-2, the most disadvantaged households. This represents 36% of all our children. The number of children in SIMD 9-10, the most advantaged households, is 26. This represents 27% of all our children. 18% of our children qualify for free school meals on the basis of family income.

Overview

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| **Headteacher:** | Nuala McElroy |

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| **Priority** | **Long Term Improvement Outcome** | **Accountable Person** |
| 1 | **Belonging and Believing:** Most children, staff and families will report a greater awareness and understanding of neurodiversity. Developing a more informed and inclusive learning community will lead to a decrease in the anxiety reported by our neurodiverse learners. | N McElroy |
| **2** | **Building Blocks:** The Writing attainment of children living in SIMD 1&2 will increase to 73%. | N McElroy |

Priority 1

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| **Long Term Improvement Outcome**  (Aspirational, Transformational; relates to improved outcomes for learners) | | |
| Belonging: Most children, staff and families will report a greater awareness and understanding of neurodiversity. Developing a more informed and inclusive learning community will lead to a decrease in the anxiety reported by our neurodiverse learners by the end of June 2025. | | |
| **NIF Priority** | **NIF Driver(s)** | **HGIOS4/HIGIOELC QIs** |
| Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing  Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children  Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy  Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people | School Leadership  Teacher Professionalism  Parental Engagement  Assessment of Children’s Progress  School Improvement  Performance Information | 1.3 Leadership of change  2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment  3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion  3.2 Raising attainment and achievement / securing children’s progress |
| **Contextual Analysis/Rationale** | | |
| **Contextual Analysis**  **Neurodiversity**  The Charter for Catholic Schools in Scotland states that Catholic schools should have ‘*an inclusive ethos that aims to honour the life, dignity and voice of each person.’* As part of our work on building a school community where all members are equally valued and enjoy equity of opportunity, we are looking at our inclusion in terms of neurodiversity. Our reputation as a nurturing and inclusive school has led families to seek us out when their children have additional support needs, 45% of our children are on staged intervention. The National Autism Implementation Team Society report that ‘*2.6% of learners in Scottish schools are autistic’* but the rate of children in our school with an ASD diagnosis is 7.2% and we have a significant number of young people waiting for an a neurodivergent difficulties assessment.  The need to promote equality and inclusiveness is explained by the organisation Mentally Healthy Schools; they report that, *‘Many (neurodivergent) pupils can face cognitive, sensory, and social challenges in the school environment, which is usually designed primarily with neurotypical pupils and staff members in mind.  Neurodivergent people can often feel as though they need to supress natural behaviours, conform to social norms and force themselves to behave ‘typically’. This is known as masking. This can be exhausting and cause increased anxiety and burnout.’*  The National Autistic Society reports: *A shift towards a neurodiversity paradigm, which views cognitive differences as natural and expected, is recommended. This approach involves preparing for a neurodiverse student population from the outset and implementing policies that do not discriminate against neurodivergent students​*.  We intend to use the Learning About Neurodiversity in Schools (LEANS) resource to raise the awareness of children, staff and families around neurodiversity and the importance of accepting each other. The National Autistic Society endorses using the Leans resources, saying, ‘*By explicitly teaching about neurodiversity and neurodivergence, LEANS seeks to increase understanding of how differences in cognition, interaction, and sensory processing affect their school experiences. The resource also aims to improve understanding of the legitimacy of neurodivergent people’s differing needs and strategies.’*  The advantage for all of our children, whether they are neurodivergent or not is that *‘Understanding neurodiversity prepares students for the diverse world outside of school. It teaches them to work and communicate with a wide range of individuals, an important skill in both personal and professional settings​*.’ National Autistic Society  We believe that this work contributes to our aim of developing children’s skills for learning, life and work. It also supports us in our aim of developing a truly inclusive school where children learn to accept and value ‘*the life, dignity and voice of each person.’*  The online, anonymised, emotions tracker that the school has introduced as a daily tool for communication; developing emotional vocabulary; and gauging the welfare of our children will be used to evaluate our progress towards this goal. | | |

Priority 2

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| **Long Term Improvement Outcome**  (Aspirational, Transformational; relates to improved outcomes for learners) | | |
| **Building Blocks:** The attainment of children living in SIMD 1 & 2 will rise to at least 73%. | | |
| **NIF Priority** | **NIF Driver(s)** | **HGIOS4/HIGIOELC QIs** |
| Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing  Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children  Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy  Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people | School Leadership  Teacher Professionalism  Parental Engagement  Assessment of Children’s Progress  School Improvement  Performance Information | 1.3 Leadership of change  2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment  3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion  3.2 Raising attainment and achievement / securing children’s progress |
| **Contextual Analysis/Rationale** | | |
| **Contextual Analysis**  Attainment over time:   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Year | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | | Writing - all children | 66 | 69 | 70 | 86 | | Writing - children living in SIMD 1 & 2 | 49 | 67 | 67 | 68 |   **Rationale**  We can see from the data table above that this year’s improvement in writing attainment was not equitable - while the whole school attainment rose substantially, the children living in SIMD\* 1 & 2 did not achieve the same success. This was despite the targeted PEF-funded\*\* support provided to our young writers who live in SIMD 1 & 2. All teachers reported that their children who received the PEF-funded support showed improvement in confidence and in their writing skills, but this did not translate into the final Teacher Professional Judgements (TPJ).  To ensure that our children in SIMD 1 & 2 enjoy more success in writing next year, we intend that the PEF-funded learning assistant will be working with teachers who are trained in the strategies promoted by the Education Scotland National Writing Programme. The learning assistant will build on the working relationships she developed this year with all the targeted children and will further develop their skills in tools for writing through following the advice of teachers trained in the National Writing Programme. The P3-P7 teachers will all be trained in the strategies promoted by the Education Scotland National Writing Programme. Our children will experience writing activities that are structured in the way recommended by Education Scotland. The PEF-funded learning assistant will work closely with the class teachers and will contribute to our tracking meetings so that there is a shared understanding of the gaps that need to be addressed by the class teacher as well as through the additional support provided by the learning assistant.  \*SIMD (The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) is the measure that the Scottish Government uses for identifying the places in Scotland where people are experiencing disadvantage across different aspects of their lives. According to this measure, 35 out of 97 of our children are living in SIMD 1-2, the most disadvantaged households. This represents 36% of all our children. The number of children in SIMD 9-10, the most advantaged households, is 26. This represents 27% of all our children.  \*\*PEF (Pupil Equity Funding) is additional funding allocated directly to schools and targeted at closing the poverty-related attainment gap. Funding must provide targeted support for children and young people (and their families if appropriate) affected by poverty to achieve their full potential. Pupil Equity Funding is allocated to schools on the basis of the estimated number of children and young people in P1-P7 registered for free school meals based on family income. For each child whose family has successfully applied for free school meals on the grounds of family income, a school should receive £1200. | | |