

## Extended Learning Partnership

Session 2022 - 2023

School: Balmerino PS and Nursery Class | Date of Visit: 4<sup>th</sup> November 2022

LP Members: Rona Weir (Education Manager), Anna Coggins (HT Balmullo PS), Janet Barker (Joint HT Lundin Mill Primary School and Nursery Class and Kirkton of Largo Primary School, Carys Murray (Educational Psychologist)

### Overview of focus/format of LP visit: (Please be very clear on focus/purpose of visit)

Prior to the visit, a draft Summary Self-Evaluation Paper focussing on the NIF QIs had been prepared and this was shared with the team during a scoping dialogue. The day was set up to allow evidence to be gathered under the four NIF QIs to support the validation of the school's self-evaluation. To allow for triangulation of evidence, a range of contexts for gather evidence was provided:

- Direct observations of classroom practice, play experiences in nursery and children's experiences in assembly
- Opportunities for people to express views and share experiences in staff, pupil and parent focus groups
- Opportunities for the visitors to work directly with pupils in benchmarking exercises
- Opportunities for the visitors to analyse tracking and ASN paperwork

#### 1.3 Leadership of Change

The focus was upon our School Vision, Values and Aims and the School Improvement Planning process. Evidence was gathered through focus groups and observations at assembly.

#### 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment

The focus in the upper primary was upon the Learning and Teaching process and Pupil Voice.

The focus in the lower primary was upon writing and tracking/benchmarking.

The focus in Nursery was upon the play experience and the use of self-evaluation to inform improvement. Evidence was gathered through classroom observations and pupil and staff focus groups.

There was a whole school focus on the involvement of parents in their child's learning – evidence was gathered through a parental focus group.

#### 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion

Evidence was gathered through focus group discussions.

#### 3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement

The focus was upon the use of data to inform interventions and on evidence of children's progress.

Evidence was gathered through observation of tracking/ASN paperwork and through staff focus groups.

### Strengths identified:

#### 1.3 Leadership of Change

- Almost all children are able to talk about the refreshed School Vision, Values and Aims.
- Staff, Parents and Pupils have been involved in development of '*Our School, Our Future*', a vision, values and aims statement which supports the direction of travel as well as building children's knowledge of the values which make a good learner and which support their wellbeing and of the wider context of the UNCRC and wellbeing indicators. School Mascots to support understanding of the wellbeing indicators are embedded in use in Nursery and have been recently introduced to the primary stages to develop understanding of wellbeing indicators and UNCRC.
- A school calendar has been devised and introduced across the school and nursery showing collegiate and evidence gathering activities, this will ensure balance of strategic and operational work and support everyone to be clear on individual and collective responsibilities.
- All staff across the school are committed to school improvement and to building rigour in self-evaluation and evidence gathering processes. There is a strong sense of team and receptiveness to change and professional development.
- Effective home-school communication was noted and this has been enhanced by the use of Seesaw from Nursery-P7.
- Conversations with nursery staff evidence their engagement with the Early Years Self-Evaluation tools to establish their current position and next steps.

- The joint headship is felt to be working effectively for Balmerino PS.

### **2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment**

- Teachers have increased their target setting practice. These are shared with all primary parents via Seesaw and routines to share progress via Seesaw are being established. Routines to involve children in target setting are being developed.
- All children in P2-7 are invited to join their parent's evening meetings to talk about their learning with parents and teachers. In October 2022, almost all parents attended a meeting for their child and families are beginning to engage with the offer to have their child in attendance.
- All children throughout the school have the option of ICT supports for learning, as indicated and there is a range of good practice in ICT to enhance learning.
- All children experience a planned, progressive programme of teaching to ensure their experience the breadth of the curriculum and balance and coverage of Experiences and Outcomes.
- All children in P5-7 are given opportunity to make choices regarding the context of their learning and a learning board display is being used to good effect to promote their reflection upon learning outcomes.
- Within the P5-7 class, the following good practice in Learning and Teaching was evidenced:
  - Reference to prior learning.
  - Almost all of the children effectively engaged in their learning almost all of the time.
  - Almost all of the children aware of their Learning Intention and can talk about what learning and success looks like.
  - Calm, purposeful and focussed classroom ethos.
  - Very effective teacher questioning which was well-placed (e.g. to give challenge)
  - Appropriate examples of learner choice (e.g. within size of group in partnership work.
  - Motivated, engaged learners who speak with a sense of enjoyment about learning.
- Within the P2-4 class, the following good practice with regards to the teaching of writing and tracking/benchmarking were evidenced:
  - In small groups, taking part in benchmarking exercise, children demonstrated their ability at the appropriate phase of 1<sup>st</sup> level in numeracy and literacy.
  - Almost all children were noted to reflect effectively upon Success Criteria within their writing.
  - Evidence was noted of teacher feedback against Success Criteria in writing.
- All children, within focus groups, were observed to be polite, respectful and highly motivated learners who are proud of their school.
- Consistencies within learning and teaching are developing through the school e.g. approaches to support (including ICT), a value placed on pupil voice within learning, a whole school approach to spelling and use of progression pyramids.
- Within Nursery, children were noted to be actively engaged with learning through play. One pupil shared their PLJ with a visitor and discussed his learning.
- Nursery Lunchtime was noted to be calm and purposeful within the playroom.

### **3.1 Ensuing Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion**

- All children in a P5-7 focus group spoke passionately and positively about the happy and supportive relationships between pupils and with staff in the school.
- All children in a P5-7 focus group commented on the helpful "Stand Up, Get Help!" practice to develop their skills and confidence in helping them to address problems they encounter from others' behaviours more independently and are aware of when to immediately seek adult help. This is becoming linked to the developing peer mediation practices.
- All children in a P5-7 focus group talked about how their differences are accepted and needs are supported, commenting on feelings of safety, sense of fairness and inclusion of all.
- All children in Nursery-P7 are invited to check-in emotionally each day and there is evident progress in this, P5-7 use technology to enhance and extend this experience (Plickers).
- Within the P5-7 class, Health and Wellbeing were noted to be integrated across the curriculum and there is careful consideration of how to interweave some of the protected characteristics into learning connected to equality.

- Through conversations with pupils, staff and parents, evidence builds a picture of an inclusive school (Nursery-P7)

### 3.2 Raising Attainment

- A more aligned approach is evident between home and school in talking about the needs and next steps of children who require individual plans.
- All teachers are working in a solution focussed way to create systems and practices to develop appropriate interventions and tracking within a multi-composite setting.
- Attainment funding is being directed into expanding PSA supports for targeted interventions supported by SfL teacher and under the overall responsibility of Class Teachers.
- All teachers know and understand individual children's attainment and next steps.
- There is evidence to support the statement that all children are making progress from their previous level of learning and most are making progress in line with national expectations.
- Current tracking systems evidence children's progress in literacy and numeracy, their attendance and (where necessary) qualitative data linked to (e.g.) engagement or English language development.
- The First Level benchmarking activities overall validated the projected levels of attainment and confirmed identified gaps in learning already identified as requiring additional, targeted interventions.

### Areas for Improvement/Planned Next Steps

Areas to work on in the short term:

- Ensure celebration of personal achievement is consistent and evident to all.
- Continue to develop routines to ensure Seesaw is used to evidence children's progress against their targets to parents.
- Develop teachers' knowledge of attainment trends across the school to support school improvement work and transition.
- Ensure children's views are included within plans for pupils with individual/additional support needs (their views are currently considered but this is not fully evidenced).
- Continue to embed understanding of school values for learning and wellbeing.
- Continue to develop practices to give effective feedback to pupils – in particular, relating to writing (as per the School Improvement Plan) but this will also impact on other curricular areas.
- Continue to develop consistency of approaches to Learning and Teaching of writing (as per the School Improvement Plan) with a view to raising attainment in this area in the long term.
- Continue to embed French as our L2 (as per the School Improvement Plan)
- Apply the school calendar of evaluation and monitoring practices and build parental workshops into the calendar. Continue to develop systems to support moderation
- Develop a skills framework and consider how wider evidence of children's progress can be evidenced e.g. skills development, social skills, engagement.
- Seek support to improve current ICT infrastructure to allow digital learning to better support and enhance children's experiences.
- Continue to develop approaches to play pedagogy.

Areas to work on in the longer term:

- *'Our School, Our Future'* has been designed to be a springboard into developing a Balmerino Primary School Curriculum Rationale. There is work that needs to be done before we are ready to do that but we are aware of this as a long term aim.

Headteacher: Lucy Jess, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022

**Report should be submitted to local authority link person for agreement within 2 weeks of visit.**