



**ST MARK'S  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT**

**2022-23**

## Standards and Quality Report 2022-23

**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 373 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 chaplain, Father Joe Balmer. 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, a Campus Police Officer, a Family First Worker and officers of the Education Department.

Within the school, 32% of pupils live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 1-3 and the school has an average SIMD of 4.2. The Family First Worker works with many families as a link between home and school. 18.5% of our pupils are identified as having additional support needs. 22% of our pupils receive free school meals. 13% 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 2022/23**

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 2022/23, the school set out the following improvement priorities:

**Leadership and Management**

- Extend the use of data to inform interventions and supports
- Continue to build a culture of collaboration and professional learning

**Learning Provision**

- Raise attainment in reading
- Raise attainment in numeracy and maths
- Increase family engagement and family learning opportunities to promote equity of success and achievement for all
- Improve the provision of our religious education programme to promote Gospel values and deepen knowledge of other world religions

**Successes and Achievements**

- Implement the 'Make Your Mark' achievement award
- Promote skills for learning, life and work

<b>Method of Gathering Evidence</b>
<p>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 <i>HGIOS4?</i> And <i>HGIOURS?</i> have been utilised to support this process.</p> <p>Evidence sources include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring of learning and teaching, achievement and attainment throughout the year through observations (peer, SMT), sampling of work and learner conversations</li> <li>• Pupil responses to Health and Wellbeing Survey and learning conversations based on <i>HGIOURS?</i> themes</li> <li>• Professional dialogue with staff focusing on planning, tracking, attainment and achievement</li> <li>• Analysis of attainment data and tracking of pupil progress through CfE levels</li> <li>• Use of benchmarks to moderate quality of teaching and learning with colleagues across our school, cluster and local authority</li> <li>• Evaluation of Child Wellbeing Plans and information from inter-agency partners</li> <li>• Staff, self and peer evaluations and departmental discussions</li> <li>• Moderation at school and local authority level</li> <li>• Surveys and questionnaires carried out with staff, pupils, parents</li> <li>• Cluster action plans</li> <li>• Focus group discussions with learners, teaching and support staff and parents</li> <li>• Information from our partners: Cluster schools and early years establishments, Active Schools, Educational Psychologist, link Social Workers, Family First, Campus Police Officer, School Nurse and Local Parish Priest</li> <li>• National Nurture Network UK accreditation report</li> <li>• Eco Schools Scotland Green Flag Evaluation</li> <li>• Fairtrade Foundation Fair Achiever Award Evaluation</li> <li>• Scottish Book Trust 'Reading Schools' Award Feedback</li> </ul>

<b>How good is our leadership and approach to improvement? (1.1, 1.2, 1.3)</b> <b>Evaluation: Very Good</b>	
<p><b>NIF Priority</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy</li> <li>• Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children</li> <li>• Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing</li> </ul>	<p><b>School Priorities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend the use of data to inform interventions and supports</li> <li>• Continue to build a culture of collaboration and professional learning</li> </ul>
<p><b>NIF Driver(s)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School leadership</li> <li>• Teacher professionalism</li> <li>• School improvement</li> <li>• Performance information</li> </ul>	<p><b>Local Improvement Plan – Expected Outcome / Impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A culture of self-evaluation and continuous improvement in all schools</li> <li>• A skilled and confident workforce</li> <li>• A positive culture of health and wellbeing in every school and service</li> <li>• A culture of professional enquiry in every school</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Progress, Impact and Outcomes:</i></b></p> <p><u>Extend the use of data to inform interventions and supports:</u>  Staff collegiate time was devoted to analytical activities from Fullan and Sharatt's 'Putting Faces on the Data' research study. These activities coupled with a refreshed calendar of self-evaluation and quality assurance were effective in foregrounding regular opportunities to gather data and</p>	

undertake robust moderation. Staff feedback indicates that almost all staff are increasingly confident in using this data to inform learning and developments across the school year.

The Senior Leadership Team have led and supported improvements in this area through attending training on the ELC tracking tool, the BGE benchmarking tool, Filemaker, the new SNSA interface and SEEMIS Business Intelligence. This training has led to improved interrogation of data sets, an increase in the quality and quantity of staff feedback sessions and higher reported levels of confidence across the team.

Next Steps:

- Empower all teaching staff to further develop skills of data analysis focused on improvement.
- Embed range of data analysis techniques into collaborative action research projects

Continue to build a culture of collaboration and professional learning:

All staff undertook professional reading from Hargreaves and O'Connor's *'Collaborative Professionalism'* and Bergson's *'Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools'* to reflect on our collaborative approaches. Using self-evaluation tools and 'Measure of collaboration' scales, staff periodically self-assessed progress and set targets for their approaches to collegiate work. All Curriculum Development groups noted improvements in collaborative approaches and all staff were complimentary about professional learning led by colleagues across a range of areas from technologies and nurture to religious education and pedagogy. Staff self-evaluation activities captured a range of views that supported an increasing sense of collective teacher efficacy. All staff undertook professional reading on action research in education and have created enquiry questions for collaborative action research projects linked to next year's improvement plan.

Next steps:

- Link enquiry questions to aspects of curriculum development in SIP 23-24.
- Continue staff led 'Assembly Focus' CLPL sessions
- Re-launch cluster moderation sessions with focus on writing
- Consolidate cluster improvement work in reading and support curriculum design standing committee

How good is the quality of care and education we offer? (2.2, 2.3, 2.4) Evaluation: Good	
<p><b>NIF Priority</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy</li> <li>• Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children</li> </ul>	<p><b>School Priorities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise attainment in reading</li> <li>• Raise attainment in numeracy and maths</li> <li>• Increase family engagement and family learning opportunities to promote equity of success and achievement for all</li> <li>• Improve the provision of our religious education programme to promote Gospel values and deepen knowledge of other world religions</li> </ul>
<p><b>NIF Driver(s)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School leadership</li> <li>• Teacher professionalism</li> <li>• Assessment of children's progress</li> <li>• School improvement</li> <li>• Performance information</li> </ul>	<p><b>Local Improvement Plan – Expected Outcome/Impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An ethos of high expectations and achievement in every school and service</li> <li>• Improved reading, writing and mathematics throughout the years of the broad general education</li> <li>• An increase in the percentage of schools evaluated as 'very good' or better for learning, teaching and assessment</li> </ul>

- 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

**Progress, Impact and Outcomes:**

Raise attainment in reading:

*Further develop whole school approach to 'Daily Literacy Learning' with a focus on developing vocabulary*

The whole school approach to 'Daily Literacy Learning' continues to ensure that lessons are of a consistently high quality across the school. Evidence from learning visits and pupil dialogue shows that teaching staff employ a range of resources to develop reading skills and enhance pupils' understanding of vocabulary and word choice. Staff report that DLL has resulted in improvements in reading fluency, reading confidence and comprehension skills.

*"I can see a big improvement in the confidence levels during reading for my class, especially since starting DLL"*

*"DLL has really engaged learners and help to cultivate a culture of reading for enjoyment."*

Assessment data continues to demonstrate the positive impact that DLL has on attainment in reading. ERC Standardised Test scores show an improvement at P5 (+6 increase in group average since P3) and P7 (+2 increase in group average since P5). Furthermore, SNSA data for P4 shows that 41% of pupils are achieving the highest band (Band 9 and above) for reading, which is 26% above the national norm. Given that the current P4 group have participated in DLL since its introduction when they were in P2, this data emphasises the positive effect that this approach has on raising attainment.

Training on the *ABCs of Talk* approach was delivered to all staff in term 1 and a video was created demonstrating the strategies being used effectively in class to stimulate and support discussion. This has resulted in a renewed focus on talking and listening during DLL across the school and ensured that there is consistency in practice. Observations and feedback from teachers confirm that almost all pupils are using the strategies on a regular basis and are becoming more confident and skilled when talking and listening in class or group discussions. They are increasingly more able to structure a discussion effectively and are also demonstrating an improved ability to actively listen to others.

*Collaborate with cluster schools to further develop reading skills and support transition to high school.*

A professional learning session on 'Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation' (RUAE) was delivered to all staff by the Faculty Head of Language and Communication in St. Luke's High School. This session provided staff with information on the importance of RUAE in the secondary curriculum and highlighted how aspects of this could be incorporated into the primary curriculum. Following the session, all staff stated that they had a better understanding of RUAE and felt more confident in their ability to incorporate some of these strategies into lessons. Developing RUAE skills at the start of S1 has had a positive impact on attainment in high school.

A working party, consisting of P7 teachers from the cluster primary schools and teachers from St. Luke's English department, was established to support transition to high school. The group agreed on a novel study that could be used to develop critical essay writing skills. Staff from St. Luke's supported P7 teachers by sharing resources and team teaching. All staff reported that they had a better understanding of how to develop critical essay writing skills and were more confident in their ability to plan appropriately challenging lessons. In addition, all staff stated that the opportunity for moderation across the cluster ensured that teacher judgements were robust. Furthermore, the

novel study and team teaching with St. Luke's staff had a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and confidence in relation to reading and the transition to high school: 42% of pupils stated that working with St. Luke's staff made them feel more confident about starting high school and 58% felt that the novel study had improved their confidence in reading comprehension.

*Continue to build a culture of reading for pleasure across the school.*

A new school library has been established which has given all children access to a wide range of diverse, engaging texts. Almost all pupils have had the opportunity to visit the library at The Foundry which allowed them to explore a range of authors and genre. Staff reported that these visits had a positive impact on most pupils' attitude to reading and their reading behaviours. *"More children have started going to the library and pursuing new authors and texts."* Furthermore, 44% of children stated that they now visit the library and borrow books with their family.

Curriculum development work has led to the creation of a reading spine of whole class novel/book studies with interdisciplinary resources. Pupils have been positive in their feedback about the range and quality of texts on offer. Moreover, all class teachers reported that the class novel had a positive impact on learners' attitude to reading.

All classes have incorporated time into the week where pupils can read for enjoyment. Resources developed by the curriculum development group have been shared with all staff to support 'Book Chat' during these reading sessions. Feedback from teachers demonstrates that this has had a positive impact on reading culture.

*"Children are sharing reading interests and habits with each other and talking about books and genres they enjoy. This has improved the reading habits of the class."*

*"Reading for Pleasure became the focus of my professional inquiry and so we do 2-3 reading for pleasure sessions, where we vote on books that I've selected or that the children have brought in from home. There has been a significant increase in their engagement with reading and their want to read books."*

*"Some children would engage in further conversations with their peers modelled on the Book Chat sessions."*

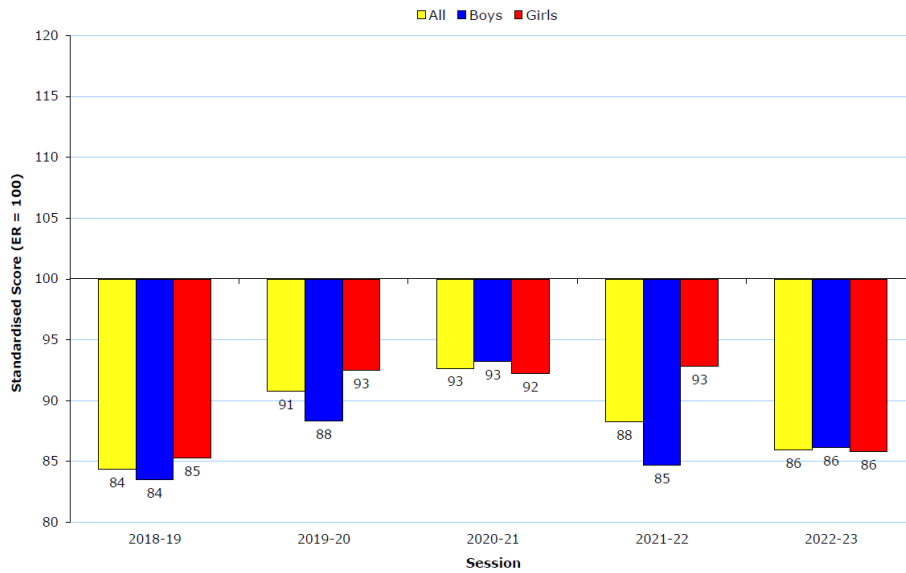
In response to a recent curriculum questionnaire, 82% of pupils stated that they enjoy having the opportunity to talk about books in class and 55% enjoy reading more now than they did at the start of the session.

St. Mark's Primary have recently received *Reading Schools* accreditation from Scottish Book Trust in recognition of the work that has been done to build and sustain a reading culture.

*Maintain established reading interventions (Reading Recovery)*

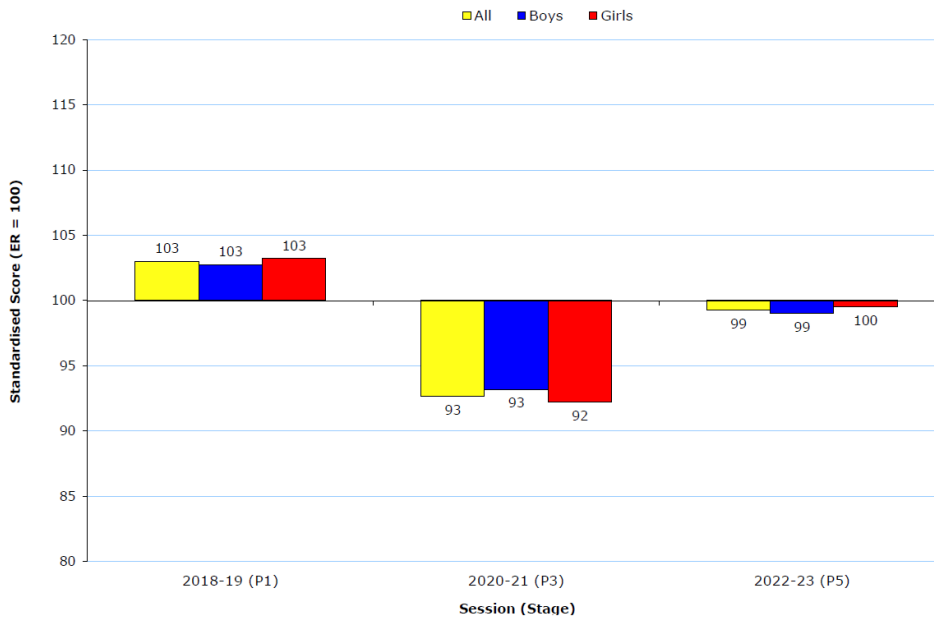
Reading Recovery pupils in Cohort 1 increased their reading age by an average of 19 months and improved book level by an average of 16. Parents have also commented on the positive impact that this intervention has had on their children. *"Since starting Reading Recovery, my child has come on leaps and bounds. Reading is now associated as a fun activity rather than a chore and it has been tremendous to see Mrs Farren's hard work paying off"*

**Standardised Testing : History**  
**St. Mark's: English: Primary 3: Boys vs Girls**



*Boys' reading attainment in Primary 3 has increased gradually compared to last year's cohort. However, the combined average is the lowest group average since 2018-19. (86) Additional support from our attainment team and PEF funded staff will be allocated to this stage in P4.*

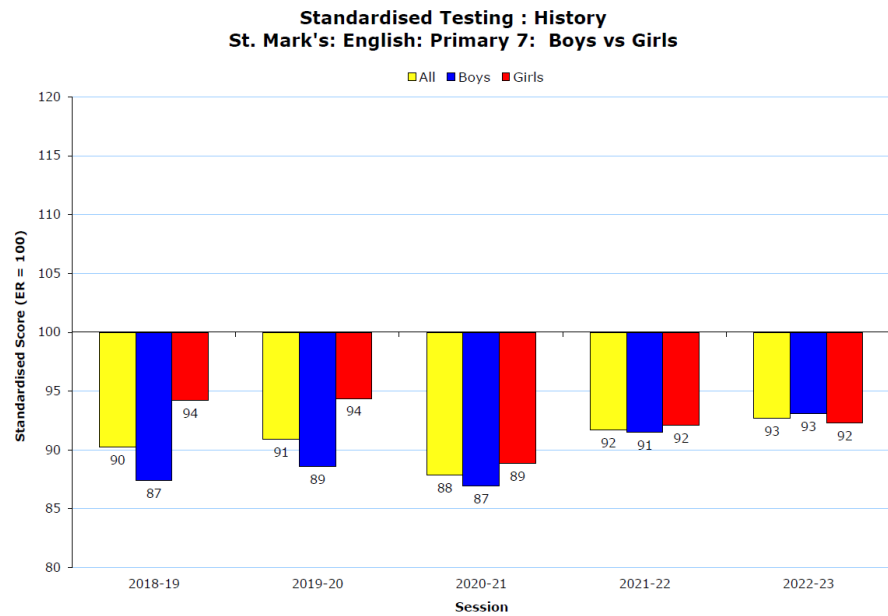
**Standardised Testing**  
**St. Mark's: P5 Tracking: English: Boys vs Girls**



*Assessment data continues to demonstrate the positive impact that Daily Literacy Learning has had on attainment in reading.*

*Standardised Test scores show an improvement at P5 (+6 increase in group average since P3), with the girls average improving by 8 points to bring it in line with the East Renfrewshire average.*

Reading attainment in Primary 7 has increased. Group average of 93 is higher than any group score at this stage since 2018-19. Tracking of this cohort of pupils identifies a 2 point increase since Primary 5, with the average score moving from 91 to 93.



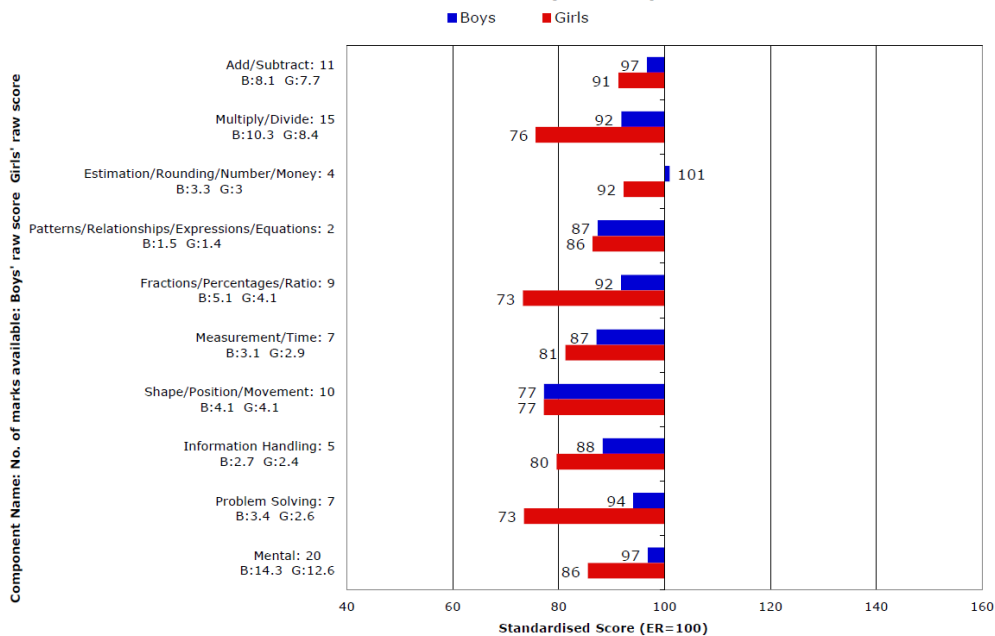
### Next Steps

- Ensure DLL approaches are included as part of induction process for new teaching staff
- Continue Reading Recovery with targeted Primary 2 pupils
- Deliver bespoke literacy support for learning at Primary 4 stage
- Introduce whole school literacy development focus on writing

### Raise attainment in numeracy and maths

A numeracy and maths curriculum development group took forward a range of activities to support a whole school approach to mental maths. All staff stated that they were very confident or somewhat confident in delivering high quality mental maths inputs. Staff confidence in using Number Talks has increased following an input from East Renfrewshire's Principal Teacher of Numeracy and Maths. Learning visits focused on numeracy and maths with most lessons including activities to develop mental agility (including discussion of the different strategies used, rapid recall and games).

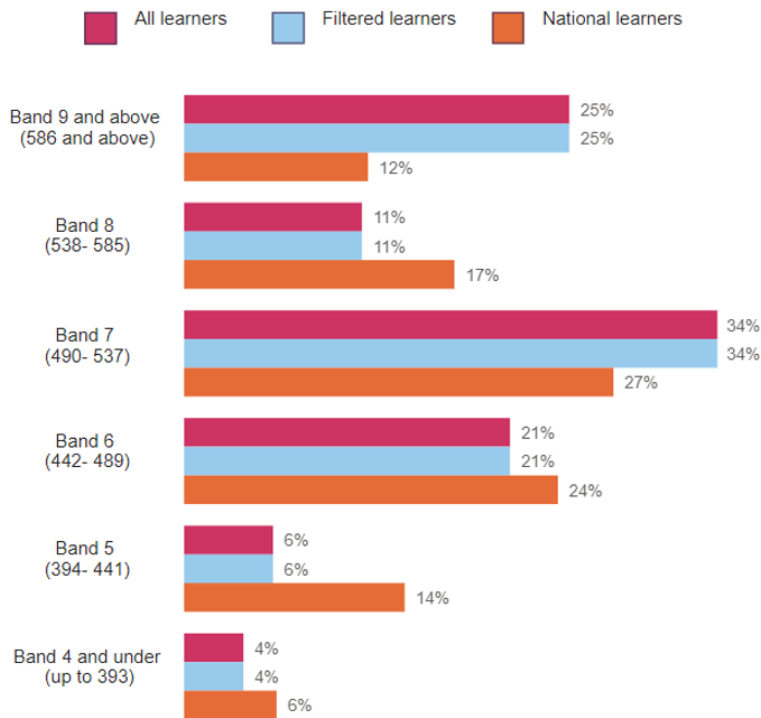
**Standardised Testing :2022-23**  
**St. Mark's: Maths: Primary 7: Components**



*Mental Maths was one of the strongest components in the breakdown for both P5 and P7 children. Boys are out performing girls in this area, most notably in P7 where there was an 11 point gap.*



All staff undertook CLPL in the concrete, pictorial and abstract approach and have embedded the use of numeracy blueprints across the school. Learning visits and staff feedback have confirmed the impact of this professional learning. Almost all children are using the numeracy blueprint boards effectively to demonstrate a range of pictorial approaches to manipulating numbers and sharing their thinking. The boards have been effective in promoting a positive maths mindset, celebrating mistakes and building a more resilient culture of learning in this area of the curriculum. This is borne out through assessment evidence where most children are able to apply skills in new and unfamiliar contexts.

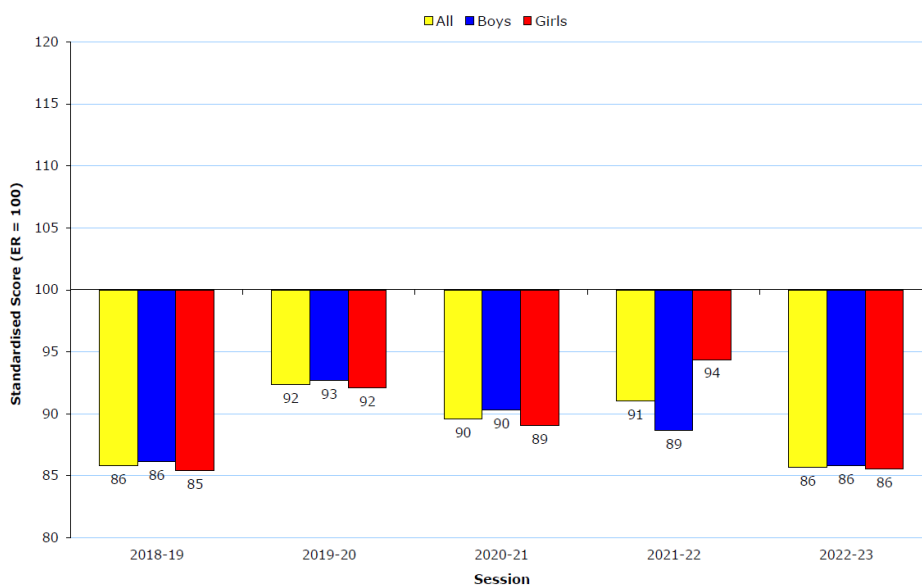


*70% of Primary 4 pupils scored at Band 7 and above in their recent SNSA Maths Assessments, compared with a national total of 56% of learners at these bands.*

*25% of learners in Primary 4 scored at Band 9 or above. This is more than double the national percentage at this level.*

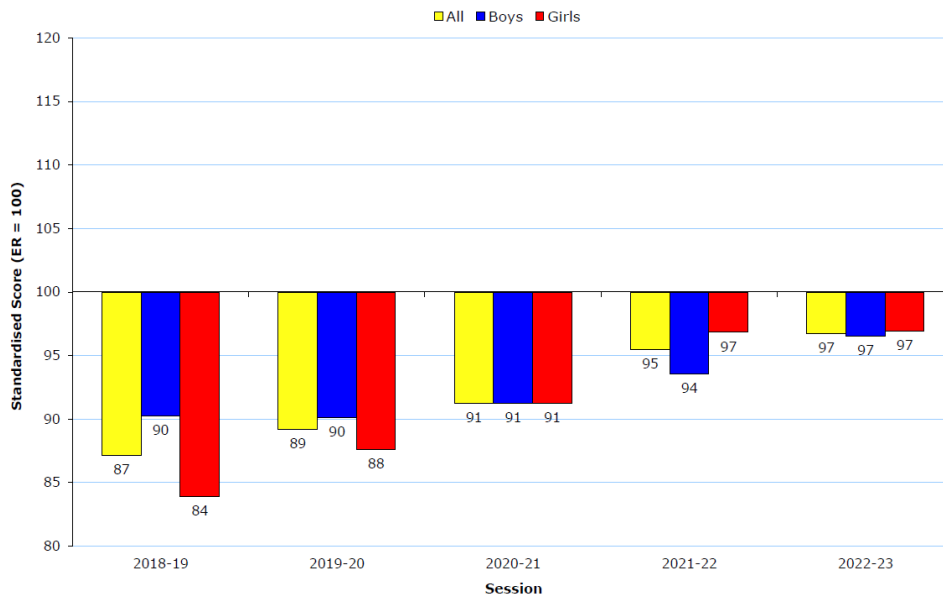
*When filtering learners to focus on Free School Meal Entitlement (FME) at this stage, 9 out of 10 children entitled to FME scored at Band 6 and above.*

**Standardised Testing : History  
St. Mark's: Maths: Primary 3: Boys vs Girls**



*Despite improvements in specific components (such as Mental Maths) and positive results in SNSAs at other stages, the Primary 3 standardised scores were at a 5 year low, with an average of 86. This cohort will receive bespoke support from our attainment team in P4.*

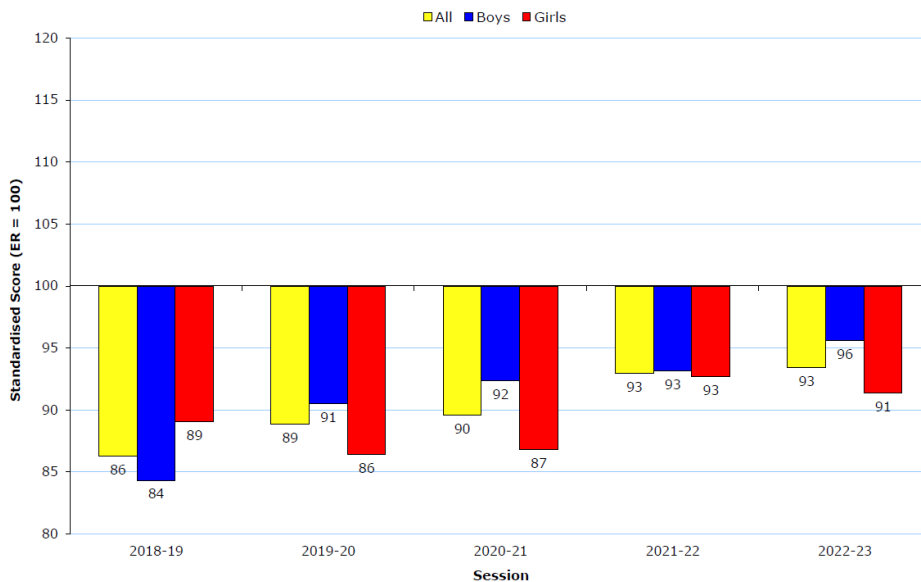
**Standardised Testing : History**  
**St. Mark's: Maths: Primary 5: Boys vs Girls**



*Primary 5 standardised scores are at a 5 year high, with children scoring an average of 97.*

*This represents a 7 point increase from the same cohort's average Maths score in Primary 3.*

**Standardised Testing : History**  
**St. Mark's: Maths: Primary 7: Boys vs Girls**



*Primary 7 standardised scores are consistent with last year's cohort with children scoring an average of 93. This is an improvement of 2 points on the P5 average of this same group of children.*

*96 represents the highest average score for Primary 7 boys in the last 5 years of results.*

**Next Steps:**

- Identify numeracy and maths improvement focus from analysis of assessment data
- Consolidate whole school development work on mental maths to improve mental agility
- Implement revised East Renfrewshire strategy and integrate methodology from Daily Literacy Learning approach into numeracy and maths lessons
- Provide targeted support to Primary 4 stage
- Relaunch maths homework policy to support consolidation of class learning and progressive, targeted approach across school

Increase family engagement and family learning opportunities to promote equity of success and achievement for all

The family engagement curriculum development group audited practice within the school using the *Family Centred Approaches Self Evaluation Framework*.

All stages hosted assemblies to share their learning with the rest of the school and their families. A total of approximately 340 family members attended. All feedback was positive. Families commented on the development of children's confidence and social skills. All family members surveyed viewed it as a 'fun but informative opportunity' to see what their 'kids were getting up to'. All respondents to the feedback form thought the learning assemblies were a useful way for children to share their learning and were an opportunity for the children to experience a sense of achievement.

17. The school provides opportunities for families to come in and engage with their child's learning.

[More Details](#)

Strongly agree	64
Agree	76
Disagree	3
Strongly disagree	0
Don't know	0



The Class Blog policy was relaunched with staff to raise awareness of expectations. Blogs have also been a focus in the quality assurance process to ensure staff are making it a priority to add evidence of learning each week. Across the blogs there have been 26000 views this year, an increase of 4000 views from last year. On average, each blog has had 2199 views this year.

18. The Class Blog is a useful tool for home school communication on my child's learning and progress.

[More Details](#)

Strongly agree	44
Agree	78
Disagree	9
Strongly disagree	1
Don't know	11



Families have been given the opportunity to lead learning. Some parents have visited Primary 1 and Primary 5 to share their culture and some also worked alongside their child during our 'Around the World' afternoon for Languages Week Scotland. This developed knowledge and a greater appreciation and respect for different cultures across the school, also allowing pupils to feel proud of their own heritage when sharing it with others.

Ten family members attended workshops hosted by our Art and Digital Technologies specialists where they explored some of the skills the pupils are learning in school which could be further developed at home.

Nine families attended the Family STEM Club hosted by the Primary Science Development Officer. This four week project resulted in a greater awareness of the importance of gender balance in STEM subjects (84% of learners who attended were female) and an increase in engagement, confidence and knowledge of STEM education.

Our 'Come Learn with Me' event was well attended with 151 family members visiting their child's classroom, completing a learning activity with them and exploring the range of strategies and resources they use. All respondents to the feedback survey said they enjoyed the opportunity to work with their child in their classroom, thought it was a useful way to share their learning and would like the event to be repeated in the future. Family members commented that it was "interesting to see how children work things out", "good to see them interact with their classmates" and it was "helpful to know strategies used in school to help with homework". A minority of respondents (23%) commented that they would have liked the event to be longer to spend more time in the classroom.

An information 'Sway' presentation was created on local community services and supports available to raise awareness of events, clubs and contacts in the area that families could make use of.

#### Next Steps

- Continue to develop Family Centred Approaches
- Refine and develop programme of 'Come Learn with Me' events
- Continue to work in partnership with families to increase engagement

#### Improve the provision of our religious education programme to promote Gospel values and deepen knowledge of other world religions

Staff used weekly Assembly time to develop their knowledge and understanding of 'This Is Our Faith' and the core learning within it. An initial focus on the scripture which underpins the Catholic Faith, written within section 2 of the TIOF document, allowed staff to gain a better understanding of how the Strands of Faith and the Church's teaching underpin the core learning at each stage.

Improved knowledge of the Strands of Faith allowed staff to look at how the core learning within TIOF could be addressed through thematic approaches. Assembly Focus sessions were used to explore and discuss the Diocese of Paisley planners in greater depth. Staff worked together across stages to share expertise and ensure a consistent, progressive approach to planning for religious education. These ongoing discussions led to clearer expectations for all staff on how to plan and deliver engaging learning experiences with the core learning of TIOF as the foundation. Feedback from staff noted an increase in knowledge and confidence in using This is Our Faith to plan learning. In addition, feedback during staff meetings, as well as results of staff surveys and peer visits, indicated that the Diocesan Planners reduced workload and supported staff in planning engaging RE lessons. All staff were positive about the input from the Diocesan RE adviser on 'Divine Pedagogy'. This session affirmed practice and provided valuable next steps for teachers to deepen their faith and adopt a range of creative approaches in leading the faith formation of the children in their care.

Peer learning visits identified good practice across the school in planning and teaching engaging RE lessons. Furthermore, the environment and nurturing ethos in all classrooms reflected the school's commitment to Gospel values of love, compassion and tolerance. As a school, we continue to embed nurturing approaches. Almost all feedback from peer learning visits indicated that the classrooms were nurturing and welcoming environments that promoted positive relationships. The school received the National Nurturing Schools Programme Award in recognition of our whole school approaches to nurture and trauma-informed approaches.

Staff also reported that they had a better understanding of the teaching of the Catholic Church and the theology that underpins This is our Faith. They feel more confident when discussing their personal beliefs and values and are more familiar with resources that can help to extend their

knowledge of the faith. All staff agreed that the regular inputs on TIOF provided meaningful and relevant CLPL which directly supported their teaching of RE across the curriculum.

Learning across the curriculum has foregrounded identity and diversity, celebrating a range of religious traditions and cultures. Children and families have shared their own religious traditions through question and answer sessions, presentations and open afternoons. These have significantly enhanced learning that has taken place in class on other world religions.

Next Steps:

- Improve family engagement by offering an increased range of opportunities for parents/carers to join in religious celebrations/events.
- Incorporate recognition of Gospel Values in whole school rewards system and signature learning experiences.
- Continue to plan opportunities for teachers to share expertise and plan collaboratively to ensure RE is incorporated into a range of engaging learning experiences across the curriculum.

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

**Evaluation: Very Good**

**NIF Priority**

- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children
- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy

**School Priorities**

- Implement the 'Make Your Mark' achievement award
- Promote skills for learning, life and work

**NIF Driver(s)**

- School leadership
- Teacher professionalism
- Assessment of children's progress
- School improvement
- Performance information

**Local Improvement Plan – Expected Outcome/Impact**

- A rights based culture, centred on Getting It Right For Every Child
- Analysis and evaluation of intelligence and data
- Building the capacity and skills of our learners to work independently/ remotely

***Progress, Impact and Outcomes***

Implement the 'Make Your Mark' achievement award:

A progressive range of 'signature learning experiences' linked to the curriculum rationale were delivered across the school. Staff evaluations highlighted the successful implementation of the award:

- "Targets were broken down across the year, making them more achievable."
- "Signature learning experiences mean that there is consistency and equity across the school."
- "All children are given the opportunity to participate and achieve success."
- "Almost all pupils were fully engaged in all learning experiences."

Next Steps:

- Link signature learning experiences to meta skills and learner dispositions
- Further promote completion of 'Make Your Mark' targets at each stage and across school
- Raise the profile of celebrating success with parents and sharing successes from outside of school
- Refine balance of achievements across three terms

### Promote skills for learning, life and work:

Following on from last year's focus on Formative Assessment, the next step identified from was to link success in learning and next steps to skills development. CLPL on Developing the Young Workforce to all teaching staff, exploring the Skills Development Scotland 'Meta Skills' model, the DYW Career Education Standard and questions to consider when planning, to ensure lessons make explicit links to skills and future career pathways.

Lesson resources were provided to all classes, including Meta Skills posters to be displayed and an information flipchart to share, to make the children aware of their entitlements and the expectations of teachers and parents to equip learners for learning, life and work.

During Term 2 Pupil Dialogue, the majority of stages were able to discuss some skills they are developing in class, mainly relating to maths, writing and digital technology.

The majority of classes (10) have displayed the Meta Skills posters. A minority of staff (14%) said they refer to these during lessons/plenaries, most do not (79%). 57% of staff indicated in a recent survey that they allow the children to discuss skills they have developed in 'most lessons', an increase of 11% in the same survey from two years ago. 50% of staff say they do this 'often', compared to 7% in the previous survey. This indicates that there is further scope to improve teaching about skills and habitually making connections for children between experiences, outcomes and skills development.

A few classes have had visits from parents and companies to share skills they use in their careers, for example a nurse, project manager from Young Enterprise Scotland and a physics teacher.

### Next Steps

- Deliver meta skills refresher training in August
- Add meta skills wheel to 'Make Your Mark' achievements passport to make link between experiences and skills progression
- Continue to include DYW as a standing item on agenda for professional dialogue meetings

### Increase staff confidence in teaching STEAM subjects:

In partnership with Education Scotland and the Wood Foundation, the Primary Science (STEM) Development Officer (PSDO) for East Renfrewshire Council has been building teacher confidence and capacity in St Mark's by delivering high quality STEM learning experiences through the Raising Aspirations in Science/STEM Education (RAiSE) programme.

The PSDO is increasing the profile of STEM in St Mark's by building capacity and has offered a bespoke CLPL programme to all staff, with the intended outcome of highly motivated, enthusiastic and confident STEM practitioners, delivering higher quality and more effective STEM learning experiences. Newly Qualified Teachers have led a staff development session to upskill all practitioners by cascading key learning from the PSDO's professional learning session on Engineering Habits of Mind.

The PSDO has established and maintains regular communication with the Science Champion. She worked collegially to support St Mark's in meeting the aspirations of the National Improvement Framework, enhancing and guiding the planning and development of STEM education. The PSDO creates opportunities for practitioners in St Mark's to network, share, collaborate and co-create, and promote opportunities for pupils to increase their experiences, engagement and achievement in STEM.

Practitioners have responded well to the creation and promotion of opportunities to consider STEM as a context for developing literacy and numeracy skills. The PSDO has contributed towards curriculum development which supports high quality, relevant and contextualised STEM learning, teaching and assessment which has in turn built the confidence, skills, knowledge and enthusiasm of the practitioners.

The profile of STEM subjects has been increased across the school through fortnightly STEM lessons and lunchtime and after school STEM clubs. 11 pupils have been selected to take part in the Young STEM Leader Programme and are on track to complete the award by the end of June 2023.

Next Steps:

- Continue to prioritise STEM teaching and learning in line with the curriculum rationale
- Build in additional pupil leadership responsibilities for Young STEM Leaders

There have been no exclusions and four incidences reported of bullying behaviour over this past year. Attendance and latecoming has been a specific focus of our Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) Action Plan this year. See PEF section below for further information.

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Target 2022-26
<b>Attendance %</b>	93%	91%	91.62%	93%

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

The mission of the refreshed Scottish Attainment Challenge is to use education to improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty, with a focus on tackling the poverty-related attainment gap. Working in partnership with our Attainment Advisor, Quality Improvement Officer and Head Teacher Quads, our head teacher and PEF principal teacher analysed our data to ensure we understood how poverty was most impacting on our school community. From this analysis we worked in partnership with key stakeholders to design three interventions for equity around social and emotional wellbeing, targeted approaches to literacy and numeracy and partnership working. The evaluations below summarise progress in each of these key areas.

Social and Emotional Wellbeing (1):

Planned Impact and Outcome	Improved attendance for targeted individuals and families, leading to an overall improvement in the school average from 91% to the 3 year target of 93%.
SMART Target	By April 2023, all identified learners will have increased their attendance ( <i>5% increase for pupils &gt;80% in 21-22, 10% increase for pupil &lt;80% in 21-22</i> )
Evaluation of Intervention	<p>Overall improvements in school attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attendance and late coming systems were refined to include 3 weekly monitoring periods, refreshed approaches to parental communication and a greater investment of time in meetings and phone calls from PEF principal teacher, office staff and head teacher.</li> <li>- 256 pupils out of 373 pupils (69%) had 90% attendance and above.</li> <li>- Average attendance (as of 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023) is 91.62%. This represents a 0.62% increase on last year's statistics and is a third of the way towards achieving the 3 year target of 93%. This positive progress has been achieved despite a significant level of absence in Primary 1 and 2 stages during the strep A and subsequent chicken pox outbreak during the winter.</li> </ul>

	<p>Specific improvements in school attendance of identified learners eligible for PEF</p> <p>83 identified learners eligible for PEF and with previous poor levels of attendance and timekeeping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Target of 5% increase for pupils &gt;80% in 21/22 10 out of 67 pupils (15%) achieved this target in 22/23 24 out of 67 pupils (36%) showed an increase in 22/23 33 out of 67 pupils (49%) decreased in 22/23</li> <li>- Target of 10% increase for pupils &lt;80% in 21/22 2 out of 16 pupils (13%) achieved this target in 22/23 8 out of 16 pupils (50%) showed an increase in 22/23 6 out of 16 pupils (38%) decreased in 22/23</li> <li>- Average attendance 22-23 FME: 87.94%</li> <li>- Average attendance 22-23 SIMD 1-3: 90.15%</li> <li>- Average attendance of identified learners: 90.86%</li> </ul> <p><i>These averages all show improvements on 21/22 data</i></p>
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Social and Emotional Wellbeing (2):

Planned Impact and Outcome	Improved attendance, engagement and social and emotional wellbeing for targeted individual attending nurture groups.
SMART Target	By June 2023, all identified learners will demonstrate improvements in wellbeing, motivation and engagements, as measured by approved nurture assessment tools. All pupils will be reintegrated into their mainstream class following attendance at nurture provision.
Evaluation of Intervention	<p>The nurture provision within St. Mark's Primary has been successfully running since August 2020 and has been an invaluable resource in strengthening relationships and attachments with pupils across the school. This year the school has been accredited for the National Nurturing Schools Award by the National Nurture Network UK. This two year accreditation process has affirmed the impact of the whole school approach to nurture and has identified examples of excellent practice in the school. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strong leadership and commitment to nurture</li> <li>- Understanding and striving to meet the developmental needs of all children</li> <li>- A collaborative approach to embedding the six principles of nurture</li> <li>- The importance placed on relationships at all levels</li> <li>- Celebrating the diversity of the school community and encouraging parental engagement</li> <li>- Pupils displaying confidence, insight and leadership</li> </ul>

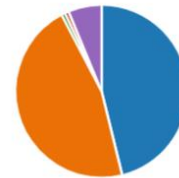


As an attachment aware school, the necessity of every practitioner applying whole school nurturing approaches in every classroom and with every child is critical. The nurture room itself is a treasured and safe base that holds so much importance for a small targeted number of children who display social, emotional and/or behavioural needs, and who are in need of extra support. The groups of pupils who have attended either the core (P1-3) or senior (P4-7) thus far have all conveyed positive strides in their own way but it is the current core group's session (2022-2023) that has shown significant social and emotional gains within pupils. Pupils of this cohort have shown generalisation of these skills into their classroom setting and as a result, the majority of pupils are transitioning back into their mainstream classroom full time.

7. I feel staff really know my child as an individual

[More Details](#)

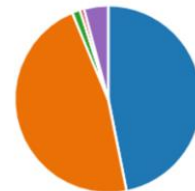
● Strongly agree	66
● Agree	66
● Disagree	1
● Strongly disagree	1
● Don't know	9



9. My child receives the help he/she needs to do well

[More Details](#)

● Strongly agree	67
● Agree	67
● Disagree	2
● Strongly disagree	1
● Don't know	6



11. The school supports my child's emotional wellbeing

[More Details](#)

● Strongly agree	52
● Agree	72
● Disagree	6
● Strongly disagree	1
● Don't know	12



The Core Nurture Group data consists of 7 pupils (5 boys and 2 girls), all who attended the nurturing provision Treasure Island over the span of 2022-2023 session. All pupils were nominated by their class teacher as nurture candidates for different reasons. Most pupils exhibited difficulties with regulating their emotions; some were socially withdrawn and/or acting out, and other pupils presented developmental immaturity, finding it tricky to concentrate and follow teacher instructions during class time.

All pupils were assessed by their class teacher and nurture practitioner using the Boxall Profile Online Assessment Tool (34 questions in the Developmental Strands and 34 questions in the Diagnostic Profile) to obtain a full picture of the pupil's strengths

	<p>and difficulties. The data identified that almost all pupils required support in strands A and B, giving purposeful attention and participating constructively within the class in some way.</p> <p>Three of the pupils are now within the normal range of strands A and B scoring highest of 19 and 11 within the strands. The results also bring to light that these children have progressed within other areas of the Boxall and all are within the normal range of preceding strands C-F, proving pupils have benefited from the nurturing experiences the group has provided. Consequently, two of the pupils have now re-integrated back into their mainstream classroom and have transferred their newly acquired skills into daily class activities. The class teachers have observed that these pupils have excelled at contributing to class discussions, showing that they can concentrate and participate constructively within lessons. They are also impressed with the quality of work they have produced. One teacher even mentioned:</p> <p><i>“I can see a huge difference in R and his ability to focus on his class tasks. He is much more confident with his daily literacy tasks and can now form his own sentences. I am very proud of how far he has come and that he is becoming much more independent with his literacy work”.</i></p> <p>The other pupils of the group have also made good progress with Strand A. Everyone’s scores have increased and two of the pupils have improved significantly with a 6 point increase.</p> <p>Next Steps: Take forward recommendations from NNUK report</p>
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Targeted approaches to literacy and numeracy:

Planned Outcome	Improved attainment in reading for identified pupils participating in targeted literacy interventions.
Impact and SMART Target	By June 2023, all identified learners will demonstrate greater engagement in reading. By May 2023, all identified learners will demonstrate progress in reading skills.
Evaluation of Interventions	<p><i>Literacy Support Groups:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All P2 pupils who were part of the literacy support group increased their literacy score from the Baseline assessment in Primary 1 by at least 41%.</li> <li>- All P2 pupils increased their assessment score when comparing the pre and post assessments carried out in October and May, now all achieving 100%.</li> <li>- The majority of P5 pupils who were part of the literacy support group increased their assessment score when comparing the pre and post assessments carried out in October and May.</li> <li>- The majority of P6 pupils who were part of the literacy support group increased their assessment score when comparing the pre and post assessments carried out in October and May.</li> <li>- All class teachers of individuals attending the literacy support groups feel the group has helped them make progress. Most teachers (83%) feel the group has helped</li> </ul>

to increase their engagement in literacy. In a recent survey, teachers commented on noticing an increase in confidence and progress with reading ability. A P6 teacher commented that the reading of one pupil is 'noticeably more fluent'. A few teachers said the pupils are using a range of strategies effectively to read unseen texts and are transferring their skills into Daily Literacy Lessons in the classroom.

#### *Playing with Sounds*

- Six week block with choice of sessions offered during and after the school day. 14 pupils and parents attended from Primary 2.
- Parental feedback showed it was a successful activity with parents implementing strategies into different literacy activities at home and into homework. 4 parents 'extremely confident in helping child to develop understanding of sounds, blends and words' in pre-questionnaire and this increased to 7 parents in the post questionnaire. One parent commented that the games were being used daily. A few parents commented that it 'made the learning fun'. One teacher commented that she noticed a difference in one pupil's ability to blend and a positive improvement in his reading ability.
- Six week block running currently (June '23) with 10 P1 pupils and parents.

#### *Bookbug:*

- 19 parents/carers attended the hour long session hosted by our Primary 1 teacher in November to learn rhymes, sing songs and be given book recommendations. This has contributed to the positive reading culture established with our new cohort of pupils, which has been complemented by the Reading Buddies programme and has links to improved attainment in reading. (83% of Primary 1 pupils have achieved early level in reading – this is 2% higher than the school's 3 year target for CfE levels in reading and shows a significant improvement from a low average starting point in baseline assessments).

#### *Chatterbox:*

- Delivered twice weekly by two pupil support assistants to improve talking and listening skills and responding to texts.
- Pre and post assessments show that all pupils have made progress in the assessed areas. Teacher feedback indicated that there has been an increase in confidence and focus when sharing their thoughts and some learners are less dominant when talking in a group.

#### *Home Learning Club:*

- 105 pupils have attended the Home Learning Club this year (individuals living within SIMD 1-3 and our identified learners eligible for PEF were prioritised) with a block running each term.
- Very positive feedback was received from the children, with many commenting on enjoying having teachers and peers there for support and less distractions in school. Parents also commented that it made their child 'more independent' with their homework and that it is 'helpful' due to other family commitments which can interfere with the completion of homework.
- All parents agreed that their child enjoyed home learning club and that it was beneficial for them. 40% of parents said their child did not regularly complete homework before attending, and since attending, 88.9% said the club ensured it was completed regularly.
- Parents were also invited in to join a home learning session and complete homework alongside their child in a calm and quiet environment.

16. The school gives me advice on how to support my child's learning at home

[More Details](#)

Strongly agree	39
Agree	89
Disagree	7
Strongly disagree	0
Don't know	8



#### *Reading Buddy Scheme:*

- P2 and P7 come together twice weekly to read a mixture of fiction and non-fiction texts. During a pupil conversation, almost all (94%) of P2 children said they enjoy reading buddies. Some did not as a result of finding reading 'boring' and 'not finding a book they like'. Some children commented that they like that their buddy helps them 'find new words' and they like 'listening to stories'.

#### *Targeted approaches to Numeracy:*

- St. Luke's PEF PT has delivered a weekly session with targeted Primary 7 pupils. Pupil confidence in basic skills has improved over the year. Sumdog data highlights an improvement in the majority of pupils and the 123 Maths report shows that they are becoming more proficient in times tables and division skills.
- The majority of pupils (64%) increased their Sumdog diagnostic test score when comparing results from November to March.
- When completing the Plus 1 book on the online 123 Maths resource, all pupils achieved 86% and above.

*Child-led Problem Solving:*

- Numeracy support groups ran twice weekly for a 30 minute session. As well as using concrete materials and the Numeracy Blueprints to provide additional targeted support for pupils not on track in P1, P2 and P4, child-led problem solving was also introduced in January with P2 and P4.
- All pupils learned to choose the appropriate level of challenge which suited their ability, use a range of strategies, including drawing a picture and acting out the situation with concrete materials and to explain the strategy they used to their peers.
- The majority of learners (50%) can now successfully complete these tasks independently, while others still require some support to organise their thinking
- PEF Principal Teacher will provide training and share evidence of child-led problem solving with all teaching staff at a future assembly focus to introduce this into a class setting.

Primary 1

- Almost all (91%) P1 pupils who were part of the numeracy support groups increased their Baseline score by at least 15%.
- 4 out of 11 pupils increased their score by 50% and above. One pupil increased by 75%.
- All P1 pupils increased their assessment score when comparing the pre and post assessments carried out in October and May by at least 9%. One pupil increased by 68%.
- Class teacher completion of the Leuven Scale for Wellbeing in October and May shows most P1 pupils (80%) have increased their level, expressing more obvious signs of satisfaction.
- Class teacher completion of the Leuven Scale for Involvement in October and May shows the majority (60%) P1 pupils have increased their level.
- Pre and post attitudinal surveys shows that most pupils (82%) enjoy maths more, the majority (73%) feel they are better at it and are more independent now.

Primary 2

- All P2 pupils increased their assessment score when comparing the pre and post assessments carried out in October and May by at least 26%. 3 out of 7 pupils increased their score by 50% and above.
- Class teacher completion of the Leuven Scale for Wellbeing in October and May shows 2 out of 7 pupils have increased their level, expressing more happiness and self-confidence. 1 pupil has decreased their level and 4 pupils have remained the same.
- Class teacher completion of the Leuven Scale for Involvement in October and May shows 2 pupils have increased their level, 1 pupil has decreased their level and 4 have remained the same.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pre and post attitudinal surveys show most pupils (86%) enjoy maths more, most pupils (86%) feel they are better at maths and the majority (71%) feel they are more independent during maths.</li> </ul> <p>Primary 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All P4 pupils increased their assessment score when comparing the pre and post assessments carried out in October and May by at least 12%. One pupil increased by 54%.</li> <li>- Class teacher completion of the Leuven Scale for Wellbeing in October and May shows 2 out of 8 pupils have increased their level, expressing more obvious signs of satisfaction. 6 out of 8 pupils remained the same.</li> <li>- Class teacher completion of the Leuven Scale for Involvement in October and May shows 4 pupils have increased their level, 2 pupils have decreased their level and 2 have remained the same.</li> <li>- Pre and post attitudinal surveys show most pupils (88%) enjoy maths more, the majority of pupils (50%) feel they are better at maths. The majority feel their independence in the subject has remained the same.</li> <li>- All class teachers of individuals attending the numeracy support groups feel the group has helped them make progress. Most teachers (83%) feel the group has helped to increase their engagement in maths. In a recent survey, teachers commented on noticing a 'huge improvement in number formation and number knowledge'. One teacher said that a pupil is now 'engaging more fully' while another is now willing to 'give tricky problems a go'.</li> </ul>
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*Intervention 3: Partnership Working:*

Planned Impact and Outcome	Increase pupil and parent/ carer awareness of support available to alleviate pressures around the Cost of the School Day.
SMART Target	<p>By May 2023, almost all families (&gt;90%) will be aware of help available at school to help pay for uniform, lunches, trips and events.</p> <p>By May 2023, there will be a 15% increase in the number of families who would feel comfortable telling the school if they were struggling to pay a cost of the school day.</p> <p>By May 2023, there will be a 15% increase in the number of pupils who would feel comfortable talking to school staff if they were worried about money.</p>
Evaluation of Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cost of the School Day action plan has been implemented over the past two years to respond to cost barriers identified by the school community.</li> <li>- Parents have been made aware of how we have responded/are responding to their feedback through email communication and newsletters on a few occasions.</li> <li>- The initial parent and carer survey was re-distributed to families to gather their views two years later to evaluate impact of the action plan.</li> </ul> <p>Evaluation</p>

- Uniform and lunch still identified as a top cost.
- Fun events no longer identified as a top cost.
- 0% now agree that the school asks for too much money over a school year. An increase of 16.9% of families disagree or strongly disagree with the statement.
- The amount of families who find it difficult to afford all the things their child needs for school has decreased by 9.6%.
- An increase in the number of respondents who are aware of help available at school to pay for almost all items, events and activities. Knowledge of help with lunches remains the same.
- Increase in the number of respondents who strongly agree that they would feel comfortable telling staff if they were struggling to pay for something in school.
- Increase in the number of families who strongly agree or agree that there is enough support for families finding it difficult to afford school costs (1.4%). A decrease of 13% of families who disagree or strongly disagree with the statement.
- 6.4% increase in respondents who know how to apply for Free School Meals and clothing grants.
- When comparing the pupil survey results, an increase of 27 pupils indicated that it would be 'really easy' to talk to a member of staff regarding money concerns they had, and an increase of 28 pupils thought it would be 'easy'. A decrease of 21 pupils indicated that it would be 'really difficult' to talk to a member of staff.
- Representatives from Money Advice and Rights Team, Young Carers and Family First have attended two school events to talk to parents, with a number of families now working closely with these partner agencies to access further support. One parent recently commented that the conversation she had with the Family First worker at this event "has changed her life".

**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, a growing commitment to research-led, enquiry based approaches, increasing instances of distributive staff leadership and a senior leadership team who have gathered significant momentum with a range of strategic initiatives. Reductions in the management team due to budget decisions around removal of 'equity principal teacher' will require adjustments in remits and expectations around pace of change in certain areas. Staff have very high aspirations and are keen to continue collegiate working to drive forward improvements. Pupils and parents are positive about their school and are keen to work in partnership.

## National Improvement Framework Quality Indicators

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

### School Improvement Priorities 2023-24

#### Next Steps

##### Leadership and Self-Evaluation

- Empower all teaching staff to further develop skills of data analysis focused on improvement.
- Embed range of data analysis techniques into collaborative action research projects
- Link enquiry questions to aspects of curriculum development in SIP 23-24.
- Continue staff led 'Assembly Focus' CLPL sessions
- Re-launch cluster moderation sessions with focus on writing
- Consolidate cluster improvement work in reading and support curriculum design standing committee
- Work with cross authority senior leadership group on curriculum evaluation and design group
- Implement the recommendations of the National Nurturing Schools UK report.

##### Learning, Teaching and Assessment

- Continue to use Pupil Equity Funding to support targeted literacy and numeracy interventions to narrow the poverty related attainment gap
- Ensure DLL approaches are included as part of induction process for new teaching staff
- Continue Reading Recovery with targeted Primary 2 pupils
- Deliver bespoke literacy support for learning at Primary 4 stage
- Introduce whole school literacy development focus on writing
- Identify numeracy and maths improvement focus from analysis of assessment data
- Consolidate whole school development work on mental maths to improve mental agility
- Implement revised East Renfrewshire strategy and integrate methodology from Daily Literacy Learning approach into numeracy and maths lessons
- Provide targeted support to Primary 4 stage
- Relaunch maths homework policy to support consolidation of class learning and progressive, targeted approach across school
- Improve family engagement by offering an increased range of opportunities for parents/carers to join in religious celebrations/events.
- Incorporate recognition of Gospel Values in whole school rewards system and signature learning experiences.



- Continue to plan opportunities for teachers to share expertise and plan collaboratively to ensure RE is incorporated into a range of engaging learning experiences across the curriculum.

### **Raising Attainment and Achievement**

- Link signature learning experiences to meta skills and learner dispositions
- Deliver meta skills refresher training
- Further promote completion of 'Make Your Mark' targets at each stage and across school
- Add meta skills wheel to 'Make Your Mark' achievements passport to make link between experiences and skills progression
- Raise profile of celebrating success with parents and share successes from outside school
- Continue to include DYW as a standing item on agenda for professional dialogue meetings
- Continue to prioritise STEM teaching and learning in line with the curriculum rationale
- Build in additional pupil leadership responsibilities for Young STEM Leaders
- Gain Rights Respecting Schools Silver Award and Reading Schools Silver Award