

ST MARK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT



2020-21

Standards and Quality Report 2020-21

Context of the School

St Mark's Primary is a Roman Catholic Primary School which sits within the community of Barrhead and St John's Parish. The current school roll is 376 pupils. The school has excellent relationships with the other establishments in the St Luke's Cluster; St Luke's High, St John's Primary, St Thomas' Primary, Arthurlie Family Centre and McCready Family Centre. Most Primary 1 pupils transfer to St Mark's from Arthurlie Family Centre. School staff liaise with Arthurlie Family Centre through Early Years Neighbourhood meetings and plan transition meetings throughout the year. The school is also part of a neighbourhood group consisting of the above partners and all other educational establishments in the Barrhead area. Barrhead is an area of regeneration in a predominately affluent local authority.

The school has excellent links with St John's church. Pupils, staff and parents are well supported by the school chaplains, Father Joe Balmer and Father Jonathan Whitworth. The school has an active Parent Partnership, which is supportive of the school. The school benefits from the involvement of a range of partners including the Active Schools Coordinator, an Educational Psychologist, Social Work Department, a Campus Police Officer, a Family First Worker and officers of the Education Department.

Within the school, 30% of pupils live in SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) 1-3. The Family First Worker, located within the school, works with many families as a link between home and school. 48 of our pupils are identified as having additional support needs. 26% of our pupils receive free school meals. 11% of our pupils have English as an additional language.

Additional information relating to our school, including details on school roll and staffing can be found in our [school handbook](#).

Improvement Plan Priorities 2020/21

In St Mark's, our aim is to inspire the moral purpose of learning and teaching to; unleash potential, raise attainment, promote equity and transform the life chances of each and every learner, especially those most in need of support. In order to achieve East Renfrewshire's vision of "Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences", we are committed to a cycle of continuous improvement that involves all stakeholders across our school community. In 2020/21, the school set out the following recovery and improvement priorities:

Leadership and Management

- Implementing operational amendments from Phased Recovery Plan
- Support the wellbeing of all staff
- Refresh curriculum rationale to ensure meaningful, high quality, progressive experiences for all
- Revise approaches to planning and moderation to deliver consistent learning and teaching and improved attainment and learning experiences across the school
- Develop further opportunities for children and young people to lead learning

Learning Provision

- High quality approaches to learning and teaching
 - Formative assessment
 - Blended learning
- Literacy:
 - Improving reading skills
 - Reading Recovery approaches

- Numeracy:
 - Positive maths mindset
 - Concrete Pictorial Abstract
- Health and Wellbeing
 - Nurturing approaches/ Compassionate connected classroom
 - Outdoor learning
 - Targeted support

Successes and Achievements

- Analysis and evaluation of intelligence and data
- Building the capacity and skills of our learners to work independently/ remotely
- Outdoor accreditation and awards

In addition to these priorities, the school is addressing areas for development identified in an Education Scotland Inspection in June 2018. These areas are as follows:

- improve the consistency of high-quality learning and teaching to ensure that all children are given the best opportunity to achieve
- extend the range of approaches to assessment so that children can apply and demonstrate their learning more effectively
- use self-evaluation evidence more systematically throughout the school to drive forward improvement which leads to better outcomes, including raised attainment, for children

Method of Gathering Evidence

A range of evidence has been gathered through self-evaluation to evaluate the work of the school in meeting the priorities outlined above. Self-evaluation frameworks, including *HG/OS4?*, *HG/OURS?* and *How Effective Is Our Remote Learning Offer?* have been utilised to support this process.

Evidence sources include:

- Monitoring of learning and teaching, achievement and attainment throughout the year through observations (peer, SMT), sampling of work and learner conversations
- Pupil responses to Curriculum Rationale Survey and HG/OURS? consultation
- Professional dialogue with staff focusing on planning, tracking, attainment and achievement
- Analysis of attainment data and tracking of pupil progress through CfE levels
- Thematic evaluation of Remote Learning Offer, using ERC audit tool to focus on Engagement and Wellbeing, Learning & Teaching, Assessment and Self-Evaluation for Self Improvement
- Use of benchmarks to moderate quality of teaching and learning with colleagues across our school, cluster and local authority
- Evaluation of Child Wellbeing Plans and information from inter-agency partners
- Staff self and peer evaluations and departmental discussions
- Moderation at school and cluster level
- Curriculum rationale surveys and questionnaires carried out with staff, pupils and parents
- Cluster action plans
- Focus group discussions with learners, teaching and support staff and parents
- Information from our partners: Cluster schools and early years establishments, Active Schools, Educational Psychologist, link Social Workers, Children 1st, Family First, Campus Police Officer, School Nurse and Local Parish Priest
- Compassionate and Connected Classroom/ Nurture pre and post staff and pupil questionnaires
- Feedback from Review of Effective Transitions (Nov 2019)
- Education Scotland Inspection Report (June 2018)

How good is our leadership and approach to improvement?		(1.1, 1.2, 1.3)
Evaluation: Good		

NIF Priority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing 	School Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing operational amendments from Phased Recovery Plan Support the wellbeing of all staff Refresh curriculum rationale to ensure meaningful, high quality, progressive experiences for all Revise approaches to planning and moderation to deliver consistent learning and teaching and improved attainment and learning experiences across the school Develop further opportunities for children and young people to lead learning
NIF Driver(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School leadership Teacher professionalism Assessment of children's progress School improvement Performance information 	Local Improvement Plan – Expected Outcome / Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A culture of self-evaluation and continuous improvement in all schools A skilled and confident workforce A positive culture of health and wellbeing in every school and service

Progress, Impact and Outcomes:

Implementing operational amendments from Phased Recovery Plan:

All operational amendments from the Phased Recovery Plan were implemented upon school re-opening in August 2020. Ongoing risk assessments were undertaken in conjunction with colleagues from Health and Safety and Trade Union representatives. Risk assessments are dynamic and are adapted regularly to reflect the latest Scottish Government guidance on reducing risks (from Covid-19) in schools. Further adjustments were made to the Recovery Plan in January 2021 due to the need for a second period of school closure and the requirement to provide an in-school hub for key worker and vulnerable children. Fortnightly COVID inspections were undertaken to ensure that high standards were maintained at all times.

Support the wellbeing of all staff:

Supporting staff wellbeing and providing pastoral care is a significant strength of the school. All staff are supportive of each other and have worked well to access and share resources that address their own wellbeing, particularly during lockdown when working remotely. All staff participated in a “staff affirmation” exercise, designed to provide positive feedback from colleagues and boost confidence and motivation at a challenging time for all. Head Teacher drop-in sessions, Senior Management Team open door policy, regular professional dialogue and weekly staff prayers are all highlighted by staff as having a positive impact on their wellbeing. The Diocese of Paisley published a case study of good practice in relation to staff spiritual development in St. Mark's. Time was protected during staff meetings and on in service days for wellbeing activities, staff masses and professional learning, including East Renfrewshire's HealthiER Minds resource and the GTCS Wellbeing Webinars. Staff feedback indicates that this careful scheduling of wellbeing time was effective in creating a productive balance in their professional lives. Staff describe the school as “welcoming”, “supportive”, “incredibly positive and uplifting” and “very much focused on the needs of all staff.”

Staff also feel supported in relation to the school offering a safe working environment. They believe that the health of staff is taken seriously, reflected in a range of measures, including Covid self-testing kits, social distancing in shared areas, clear and consistent ‘Test and Protect’ procedures and regular briefings and communications with significant updates.

Refresh curriculum rationale to ensure meaningful, high quality, progressive experiences for all:

All stakeholders have been involved in the process of refreshing the curriculum rationale. Parents and pupils have been fully consulted. Almost all parents (93%) either agree or strongly agree that their child currently receives high quality learning in all curricular areas. In spite of this positive affirmation of the current curricular offer, pupils, parents and carers shared a range of suggestions to better tailor the curriculum to reflect the context of St. Mark's and to provide highly relevant learning experiences that meet the needs and interests of all learners.

Their views are central to improvement planning for 2021-22 and the key messages from these consultations have been fully incorporated into the evolving rationale document. The consultation process has included staff in service activities on learning for sustainability, remote learning and curriculum development sessions on the refreshed narrative of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE).

These sessions delivered positive outcomes, allowing staff to identify and focus on four key areas of curriculum development. The areas acknowledge the principles of "Building Back Better", while aligning with CfE's inter-connected four contexts for learning. The four areas are: Raising Attainment in Reading, STEAM as a context for IDL, Outdoor Learning and Recognising, Tracking and Celebrating Pupil Achievements (the 'Make Your Mark' Award). This work will carry over into the next year of the school's improvement cycle, utilising the context of St. Mark's 60th anniversary to explore and embed the new curriculum rationale. Pre-planning professional dialogue was successfully introduced to the Quality Assurance calendar this year and was well received by all staff. This approach will continue in the next academic year to ensure that planning approaches are foregrounding the principles and themes of the revised curriculum rationale.

Revise approaches to planning and moderation to deliver consistent learning and teaching and improved attainment and learning experiences across the school:

Streamlined versions of One Note online planners were created and successfully introduced. All staff agreed that the planners helped to facilitate better discussions around teaching and learning, while tackling the workload issue from the previous version of online planners. Staff training and ongoing support was provided for all staff to ensure a consistency of approach across stages.

Moderation sessions were re-designed to support curriculum development work on approaches to high quality learning and teaching and, in particular, formative assessment. Most classroom learning visits across the year evidenced a greater consistency and range of formative assessment strategies. There is scope to improve consistency of formative assessment approaches across all classes. Supporting children to better articulate what they have learned and their next steps should also be a priority for the next session.

In the absence of a local authority moderation event at the February in-service, primary teaching staff participated in a St. Luke's cluster moderation event. This event successfully addressed the area of learner feedback in the context of remote learning. Almost all (97%) participants stated that the moderation activity had increased their confidence in providing effective feedback to learners. All participants either agreed or strongly agreed that the moderation session allowed them to work towards a shared understanding of consistent, manageable and effective approaches to feedback. The cluster was invited to share their practice with Education Scotland in relation to a review of remote learning quality assurance processes.

In-school moderation activity was effective in supporting teachers to engage in professional dialogue and discussion around the standards and expectations set out in the experiences and outcomes. All teachers worked with their colleagues at the same CfE level to analyse a wider range of assessment data and to compare professional judgements on the achievement of a level. This collaborative moderation activity supported all staff in preparing for data discussions with line managers. Data discussions have provided an opportunity for staff to undertake careful analysis of a range of intelligence and data, focusing on patterns and trends of attainment in relation to different equity groups. All staff have a clear understanding of the socio-economic context of the school, including specific needs and barriers to learning of individuals and key groups of children. Improvement priorities for 2021-22 should look to build on this analytical approach and should

continue to carefully track the impact of all related interventions on both attainment and pupil wellbeing.

Online assessment and achievement tracking systems were incorporated into the revised planning format. Consistent use of these systems was not possible due to the second period of remote learning. Most parents (81%) agree that their child has opportunities in school to achieve a range of skills and attributes through a wide range of activities. Curriculum development work on 'Recognising, Tracking and Celebrating Achievements' has led to the creation of the 'Make your Mark' award, which will be rolled out to all pupils in 2021-22.

Develop further opportunities for children and young people to lead learning:

Staff and pupil evaluations indicate that there have been increased opportunities for pupils to lead their own learning. All teachers consult pupils on areas of interest and involve children in the planning of interdisciplinary learning (IDL) topics. Primary 7 pupil-led IDL topic on 'Black Lives Matter' was commended by East Renfrewshire's Education Committee as an excellent example of pupil voice and participation. Outdoor learning experiences have been timetabled as an entitlement, and are providing open-ended experiences for pupils to lead learning and show leadership in a range of creative contexts. Pupils have been selected to sit on a National Steering Group for The National Galleries of Scotland. The pupils have worked collaboratively to lead the design of weekly Art lessons which will be shared via the National Galleries website in 2021-22. Almost all pupils attending 'The Greenhouse' and 'Treasure Island' show increased engagement in learning experiences that are tailored to their personal interests. This increased engagement is reflected in significantly reduced numbers of incidents across the school, improved attendance and positive parental feedback in questionnaires.

Next Steps

- Continue to follow national guidance on 'Reducing risks (of Covid-19) in school settings'
- Introduce wider range of staff wellbeing activities with focus on physical and mental health
- Publish online version of revised rationale to coincide with 60th anniversary celebrations
- Introduce Quality Assurance Moderation Support Officer role to support in-school, cluster and local authority moderation activities
- Participate in local authority CLPL on 'Sharing Standards'
- Improve consistency of formative assessment approaches across all classes through peer support and lesson study approach
- Coach all children to better articulate skills development and next steps in learning
- Introduce cluster learning dispositions
- Refine approaches to data analysis in order to carefully track the impact of interventions on both attainment and pupil wellbeing
- Launch the 'Make Your Mark' award to better recognise, celebrate and track pupil achievements

How good is the quality of care and education we offer? (2.2, 2.3, 2.4) Evaluation: Good	
NIF Priority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children 	School Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High quality approaches to learning and teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formative assessment Blended learning Literacy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving reading skills Reading Recovery approaches Numeracy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive maths mindset Concrete Pictorial Abstract Health and Wellbeing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nurturing approaches/ Compassionate connected classroom Outdoor learning Targeted support
NIF Driver(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School leadership Teacher professionalism Assessment of children's progress School improvement Performance information 	Local Improvement Plan – Expected Outcome/Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved reading, writing and mathematics throughout the years of the broad general education An improvement in the attainment of disadvantaged children and young people An increase in activities which support prevention and early intervention, improve outcomes and reduce inequalities
<i>Progress, Impact and Outcomes</i>	
<u>High quality approaches to learning and teaching (Formative assessment/ Outdoor Learning):</u> An additional Principal Teacher was employed using Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) to take forward specific interventions for equity in relation to high quality learning and teaching. See separate <i>PEF report for Progress, Impact and Outcomes on Formative Assessment and Outdoor Learning interventions</i> .	
<u>High quality approaches to learning and teaching (Blended Learning/ Remote Learning):</u> All staff participated in professional reading, blended learning training and related moderation activities aimed at building on strengths from the first period of lockdown. Teachers are aware of updated policies and expectations around blended learning approaches. Most teachers demonstrated effective use of technology and an effective blend of synchronous and asynchronous learning during learning visits. All P4-P7 pupils were trained in the use of Read and Write software in order to further build capacity in accessing a suite of inclusive digital technology. From August to December, Learning Loss teachers worked closely with non-engaging pupils from the first period of lockdown in order to improve digital skills and encourage a more independent approach to accessing tasks, lessons and live meets on Google Classroom. Almost all targeted pupils demonstrated increased levels of engagement during the second period of remote learning.	
<u>Remote Learning – Engagement and Wellbeing:</u> Almost all pupils (96%) engaged regularly in remote learning or in-person learning at the St. Mark's hub during the period of lockdown. Attendance and participation data was analysed in order to understand patterns of engagement and follow-up interventions were planned and implemented. These interventions included supportive phone calls home, bespoke video help guides, drop-in technical support sessions and offers of hub places.	

Support for learning, nurture and learning loss provision also continued through in-person “Reconnect” sessions in school, complemented by group and individual Google Meets. All families were provided with learning packs to support remote learning. 81 families were issued with devices (including Mi Fi boxes) to ensure equitable access to technology.

A range of high-quality experiences were planned and delivered daily to ensure Health and Wellbeing remained a key focus during remote learning. Updated online learning guidance was issued to all staff to ensure understanding of expectations. Teachers promoted outdoor learning, ‘Fresh Air Fridays’, regular screen breaks and the importance of activity and exercise. Online assemblies delivered consistent messages around the SHANARRI indicators and provided an opportunity for children to sing and dance together from home. Class teachers were praised by parents for their clear communication via Google Classroom and SeeSaw and for the range of creative approaches to “checking in” with children. Established Health and Wellbeing Resources, such as PATHS and the Compassionate Connected Classroom were delivered remotely, to ensure consistency of approach and progression across the year. Design of online learning activities foregrounded collaborative approaches (such as Jamboards, group presentations, Google Meet class drop-ins) to maintain relationships and boost morale of children. Parental guidance was revised and re-issued to promote consistent, positive messages for parents and carers and to signpost further support. Almost all parents responding to questionnaires agreed that the school had successfully continued to support pupil wellbeing through pro-active communication, positive, nurturing relationships and effective use of technology.

Remote Learning – Learning, Teaching and Assessment:

Remote learning policy reflects national and local guidance, setting out clear expectations around the structure and content of the weekly timetable. Flexibility was built in to allow families to balance the need for ongoing “school routines” with the demands of home life and home working. All teachers demonstrated an increased range of pedagogical approaches, utilising live and recorded lessons and sourcing lessons from ERC video vault, West OS and e-Sgoil. Peer observation and support took place during live lessons to assist with technical issues and to quality assure standards.

Staff creatively adapted approaches for remote learning. For example, Primary 2 teachers created an online version of the Daily Literacy Learning approach. This linked effectively with the distribution of digital versions of reading books, ensuring children were able to access appropriate texts at the correct instructional level. The Primary 2 teachers designed and led CLPL in this online approach for a number of colleagues across the authority.

Formative assessment strategies were a focus for curriculum development prior to remote learning. Professional dialogue, departmental meetings and observations of SeeSaw and Google Classroom were effective in monitoring the consistency of formative assessment during remote learning. This quality assurance led to a tighter focus on communicating which work should be submitted for assessment and teacher feedback.

Tutorials were recorded and shared with staff on using features of Google Workspace to effectively assess and provide valuable feedback. A few staff provided immediate feedback on Google Slides and Google Docs and used comment banks and rubrics on Google Classroom. In the strongest examples, teachers shared Learning Intentions and Success Criteria, arranged Google Meets as plenaries and made creative use of assessment functionality (such as branching Google forms/ Quizzes/ Jamboards). Online exit passes, feedback questions, voice notes using Mote and analytical tools within Literacy Planet and Sumdog were also utilised skilfully to ensure learners understood strengths and next steps. There is further scope for a few staff members to improve the consistency and range of approaches used across all digital platforms to assess learners’ progress and provide feedback.

Remote Learning – Self-evaluation for self-improvement:

All staff contributed to the ‘How effective is our remote learning offer?’ self-evaluation exercise. Parents and carers were consulted via the Parent Partnership to gather views and to ensure that lessons had been learned from previous feedback in June 2020. Cluster moderation activity

provided an opportunity to evaluate practice, with almost all (95%) participants rating the activity as very good or excellent.

Literacy – Improving Reading Skills:

The school has invested in comprehensive reading, spelling and grammar resources to support a consistent approach and clear skills progression across stages. Almost all teachers have observed increased enthusiasm for reading and, during pupil dialogue, learners stated that they find the texts interesting and engaging.

Guided Reading CLPL was delivered by Principal Teachers of Literacy and Reading Recovery. Pre-training questionnaires indicated that the majority of staff were fairly confident when facilitating a guided reading lesson with a few staff (4%) stating that they were not confident at all. In addition, there was a lack of consistency in the frequency of guided reading lessons being delivered across the school, ranging from one to five per week. Following the training, almost all staff reported an increased confidence in their ability to facilitate a guided reading lesson, with 24% stating that they were completely confident in their ability to deliver this approach successfully.

Daily Literacy Learning (DLL) was introduced in Primary 2 to raise attainment and improve reading confidence and fluency. 86% of pupils were non-readers or reading at emergent literacy levels before participating in DLL. 42% of pupils were reading above age expected levels after participating in DLL. All pupils demonstrate increased independence and confidence during reading lessons. All teachers involved have reported that they feel more confident when teaching reading. Primary 2 teachers transferred the successful pedagogical approach from DLL into the area of Numeracy and Mathematics and have developed a series of Daily Numeracy Learning lessons.

A working party was set up to develop a whole school approach to teaching reading. This incorporated strategies from DLL and Guided Reading CLPL into guidance for teachers on how to effectively teach reading across a week. The resources and guidance set clear expectations to ensure learning experiences are progressive and of a consistently high quality. In addition, a Reading Spine is being developed which will establish a core of key books that all children will experience in their time at St. Mark's. This will help our learners to foster a love of reading and utilise an inter-disciplinary approach to engage with texts at a deeper level. Implementing and quality assuring this approach will be a key next step in the school improvement plan for 2021-22. An additional next step in raising the profile of reading will be to sign up for the Scottish Book Trust's Reading School scheme.

Literacy – Reading Recovery Approaches:

P1 baseline assessments in literacy and analysis of SIMD information identified learners who required targeted support. Weekly assessments show that most children targeted have made progress in their phonological awareness. Next steps should include identified pupils working with the Reading Recovery teacher in Primary 2, and 'Playing with Sounds' programme to be delivered by 'Learning Loss' teacher.

P2 readers identified in January 2021 have been targeted with a tailor made reading approach designed by the Reading Recovery Team. Initial formative assessments showed this strategy to be working well. Poor attendance and enforced periods of isolation due to Covid-19 have impacted on the progress of this intervention. This approach will continue for the same group of pupils in Primary 3.

Benchmarking of pupils and teacher assessments identified pupils in P3 who required targeted intervention to improve reading skills. These children participated in TRAiL (Together Raising Attainment in Literacy), a group intervention based around theories of early literacy acquisition. This intervention was delivered by the 'Learning Loss' teacher. Assessments show that all children have an increased reading age and most children are reading one level above the level they started on. Class teachers have reported that all pupils are more confident during reading activities in class as a result of the intervention.

Twelve pupils from P4-7 received individual support through the Together Better Readers programme. Prior to the intervention, reading assessments showed that learners were reading at an average of 10 bands lower than the expected level for their age and stage. By the end of May, all children's reading ability had improved. The average is now 3 bands below the expected level. Five children are now reading at or beyond the level expected and no longer require support.

Evaluations from the Principal Teachers of Literacy affirm the practice in the school. "It is clear that the staff at St. Mark's are committed to ensuring all children have the will and skill to read. They have been involved in a number of CLPL sessions to enhance their knowledge and have created targeted staff focus groups to embed approaches further. The SMT have made it possible for a number of teaching staff and PSAs to be trained in specialised interventions to target reading and not only are the children making improvements but the staff have an increased knowledge of how to support all learners."

Numeracy – Positive Maths Mindset/ Concrete, Pictorial, Abstract:

Daily collaborative maths starters were introduced and are used consistently in almost all classes. Observations and pupil dialogue demonstrate a positive impact on pupils' enjoyment and engagement in lessons, as well as developing their ability to apply skills and explain strategies in a range of contexts. Learners are more willing to share and explain their strategies and can discuss how their daily maths starters facilitate their learning. They can identify what skills are being used and comment on daily improvement.

Mindset Month was celebrated across the school in November to build on the work done in class in promoting resilience and learning from mistakes. STEAM challenges, with a particular focus on Engineering and Maths further developed learners' problem solving skills and ability to apply skills in new situations. Weekly Growth Mindset Awards are distributed to pupils displaying determination, perseverance and a positive mindset in the face of challenges.

Participation in Maths Week Scotland, National Numeracy Week and the Virgin Make £5 Grow initiative provided learners with the opportunity to apply their numeracy and mathematics skills in real-life contexts and further develop their understanding of how maths is used in the work place.

A few teachers have engaged in professional reading related to outdoor learning and playful pedagogy to promote positive maths mindset and support/challenge learners. Observations of play in P1 have shown that children are more engaged in numeracy-based activities and spend longer at these stations. Assessments have indicated that most children in P1 are attaining in line with the gradient of learning.

P2 classes have introduced a Daily Numeracy Lesson which follows a similar format to the Daily Literacy Lesson. Pupils are supported by the class teacher and a member of the attainment team and are provided with a range of concrete materials, real-life contexts and outdoor learning experiences to develop their maths skills.

Planned next steps include collaborative working with a Principal Teacher from the secondary school Maths department to support team teaching. We will also utilise the context of our 60th anniversary to plan further learning experiences that allow children to apply their maths skills in a range of real world contexts.

Health and Wellbeing - Nurturing approaches/ Compassionate connected classroom:

All staff participated in 'All Behaviour is Communication' training, as delivered by ASN PT over three separate CLPL sessions. Staff surveys highlight an overall increase in the awareness of and implementation of nurturing approaches. Views gathered and recorded show that staff are recognising the value of a nurturing ethos and increasingly feel they are contributing to this ethos through their interactions. All comments recorded by teachers in the final section of the survey were positive, with everybody highlighting how they have used nurturing skills, how it has benefitted the class or how it has had a positive impact on the learning or readiness to engage of specific pupils. Next steps should include adding nurturing approaches as a standing item on August in service day and also raising the profile of nurture with parents.

The Compassionate Connected Classroom resource has been delivered across Primary 5-7. This resource has supported children in returning to education following lockdown and reinforced the importance of “trauma informed” approaches. Data collated in November and then in May reflects that the children have been affected by the impact of lockdown, for example there was a decrease of 7.5% with regards to how confident pupils would feel in expressing their feelings to a trusted adult. Similarly, there was a decrease of 8.6% in terms of children knowing things that they can do when difficult events happen. Discussions with parents however have shown that the trauma informed approach of the school is making a difference, with one parent stating: “My kids often find it hard to trust other adults. I can’t thank the school enough for their efforts to build this trust. My children have never been so close to management or teachers. They have never been as happy going to or going home from school.”

Evaluations from colleagues in Educational Psychology also offer evidence of improvements in these areas: “Over the past year or so, there has been a marked and significant shift in the ethos and culture of the school and the collective effort and hard work of the SLT and wider staff team has led to significantly improved relationships between the school and families and children. I am regularly involved in discussions with parents who specifically highlight their recognition of these changes and the impact this has had on the children and young people within the school is very apparent. Nurturing approaches are becoming more embedded within the culture of the school and my dialogue with individual teachers almost always reflects the values of inclusion and trauma-informed practice. There is a real commitment to a continual process of self-reflection and improvement within the school. The needs of the many children in the school are significant but the school are responsive and committed to meeting these needs and have shown creative ways of doing so within a context of limited resources and the added challenges of the pandemic. The school are in regular contact with Educational Psychology and seek support, consultation and advice appropriately and proactively. They are committed to multi-agency working, which is absolutely crucial within a context such as St Mark’s.”

Targeted support – ASN:

The Greenhouse Room provides an alternative learning space for pupils with identified needs who require targeted and tailored support. Since the introduction of the Greenhouse in August 2020, a number of children have benefitted from spending time in a smaller group setting that caters to their individual learning styles and needs. Teachers and support staff have provided very good levels of support and almost all children are meeting, if not exceeding, their targets. All parents are positive about the impact this intervention has had on their child’s willingness to attend school and the gains they are making while at school. In recent evaluations one parent stated: “My son has never been so willing to attend school. He also brought his jotters home recently and I couldn’t believe how much evidence of work there was.” There has been a significant reduction in incidents across the school, resulting in improved readiness to learn in all classrooms. Pupils are also more able to complete tasks, including summative and diagnostic assessments which provided valuable information for charting progress and planning next steps.

Targeted support – Nurture class:

All pupils are making progress in achieving their targets in the nurture classroom. The consistent, daily approaches used with our core nurture group in P1-3 are having a significant impact. This impact is measured using Boxall profiles which are used to measure the social, emotional, mental health and wellbeing of children. Nurture interventions have led to increases in developmental strands and decreases in diagnostic measures. In our two upper nurture groups, progress is also evident, albeit at a slower rate. For example, children who struggled to engage in conversation with peers are now speaking aloud to the group. Children who struggled to regulate behaviour are now more consistently using taught strategies throughout learning to help them engage. Collectively the children show that they are able to work as a team.

Next steps: The core nurture group will follow a similar model dependent upon the needs of the children who come into the group. The upper groups will be reviewed to ensure that groupings are most effective. Activities and timetabling of the upper groups will also be reviewed to ensure that the approaches used are fresh for the children, are engaging and that the children continue to

work hard at understanding and applying nurturing approaches when outside of the nurture classroom. Equity will continue to be a key consideration when nominating pupils for nurture class.

Next Steps

- Embed formative assessment through ongoing professional learning and enquiry-based approaches
- Utilise in-house assessment videos to train new or returning members of staff on agreed approaches
- Implement whole school reading approach, as designed by Reading Skills Working Party
- Build a culture of reading through Scottish Book Trust Reading Schools accreditation framework
- Participate in Open University/UK Literacy Association 'Reading for Pleasure' project
- Re-establish Reading Recovery for identified Primary 2 pupils, alongside P2 Daily Literacy Learning, P3 TrAIL, 'Playing with Sounds' phonological awareness programme and Together Better Readers.
- Collaborate with PT Maths and partners to build capacity in delivering ERC Numeracy and Maths strategy
- Continue to deliver outdoor learning as a progressive, curriculum-led entitlement for all learners
- Develop whole school nurturing and trauma-informed approaches
- Provide ongoing targeted support through 'The Greenhouse' and 'Treasure Island'

How good are we at ensuring the best possible outcomes for all our children / learners? (3.1, 3.2)

Evaluation: Good

NIF Priority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children • Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy 	School Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve analysis and evaluation of intelligence and data • Building the capacity and skills of our learners to work independently/ remotely • Outdoor accreditation and awards
NIF Driver(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leadership • Teacher professionalism • Assessment of children's progress • School improvement • Performance information 	Local Improvement Plan – Expected Outcome/Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis and evaluation of intelligence and data • Building the capacity and skills of our learners to work independently/ remotely • Outdoor accreditation and awards

Progress, Impact and Outcomes

St Mark's has a positive, nurturing ethos based on respect for all. Almost all (92%) parents agree with this statement and many parents are complimentary about the efforts made by staff to create a caring and supportive environment for all. There is a strong sense of community and a commitment to the shared values of love, faith and understanding. The Charter for Catholic Schools is used to underpin improvement work, professional dialogue and training. The school has registered as a Laudato Si' school. This is a new initiative developed by the Scottish Catholic Education Service (SCES) aimed at answering Pope Francis' call to embed ecological education within our schools. All classes have participated in a range of Laudato Si' activities including Laudato Si' week. Pupils have developed awareness of "caring for our common home" and some children have received Laudato Si' awards to celebrate their contributions. Upper school pupils have demonstrated faith in action in the work undertaken to achieve the Pope Francis Faith Award.

The school has made links with a variety of STEM Ambassadors to discuss careers in the STEAM industry and to challenge stereotypes. During British Science Week, a Royal Navy Marine Engineer, individuals from the space industry and NHS workers delivered a virtual talk and question and answer session to develop pupil understanding of the World of Work. Second level stages are working with SmartSTEMs to host a virtual event to inspire them into a STEM career path.

The Digital Technologies Pupil Group have created a weekly STEAM Podcast which has been shared with all classes and with the wider community on Twitter and school website. Pupil feedback indicates that this has encouraged them to view STEAM as a potential future pathway, discover the skills required for a variety of roles and to challenge stereotypes.

A STEAM Working Group has produced resources and a model wall display which will be shared with staff to embed *Building the Learning Power* and *Visible Learning* approaches across the whole school starting from August 2021. The aim is to promote a Growth Mindset culture that will enable successful engagement with STEAM activities.

Staff evaluations showed around 60% of staff 'do not feel very confident' when teaching science. A partnership has been formed with cluster colleagues and a STEAM Leader to provide team teaching opportunities aimed at increasing staff confidence in teaching Science and Engineering.

Experiential IDL learning experiences have been developed for each stage to ensure STEAM is a main focus each year. Links with businesses have been incorporated to create depth and relevance to learning. A tracking system has been developed to evidence the range of experiences children are receiving, with a specific focus on pupils entitled to free school meals and living within SIMD 1-3.

St. Mark's is now a Young STEM Leader delivering centre. The Acting Principal Teacher is trained as a tutor assessor, working with identified children in SIMD 1-3 to lead whole school STEM activities and events. This will allow them to become positive role models and build employability skills, confidence and resilience.

Two class teachers and an Acting Principal Teacher are undertaking Education Scotland's Mindset Teams Primary Science training to develop staff awareness and understanding of growth mindset principles, promote positive teacher attitudes towards science and increase teacher awareness of relevant science pedagogies. A growth mindset project is currently being planned to take place next academic year and the impact will be evidenced through a reflective report.

Improve analysis and evaluation of intelligence and data:

The Working Time Agreement ring-fenced collegiate time for analysis and evaluation of intelligence and data. This included revisiting the assessment overview to introduce new diagnostic assessments to measure the impact of lockdown and identify gaps in learning. Learning loss teachers have worked closely with class teachers and the attainment team to deliver a series of targeted interventions in literacy and numeracy. Analysis of standardised assessment data shows that most pupils have yet to show significant gains in attainment. However, some pupils have improved their attainment over time and are on track with learning, despite a lack of engagement during lockdown.

In Primary 1, the percentage of pupil achieving their developmental milestones was significantly down from 82% in 2019-20 to 65% in 2020-21. Focus and gross motor skills were particular issues for boys. In baseline assessments for 2020-21, the average standardised score in literacy was 94 and in numeracy was 97. Historically, girls have outperformed boys in baseline assessments. However, this year, boys were an average of 3 points higher than girls in literacy, and an average of 8 points higher than girls in numeracy. Overall, boys were above the local authority average, with an average standardised score of 101 for numeracy.

Analysis of components of literacy assessments highlights strengths in relation to concepts of print and rhyme, and below average scores for letter knowledge and alliteration. A 'learning loss'

recovery teacher has delivered targeted support to specific pupils in Primary 1 to address these areas alongside a programme of phonological awareness and phonics programme. This work will continue in to Primary 2 with targeted pupils working with Reading Recovery teacher.

Baseline Assessment	Literacy			Numeracy		
	All	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls
2018-19	103	103	103	99	97	101
2019-20	92	88	98	97	96	100
2020-21	94	96	93	97	101	93

Standardised Assessments were undertaken by pupils in Primary 3, 5 and 7 in April 2021. Trends in attainment over time are evidenced by results in the table below.

Stage	Curricular Area	2018-19 School Average (P1,P3,P5)	2020-21 School Average (P3,P5,P7)	Increase/Decrease
Primary 3	Reading	104 (P1 baseline)	93	-11
Primary 3	Maths	100 (P1 baseline)	90	-10
Primary 5	Reading	85 (P3 St.)	91	+6
Primary 5	Maths	87 (P3 St.)	91	+4
Primary 7	Maths	88 (P5 St.)	90	+2
Primary 7	Reading	86 (P5 St.)	Tbc	Tbc

The table below shows the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Curriculum for Excellence attainment levels in reading, writing and mathematics over the last four years. Levels were not submitted in 2019-2020 due to school closure. Average CfE levels for 2020-21 fall below the targeted percentages by 2% in reading, 11% in writing, 2% in talking and listening and 9% in Maths. Individual stage analysis of P1, 4 and 7 pupils suggests the impact of Covid-19 has resulted in below average performance. However, Primary 4 data demonstrates the success of learning loss recovery work, with above average levels of attainment in Reading, Talking and Listening and Maths.

CfE Attainment	2017-18	2018-19	2020-21	Target 2018-2021
Reading	78%	81%	78%	80%
Writing	80%	73%	69%	80%
Talking and listening	89%	89%	88%	90%
Maths	82%	82%	73%	82%

In addition to these results, this year's Scottish National Standardised Assessment (SNSA) results for P1, 4 & 7 pupils highlight some encouraging trends in attainment, despite the challenges of remote learning for so many families. 39% of Primary 1 pupils were above the mid-range (Capacity band 3 and 4) for Numeracy, with 33% above the mid-range for Literacy. There was no obvious gap between boys and girls despite baselines showing boys outperforming girls at the start of P1.

In Primary 4, 29% of pupils were above the mid-range for Numeracy (Capacity band 6 and 7), with 35% above the mid-range in Reading. Girls out-perform boys 45% to 24% at these bands.

In writing, 28% of Primary 4 pupils were above the mid-range. Overall, there are no significant gender disparities. However, more boys are underperforming than girls, particularly in reading. 24% of boys are band 5 and below compared to 10% of girls.

27% of Primary 7 pupils were above the mid-range in Numeracy. Boys slightly out-perform girls (33% to 20%) at these bands. In Reading, 39% of pupils were above the mid-range, with girls outperforming boys 43% to 33% at these bands. In Writing, 25% of Primary 7 pupils are above the mid-range. Overall, there are no major differences in attainment in relation to gender. More girls are under-performing in maths and more boys are under-performing in literacy.

There have been no exclusions and no incidences reported of bullying behaviour over this past year. Attendance and punctuality remains a focus and information is given to parents on the importance of good attendance.

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Target 2018-21
Attendance %	94.5%	92.7%	93.46% (as of 7 th June)	95.1%

Despite the restrictions imposed on schools due to Covid-19 risk assessments, teaching and support staff delivered after-school clubs in the final term. The clubs covered a range of activities, including dance, football, gymnastics, gardening and chess. Clubs were established at all stages and prioritised children in lower SIMD deciles. Engagement has been high and there has been positive qualitative feedback from pupils and parents. The school will look to continue to provide a range of after-school clubs for learners in the coming year.

Homework Clubs were set up to allow pupils who required extra support to complete homework tasks. 59% of children who attended were entitled to FME and/or living within SIMD 1-3. The clubs have been well received by children and families and provide another example of how the learning loss teachers have made a significant impact on engagement and attainment in the school.

Outdoor accreditation and awards:

Following a successful whole school approach to reduce litter in the school grounds, develop pupil knowledge of biodiversity, grow vegetables and maintain the school garden, St. Mark's were awarded their 9th Eco-Schools Green Flag . Keep Scotland Beautiful identified aspects of the application as being examples of good practice. An environmental review was recently completed by the current Eco Committee and an action plan for the next two years has been created with a focus on Learning for Sustainability and COP26.

All classes have had opportunities for outdoor learning experiences at least once a week. Most classes have also taken part in further outdoor learning experiences each week to enhance learning where appropriate. All classes participated in Outdoor Classroom Day. Feedback from staff and children was positive and pupils were highly engaged in outdoor learning experiences.

Following inputs from Learning through Landscapes Scotland on 'loose parts play' and CLPL on outdoor learning, staff confidence on facilitating outdoor learning experiences has increased. The majority of teachers are beginning to make use of loose parts play when outdoors. Feedback from pupil support assistants during their training sessions with Learning through Landscapes Scotland on 'loose parts play' was taken on board to begin to revamp areas of the playground.

The Outdoor Learning Curriculum Development group have consulted all staff on provision within the school. They have audited and ordered appropriate outdoor equipment to further enhance outdoor learning experiences for all. The Outdoor Learning Curriculum Development group are in the process of upgrading school grounds and identifying appropriate grants to purchase additional outdoor resources.

Next Steps

- Continue in our Laudato Si' journey, linked to the Glasgow COP 26 summit, and to raise awareness of this in our local community
- Collaborate with cluster colleagues to moderate approaches to analysis of interventions
- Deliver staff CLPL on the DYW framework and the inclusion of DYW as a standing item on the agenda for professional dialogue meetings

Pupil Equity Fund – How are we ensuring Excellence and Equity?

Please see separate Pupil Equity Fund report.

What is our capacity for continuous improvement?

The school's capacity for improvement is very good. The school is well placed to achieve further improvement with an established staff team and a senior leadership team who have now been in place for a full academic year. Staff have high aspirations and are keen to continue collegiate working to drive forward improvements. Pupils and parents are largely positive about their school and are keen to work in partnership. While recovery from the pandemic presents some challenges, it also provides opportunities to systematically address recommendations from the school inspection action plan and local authority review.

National Improvement Framework Quality Indicators

Quality indicator	School self-evaluation	Inspection evaluation
1.3 Leadership of change	Good	
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Good	
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion	Good	
3.2 Securing children's progress / Raising attainment and achievement	Good	

School Recovery/ Improvement Priorities 2021-22

Next Steps

Leadership and Self-Evaluation

- Implement ongoing guidance on 'Reducing risks (of Covid-19) in school settings'
- Publish and implement revised curriculum rationale
- Develop moderation approaches
- Launch 'Make Your Mark' achievement award
- Improve analysis and evaluation of intelligence and data

Learning, Teaching and Assessment

- Extend range of assessment approaches
- Raise attainment in reading
- Raise attainment in numeracy and maths
- Improve playful pedagogy
- Strengthen approaches to skills development
- Embed outdoor learning
- Enhance personalised support

Raising Attainment and Achievement

- Support staff wellbeing
- Promote inclusion and equality
- Develop creativity and employability skills
- Consolidate Learning for Sustainability (LfS) accreditation and awards