



## *Bearsden Primary School*



## *Standards & Quality Report*

*2013 - 2014*

## **Context of the School**

Bearsden Primary School was built in 1911. It is a traditional sandstone building in the centre of Bearsden, a small town on the outskirts of Glasgow. The catchment area consists mainly of private housing. 40% of pupils attend as a result of placing requests. The majority of these pupils come from other areas of Bearsden. 20% of our pupils are bilingual, speaking a total of 24 different languages.

The school is non-denominational and co-educational. The school roll is currently 438 and is organised in 15 classes. The staffing comprises a Head Teacher, two Depute Head Teachers, a Principal Teacher and 14 class teachers, including 2 chartered teachers. There are specialist teachers for Physical Education and Music who visit the school every week. A teacher from the network support team is allocated for one day a week and a teacher from the English as an additional language team is allocated for part of the week. We also have visiting teachers who support our sensory impaired pupils. The teaching staff are supported by four classroom assistants and four support for learning assistants. Instrumental tutors visit once a week and tuition is available for woodwind, violin and cello. The school office is staffed by an administrative assistant and two clerical assistants.

Liaison meetings are held throughout the year with local pre-schools and nurseries and this ensures a seamless transition for pupils coming in to Primary 1. Children entering Primary 1 come from more than 20 pre-schools and nurseries in Bearsden and the Glasgow area. An informative pre-entrant programme in May and June helps to familiarise children and parents with the school and the curriculum.

Almost all Primary 7 pupils transfer to Bearsden Academy. There is an excellent transition programme involving all schools in the Bearsden Academy cluster. Recent developments within the cluster help to provide a coherent curriculum for our pupils and opportunities for them to work with teaching staff and young people across the cluster.

Bearsden Primary School is highly respected within the local and wider community. It has well established links with businesses, churches, pre-schools, care homes, community groups, libraries and shops. At an international level, there are close links with Malawi and with China. The school is supported by a very active Parent Council and an enthusiastic and dedicated Fundraising Group.

## **How well do children learn and achieve?**

### **2.1 Learners' experiences; 1.1 Improvements in performance.**

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Our pupils are motivated by their learning contexts and almost all children are performing well in their class work. This is evident through monitoring of jotters and topic work, classroom observations, discussions with pupils and staff and examination of standardised test results. Pupils' mental maths skills continue to improve and this can be seen through monitoring forward plans, professional dialogue with staff and discussions with pupils. Pupils in Primary 4 won the East Dunbarton round of Sumdog. The new resources introduced for the teaching of mathematics have helped staff to ensure progression through CfE experiences and outcomes. Staff have continued to ensure that our able pupils are suitably challenged. Progress made by our Primary 3 able pupils' maths group and by pupils in Primary 7 shows that we are meeting the needs of these learners. The standardised test maths

scores at P4, P6 and P7 show that pupils are consistently performing above national averages. Evaluation of the new maths resources showed that some concepts taught at the Primary 5 stage were very challenging. This will be addressed in planning formats next session. Maths topic weeks have been very successful, providing a whole school focus and enabling staff to work together to share the standard. This approach will be continued next session.

The continued focus on moderation of writing across the school, has ensured a consistent approach to learning and teaching and has helped pupils to improve their standards in writing. Staff are confident when assessing pupils' writing against CfE levels. Samples of pupils' writing show very good progress, with almost all pupils performing at national levels and some pupils exceeding these levels. The network support team worked with Primary 1 pupils and staff on emergent writing. This, along with the focus and discussion on detailed drawings at the Primary 1 stage, has enabled our Primary 1 pupils to confidently produce very good stories.

Reciprocal reading approaches are used throughout the school. This approach, along with a wide range of additional reading resources, helps pupils to experience enjoyment and choice in reading. Analyses of standardised reading test scores at Primaries 4, 6 and 7, showed that scores were well above the national average. They also showed an increase in performance from previous scores. This was particularly evident at the Primary 7 stage. Baseline test scores at Primary 1 showed that the majority of pupils performed at above average levels in literacy and numeracy.

Planning formats have been amended to help staff to track progress through experiences and outcomes. This ensures adequate coverage of experiences and outcomes as well as breadth, challenge and application. Bloom's revised taxonomy has been incorporated into planning for learning and teaching this year and children from Primary 4 upwards are familiar with the terminology. Class visits by senior managers identified children actively engaged in their learning; collaborating with each other and involved in the decision making process about their learning. Pupils are aware of their own learning targets and how to achieve these. Teachers in all classes continue to give high quality feedback to their pupils to inform them of progress being made.

Our pupils are actively involved in their learning and high quality feedback makes them aware of their strengths and areas for development. Pupils contribute to the life of the school and the wider community through ECO Schools, Rights Respecting Schools, Enterprise activities, Pupil Council and House systems. Pupils in Primary 7 achieved John Muir Discovery Awards following their residential visit to Ardmay House in May.

## **How well does the school support young people to develop and learn?**

### **5.1 The Curriculum; 5.3 Meeting Learners Needs**

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The curriculum encompasses the principles of Curriculum for Excellence. We ensure that pupils are fully involved in their learning and are given appropriate opportunities for personalisation and choice. Where possible, Scottish contexts are used to enhance learning. Our programmes this year continue to emphasise active learning; interdisciplinary learning; cooperative learning and reciprocal teaching. Pupils have been given opportunities to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work through well planned learning contexts and opportunities to take part in enterprise activities in all

classes. We promote a strong sense of equality and fairness which is emphasised in our programmes of study and our school values and aims. We welcome and celebrate diversity. Our approaches to learning and teaching ensure that children are provided with a breadth of experiences which are set within relevant contexts. Interdisciplinary learning is the main focus for teaching topics and covering a range of curricular areas. Pupils participate in educational visits linked to topics, to enhance their learning. Visitors are welcomed to school to help to extend pupils understanding of topics. The impact of Interdisciplinary learning is evident during class visits and can be seen in the quality of work produced by pupils at all stages.

This year we have developed a whole school approach to the teaching of science to ensure progression and full coverage of experiences and outcomes. Following last year's evaluation by staff, Bounce Back is now being taught by class teachers rather than during Reduced Class Contact time.

Learning & teaching meetings continue to focus on attainment of the lowest achieving 20% of pupils and also the most able pupils in each class. Support was provided from network learning support to help the lowest achieving 20% of pupils. The able pupils' maths group at Primary 3 and setting for maths at Primaries 5, 6 and Primary 7 provides support and challenge at these stages. Pupils continue to achieve well in Maths Challenge competitions, winning the local event and achieving silver and bronze awards in the national event. The Cluster Development enhanced transitions between and within the cluster, with a focus on mathematics, incorporating Blooms taxonomy.

The implementation of GIRFEC this year has ensured that all children are well supported within school. Partner providers have worked closely with the school to provide support for children with additional support needs. We have again provided a Seasons for Growth group to support some of our pupils. Targets have been set for support plans and teachers, children and parents have reviewed these targets regularly.

## **How well does the school improve the quality of its work?**

### **5.9 Improvements through self-evaluation**

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Parents play a vital part in their children's education and are committed to the school. They are an integral part of the school community and of their child's learning. The school is supported by a Parent Council, which includes members from teaching and non teaching staff, and a Fundraising Group and these bodies work closely together.

Planning for improvement takes account of the views of all stakeholders. This is done through questionnaires, discussions with staff, pupils and parents, minutes of meetings and analyses of test results. Teaching staff are reflective practitioners and evaluate their own practice regularly through professional dialogue with SMT and in forward planning evaluations. Progress with improvement priorities is discussed at staff meetings. Our collegiate approach ensures that staff are fully involved in setting priorities for improvement and evaluating the effectiveness of these on learning and teaching. All staff enthusiastically take on leadership roles within the school and we will continue to develop this model next session. The revised approach to TLCs and the collegiate calendar this session has enabled staff to work more closely together to plan curricular changes. This is evident in the revised approaches to science teaching which have now been planned. We will continue to monitor the impact of our improvement priorities during the coming session.