

Session 2020 – 2021

School: Balmerino**Date of Visit: 10/11/2020****LP Members: Angela McArdle, Janet Barker, Anna Coggins, Jackie Funnell & Lucy Jess**

Overview of focus/format of Learning Partnership: (Please be very clear on focus/purpose of visit)

Balmerino Primary School is in a time of change: a new HT has been appointed and Lucy Jess is a joint HT (with Wormit) rather than a teaching head which the school has always had. This adjustment is happening within the context of Covid-19. The school has a long established team who are reflecting honestly on aspects for improvement and are working collegiately to become involved in school evaluation processes and developing shared understanding of vision, values and aims. The school was ready for an inspection in March 2020 (which did not go ahead due to Covid-19). The whole team are motivated to continue to drive change and improvement

This LP is an opportunity to tune into and reflect upon this context and inform next steps. Assessment, tracking, pathways and moderation have been identified by staff as key areas for development. For some learners there is already evidence of improved attainment due to the work carried out prior to March 2020. Consistency through the school is a recognised starting point.

The focus of today is Raising Attainment. The school recognises that developing a culture of tracking to raise attainment is key. The staff have worked with HT to identify a group of those not on track in one or more aspect of Literacy or Numeracy. Beyond TRAMS there is not an embedded system in school. Work was underway on that last session. The vision is that an Assessment Strategy will be devised which works hand in hand with effective tracking system (Nursery to P7). LP members undertook a task looking in detail at data available for five children (focussing on what we know about these children and what are the gaps in their data).

There is the option to have follow up LP discussion to measure progress in relation to suggested next steps (eg March/April 2021)

Strengths identified:

- ✓ School has data on children
- ✓ Staff are planning across the curriculum
- ✓ A strong and reflective staff team willing to engage with new practice and drive change

Planned next steps:

Within the task of looking at the five children the group discussed key points and queries. Specific advice was given on the five children and strategic advice is to consider the following:

- The range of diagnostic literacy and numeracy assessments used as well as how assessment can happen through the context of the wider curriculum. This could include assessments which can be done across home and school (eg Sumdog), use of the Scottish Criterion Scale and methods to assess how application of Writing Tools is tracked (eg application across curriculum).
- Prior to the learning partnership, the school has liaised with Jen Allan (HT of Supporting Learners Service) about assessment of spelling and will act upon this advice.
- The narrative for how each young person is progressing and how this is recorded – How can tracking be improved to give clearer picture of development of individuals over time?
- The need for universal and targeted assessment and tracking.
- Ensuring targeted tracking has planned measurable outcomes and that this is shared with parents.
- Use of Excel to form a usable tracker to include:
 - SIMD
 - Attendance data
 - Assessment Data
 - Inserting comments
- The role of IT to support learners (online resources and laptops for writing support)
- The need to ensure tracking answers the question “What value is school adding?”

This strategic advice was discussed with teaching staff on 13th November in-service day and we have agreed to the following initial tasks:

- Develop an excel tracker to include all relevant information – the tracker will evolve as we gather information through the development and implementation of our Assessment Strategy.
- Develop an Assessment Strategy in line with the advice given above. In doing this, we are using collegiate time to engage with up to date assessment information from Education Scotland. The starting point will be writing assessment as this was started last session and can usefully be firmed up.

Following the Learning partnership, Lucy Jess attended a professional dialogue session with Jim McCrory (Education Scotland) the information from this dialogue will inform the school’s work moving forward and there is the option for the school to liaise with him for further support. This would be helpful once the initial work on setting the tracker up and drafting the assessment strategy has been done so that there is a starting point to discuss. One aspect discussed at the professional dialogue is the need to track across the whole curriculum. This is noted and known to be important but in the context of Balmerino in 2020, the priority will be establishing effective tracking in Numeracy and Literacy (with elements of Health and Wellbeing).

Report completed by

Lucy Jess

Headteacher/SLT

Sent to Education Manager

Rona Weir

Date 8/12/20