

## Extended Learning Partnership Report

### Session 2025 – 2026

**Establishment:** Balmerino Primary School and Nursery

**Date of visit:** 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025

**Reason for ELP:** Headteacher request

**Team members:**

Claire Allan– Headteacher, Strathmiglo and Auchtermuchty Primary Schools & Nurseries  
James Hutchison– Depute Headteacher Leuchars Primary School  
Lucy Jess – Headteacher, Wormit and Balmerino Primary Schools and Nurseries  
Rona Weir – Education Manager

*Acting Headteacher Katie Mitchell was invited to attend as a follow-on to her time leading the school but was unable to attend.*

### Evaluative grades from SQR June 2025

#### Primary:

1.3 Leadership of Change	Good
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Good
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Good
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	Good

#### Nursery:

1.3 Leadership of Change	Good
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Very Good
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Good
3.2 Securing Children's Progress	Very Good

### Overview of focus/format of ELP visit (please be clear of focus/purpose and show range of activities that took place)

#### *Focus on:*

QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment

QI 2.4 Personalised Support

QI 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

- Classroom Visits (30 min observations) x 2 (both classes) - followed by focus group discussion with 4 children from each class about the learning
- Nursery observation followed by discussion of practice with EYOs
- Pupil focus Groups using x 3 (Playground focus, P5-7 x1, Respect Focus,P2-7 x1, Committees, )
- Parent/Carer Focus Group x 1 (Invitation sent to all parents, # 3 attended)
- Staff Focus Groups x 1 (all teaching and PSA Staff
- Discussion of key documents including recent parental survey
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## **Overall Strengths**

- Parents in the focus group noted their view that all staff know children well, that communication from the school is effective and has become simpler and more tailored.

### **2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment**

- In classroom visits, most learners were noted to be actively engaged in learning most of the time and were enthusiastic about the tasks given.
- Examples of differentiation were observed: by outcome, by scaffolding and by task
- Examples of oral feedback were observed through formative assessment approaches.
- Nursery children were noted to be actively engaged in play.
- Feedback from parent focus group recognised that children's views and ideas across Nursery and Primary are used well to inform professionals' planning for learning/thematic work, ensuring a strong personalised approach within the curriculum.

### **2.4 Personalised Support**

- Effective partnership working is evident between teachers and support staff to support children's learning needs
- Impacts of partnership with the Inclusive Practice Team in Nursery is evident. Communication spaces are now becoming well-established. The team have developed good use of core approaches such as use of High 5 and aspects of Up Up and Away.
- Tracking of children, responsive planning and next steps in Nursery are very clear.

### **3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality & Inclusion**

- During observations within classrooms and at assembly children were observed in high quality interactions with their peers from different year groups. Very good practice was seen in children taking on a buddy role to support younger children.
- Universal routines are well-established. Today these were particularly evident in Nursery and at Assembly.
- The nursery was noted to be a warm and welcoming environment and pupils and staff throughout the school were noted to be welcoming to visitors.
- The school looks outwards to its partner school (Wormit) and other agencies to extend support for children as needed.
- Children across the primary school experience a very good Assembly model which teachers and PSAs recognise relates well into classroom and playground expectations.

- Children across the primary stages have a very good understanding of the Stand Up Get Help approach. This was articulated at assembly and by staff. In one of the focus groups, children articulated times that Stand Up Get Help might not work well – when peers persist in low level annoying behaviour. This is helpful information to feed into the policy review this year and to feed into assembly work on responsibility and problem solving skills this term.
- Children report that they feel respected by the adults in school.
- Children report that the school has rules and routines in place to help them show respect (for example certificates and house points) and that the school teaches them what respect is and how to live that value.
- Children's understanding of the Golden Rule (treat others as you would like to be treated) and THINK before you speak (True, Helpful, Inspiring, Necessary, Kind) – was evident through assembly and a pupil focus group.
- Children value committees and clubs. Children from all P3-7 committees spoke positively about the activities their committee does, and the Rights Respecting Schools committee were able to speak confidently about the accreditation pathway. Children report liking the clubs on offer and valuing opportunities to go to festivals and tournaments and to compete against Wormit (partner school)
- Children report enjoying the playground experience – they speak highly of others being kind and of being with friends. They like playing all together – with children of different ages.

Areas for Improvement and planned next steps

### **2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment**

- The School's Improvement Plan has identified the need to undertake work to build consistency of assessment and tracking practices across Primary stages to inform teachers' planning.
- Staff team to reflect upon and define the school's approaches to differentiation and feedback, including what practices would be core across the school. This can start with revisiting 'Our School, Our Feedback'.
- Parents in focus groups shared their interest in knowing more about their children's learning experiences (e.g. exploring what children can add to SEESAW through Transforming Learning project and looking at opportunities for parents to come into school to build their picture of their children's learning experiences). This builds well on school's plans for a Numeracy/Literacy Drop In for Primaries 1-4 later this month and plan for a P5-7 showcase of learning later in the year.

### **2.4 Personalised Support**

- Primary staff team to develop routines to allow them to take ownership of content of children's individual plans.
- Continue to review opportunities for targeted work by PSAs to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy and to support nurturing approaches, working alongside the role of Teachers leading teaching and learning (e.g. building timetable for interventions, informed by data).

- Consider universal practices, building on the work started in Nursery and consider the role of teacher/parental partnership in meeting children's needs.

### **QI 3.1: Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality & Inclusion**

- Consider next steps in terms of teachers' and support staff team members' roles in universal practices around expectations and in managing children's behaviours (e.g. around use of Fix It Folder, problem solving skills, scripted language, adults' use of restorative conversations, natural consequences and use of "Key Phrases"), drawing on good practices at other schools. Within this it would be useful to reflect on the work of Paul Dix and others. It also would be helpful to build routines for peer mediation.
- Children recognise that they are not always quiet enough when others are learning and see that this is a development area which school staff can work on with them.
- Create opportunities for the committees to feedback to each other.