

TOLSTA SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL

Annual General Meeting



HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT **September 2017**

1. Leadership and Management

How good is our leadership and approach to improvement?

Overall the quality of our leadership and our approaches to improvement are Satisfactory.

In the first instance, the Head Teacher has actively encouraged staff members to support the school through a range of self-evaluation procedures. The results of completed exercises were shared with staff and used to determine the priorities for inclusion in the School Improvement Plan 2017-18. The Head Teacher has an open door policy and encourages all staff to be involved in the life of the school and offer their views and ideas. Staff in this school feel they can do this and work well within the frameworks governing school life.

Staff were encouraged to be reflective in their practice and there was a readiness to take advice and adapt practice and provision in order to improve learning experiences for pupils. This led to the identification of those pupils who were classed as being underperforming across the school (14% equating to 4/27 pupils). This led to a focus in the SIP on additional support needs and Pupil Equity Funding. School staff need to work now on monitoring progress in classes more robustly and the Head Teacher needs to gather the views of parents about the management of the school. Data which has been collected over the course of the last session has highlighted areas of improvement and these are being tackled by the Head Teacher in conjunction with the teaching staff.

Very good professional review procedures are in place for all staff, with targets being set and reviewed regularly. Staff apply themselves willingly and diligently to this process and were well supported. However Local Authority In-Service choices for School Assistants and School Auxiliaries require to be improved.

Teachers are growing in confidence in their application of GTCS standards and their professional learning which leads to professional update. The majority of staff have been motivated to take decisions and lead aspects of school improvement.

Pupils now need to be more confidently engaged in reviewing their learning with their teachers and in evaluating the work of the school and this is an ongoing action in the life of the school.

A Care Inspectorate Inspection of the Nursery Provision within Tolsta Primary School graded all themes which were inspected to be Excellent. The challenge for the Nursery Sector in the coming session is to build knowledge, skills and confidence in the Gaidhlig Language. A greater focus also needs to be placed on the provision of the curriculum at the Early Level.

Overall school staff have transitioned well through a number of staffing and leadership changes within the school and have remained focused on making improvements for the benefit of pupils.

2. Learning Provision

How good is the quality of the care and education we offer?

Overall the quality of the care and education we offer is Satisfactory.

Teaching provision over the course of the last session was patchy with the P1-4 class teacher being absent long term. This resulted in a job-share situation. Initially this proved to be a difficult situation as planning for the class was only happening in the short term. During the second half of the session, this situation improved with class teachers being tasked with planning for the long term for the class and also taking responsibility for meeting additional support needs. Class teachers grew in confidence through this process and ultimately ensured that all pupils had opportunities to engage in learning outside of the classroom by visiting places of interest and working environments.

The Nursery Play Leader made use of outdoor learning every day, making regular visits to amenities in the local vicinity. This provided children with very good opportunities to play and learn in their own community.

Teaching staff across the school worked well with each other and were able to plan collaboratively with one another. Teachers plans were clear but now need to reflect the progression of learning which is taking place. Staff have reviewed planning formats in the light of national advice and these have been introduced this session.

The Head Teacher meets with class teachers once a term to discuss attainment and to monitor and track pupil progress in areas of Literacy and Numeracy. Strengths and actions points are discussed and decided. As a result of this, small improvements in attainment have been observed over the course of the session. The greater positive is that as class teachers have worked with the Head Teacher staff have come to a common understanding of the standards which are expected. With new staff coming in to the school this remains a challenge for the coming session. The Head Teacher continues to closely track and monitor the progress of all children, but particularly those pupils with additional support needs.

The needs of pupils with additional support needs have been better evidenced and as a result the school has secured a Support for Learning teacher once a week as opposed to once a term. In addition the auxiliary hours allocated to the school have significantly increased. This time needs to be utilized wisely and targeted support given to those pupils who require it. The Head Teacher continues to monitor the ASN agenda very closely to ensure that all children are being challenged to meet their potential.

All pupils from P1-7 have been challenged to increase their pace of work and class teachers have worked together to update and refresh the curriculum rationale for the school. This should now be reflected in all activities within classes.

Looking to the future, all pupils now need to be more greatly involved in the planning of learning and also be given more opportunities to engage in pupil led learning.

3. Successes and Achievements

How good are we at ensuring the best possible outcomes for all our learners?

Overall the quality of the outcomes we have achieved is Good

All pupils within the school evidenced a strong sense of wellbeing and this was evidenced in the very successful Health Week which was held in Term One and culminated in the Rookie Rockstars event held in Term Four.

The results of Health and Wellbeing questionnaires carried out this session were positive with almost all children expressing that they felt safe and secure. Approximately 75% of pupils stated that they felt more confident about reporting bullying incidents where they have felt harmed, threatened or upset to a safe adult in the school. In addition, there was an increase in the number of pupils who felt confident about themselves and also had confidence to deal with a range of situations. Staff have created an atmosphere across the school where children feel able to be open and know they are listened to.

Attendance levels in the school are excellent with almost all pupils achieving attendance of over 90%.

Data which was gathered from recent standardised assessments administered at P3 shows that P3 pupils were performing well below the national average in Phonic Knowledge and Skills, English Skills: Spelling, English Skills: Grammar and Punctuation and Reading Comprehension: Narrative

Data which was gathered from recent standardised assessments administered at P3 shows that P3 pupils are performing significantly well below the national average in number, money and measure, shape, position and movement and information handling.

Data which was gathered from recent standardised assessments administered at P7 shows that P7 pupils were performing above the national average in English Skills: Spelling, Reading Comprehension: Narrative and Reading Comprehension: Narrative. The same pupils were performing below the national average in English Skills: Grammar and Punctuation.

Data which was gathered from recent standardised assessments administered at P7 shows that P7 pupils were performing below the national average in number, money and measure, shape, position and movement and information handling.

Pupils from the School performed very well in the Western Isles Cross Country Series for 2016-17 achieving excellent results from a good representation of pupils.

Pupils from the school once more won their group in the Rural Sports for the fifth year running. This is an exceptional achievement for a small school.

4. Objectives for the Coming Year

There are three projects included within the School Improvement Plan for this session. These projects have at their very heart, the aim of raising pupil attainment. These projects are:

Project 1 –Raising Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy for All (with a focus on additional support needs /planning, assessment and moderation / health and wellbeing.)

Project 2 – Improving Learning and Teaching in Technologies

Project 3 – Curriculum Development