

Education – Improvement Planning Document – 2025-26

Establishment Name: St. Mary's Primary School

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Head of Establishment	Mark Deegan	Date	June 25
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Quality Improvement Officer	Alison McLellan	Date	June 25
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Our Vision, Values and Aims

In St. Mary's Primary School, we aim to develop the faith, knowledge and skills of all learners to prepare them to have a happy, successful and prosperous life in the 21st century.

As a Catholic Primary School, a strong emphasis is placed on developing our Christian faith and promoting the Gospel values. Through your help, and with continued support from our parish, we aim to develop a genuine love of God and an understanding of social justice in our children's lives.

Agreed Core Values

- Happiness
- Respect
- Kindness
- Ambition

All members of our school community are valued equally, as is their right to be themselves and to excel in different ways. Regardless of sex, race or creed, everyone is offered the same opportunities to participate in the life of the school.

Aims

In order to equip the children to achieve their full potential, we aim to:

- Provide a happy, safe and welcoming environment where each member of our school community feels valued and respected.
- Provide the highest quality learning experiences which support and enhance each child's potential for success and life-long learning.
- Develop as a community of faith, through the promotion of Christian values, celebration and worship, and service to others.



Our Shared Vision

In St. Mary's Primary School, we aim to develop the faith, knowledge and skills of all learners to prepare them to have a happy, successful and prosperous life in the 21st century.

As a Catholic Primary School, a strong emphasis is placed on developing our Christian faith and promoting the Gospel values. Through your help, and with continued support from our parish, we aim to develop a genuine love of God and an understanding of social justice in our children's lives.

Our Shared Values



Happiness

To create an environment where our whole school community experiences happiness.



Kindness

To promote kindness to all in our words and actions and to treat others like Jesus taught us.



Respect

To support everyone in showing respect for ourselves, peers and our whole school community.



Ambition

To always aim for the very top by giving everything we do our best.

St. Mary's Primary School

Curriculum Rationale 2024-2027



In St. Mary's Primary School, we value Happiness, Respect, Kindness and Ambition. We have worked with pupils, staff, parents and partners to ensure our curriculum reflects our uniqueness and is designed to build the skills our pupils need in life, learning and work in an ever changing world. We recognise that the curriculum is wider than the experiences and outcomes and that all stakeholders support our curriculum. We have encouraged the contribution of all stakeholders to develop a curriculum rationale which is designed to meet the needs of the pupils in our context.

Our curriculum is driven by:	Our curriculum aims to:	We will do this by:
• Creativity • A rich digital ethos • Diversity • Warm, welcoming Ethos • 7 design principles: personalisation and choice, coherence, relevance, challenge and enjoyment, breadth and depth • The Gospel Values • Self Evaluation	• Provide the highest quality learning experiences which support and enhance each child's potential for success and life-long learning. • Give children opportunities to develop the 4 capacities • Develop the meta skills but in particular Collaborating, Creativity, Critical Thinking, Adapting and Initiative.	• Bundling Es and Os in planning to give coherence. • Planning for support looking at individual needs and being responsive to poverty of experience • Creating pathways which bundle Es and Os which are covered through the "hidden" curriculum. • Quality assurance procedures ensuring high quality teaching and learning.

What makes us unique?

There are several things which make us unique to any other school. We asked pupils, staff, parents and partners over a three week period in February 2024 for their views on this. The following four key things were easily identifiable from the views of all stakeholders:

Our strong values

Our school community all played a part in developing values which match the context, needs and wishes of everyone: Happiness, Kindness, Respect and Ambition. You can see our pupils living our values any time you enter the school. We have shown how important they are to us by displaying them in every class, greeting visitors with them in the playground, having them visible in our hall and discussing them at every opportunity.

The opportunities we offer

In St. Mary's Primary School it is recognised that we provide many opportunities to be part of a group, try new activities, go on trips or have new experiences. Pupils have the opportunity to take on roles within Houses, taking leadership opportunities as House Captains and Vice Captains, attending the theatre for a musical and for a panto, attending football matches, getting outdoors and on trips regularly, develop new skills on residential and so much more. The work in the Inverclyde Music Festival to develop and showcase the talents of our pupils has been highly commended by all and identified as a strength people wish to see continue moving forward.

Our staff and pupils

Our whole community recognised the warmth and love the staff show our pupils and the hard work they put in to ensure every child achieves success. We aim to ensure every child feels safe, happy and cared for and this is reflected in the positive relationships between staff and pupils. Our caring and nurturing ethos is visible for all parents, partners and visitors who enter our school.

The kindness, respect and manners our pupils display has also been identified as making us unique. The dedication to living the values in our school is clear and our pupils are excellent ambassadors for our school when they are out in public.

Our high standards

We pride ourselves in having high standards in all that we do in St. Mary's Primary. Our community recognises this in terms of behaviour, achievement, and conduct. They are also proud of the uniqueness and high standards we have for uniform. Our green shirts make us easily identifiable and we aim to leave a lasting memory after participation in events by showcasing our high standards when we wear them.

When thinking about what makes us unique, we must take into consideration that 29% of our pupils reside in SIMD 1 and 2. We have welcomed 47 pupils who are 'New to Scotland' to our school in the last two years increasing our population to 17% of pupils joining us from other countries. Our school community has always been very open, friendly and welcoming when new pupils join us and show respect to everyone regardless of any differences.

Ensuring we take forward the driver of Diversity and continue to provide equity for our pupils must be taken into consideration during the development of our curriculum and School Improvement Planning over the next three years.

What skills are important to us?

We want to develop skills that allow all our learners to develop as successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens and we will have this at the heart of all curriculum decisions.



Self management	Social intelligence	Innovation
Focussing	Communicating	Curiosity
Integrity	Feeling	Creativity
Adapting	Collaborating	Sense making
Initiative	Leading	Critical thinking

We also want to develop meta skills but in particular we will focus on 5 key skills which staff have identified as being most important and needed for our pupils; Collaborating, Creativity, Critical Thinking, Adapting and Initiative.

Article 3

When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions affect children.

Article 28

Every child has the right to an education.

Article 29

Children's education should help them fully develop their personalities, talents and abilities.

What comes next?

- Collegiate sessions for 2024-2025 will focus on the design of our curriculum, the bundling of Es and Os and creating overviews of what we cover through the 'Hidden Curriculum'.
- We will review our approach to IDL and the 7 design principles.
- Enlist the support of parents, partners and the community to enhance our curriculum and support the development of skills.
- Review our rationale at the end of 2026-2027.

3 Year Overview of Establishment Priorities

The improvement priorities for our establishment are noted on the following page. They have been expressed in the context of the National Improvement Framework

Our Improvement Priorities extend in a rolling programme over three years. Each priority has been coded accordingly:

Session 2024-2025

Session 2025-2026

Session 2026-2027

Overview of rolling three year plan

National Priorities	Session 2024-2025	Session 2025-2026	Session 2026-2027
Improvements in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy	Play Pedagogy Reading and Writing- targeted and beyonds	Play Pedagogy Numeracy	Play Pedagogy Numeracy
Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children	Reading and Writing- targeted and beyonds	Play Pedagogy Numeracy	Numeracy
Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing	Development of Meta Skills and DYW Outdoor learning	Attendance Anti-Bullying Policy Equalities Signs of Safety Equalities Outdoor learning	Development of Meta Skills and DYW Outdoor learning
Improvement in employability skills and sustained positive school leaver destinations for all young people	Development of Meta Skills and DYW	Development of Meta Skills and DYW Pupil Leadership Development	Development of Meta Skills and DYW
Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education	Equalities Trauma Informed Practice Pupil Leadership Development	Attendance Anti-Bullying Policy Equalities Signs of Safety Equalities	Equalities

Stakeholder’s views

How were stakeholders views collected?

Staff collegiate sessions
Parent Group meetings
House captain meetings
Houses
Forms
Partners meetings

How was PEF spend consulted on?

PEF Total: £60,480 Core + £4198 Carry Forward= £64,678
PEF Questionnaire
Collegiate sessions with staff
Parent group meetings
House meetings

Plan: Session 2025-26

Priority 1 Pedagogy: Play Development into Primary 3, Numeracy Development Across the School and Narrowing the PRAG

Improvements in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people

National Improvement Framework Outcomes

5. Skilled teachers and leaders delivering excellent, inclusive education.

3. Inclusive curriculum and assessment for a sustainable future.

4. High achievement and reduced attainment gap for all learners.

[Education - achieving excellence and equity: National Improvement Framework 2025](#)

How Good is Our School/Quality Improvement Framework ELC

1.3 Leadership of change

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

2.2 Curriculum

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

UNCRC

Article 28: (Right to education):

Article 29 (Goals of education):

Article 31 (Leisure, play and culture):

Developing in Faith

Developing as a community of faith and learning

Rationale for change based self-evaluation including data and stakeholder views

Play

In the last 3 school sessions, we have developed play pedagogy in primary 1 and into primary 2 which has had a positive impact on outcomes for pupils, has been well received by parents and has been commented on positively in both an authority review and a recent HMIE inspection. Staff at primary 1 and 2 have worked to develop a policy for play in our school (*Play: The St Mary's Way*) which we will continue to review, revise and develop as play progresses through the school. Our next step is to develop play pedagogy into primary 3 to continue to develop a consistent approach across our school.

Numeracy

Through self-evaluation processes and quality assurance, as a staff we have identified that approaches to mental maths and mathematical language is varied across the school. While attainment remains high in numeracy, we want to ensure we have an agreed, consistent approach to numeracy and maths across our school to ensure pupils have a better understanding or expectations as they progress across levels.

Poverty Related Attainment Gap (PRAG)

After narrowing the PRAG in session 23/24, we saw it widening again at the end of session 24/25. This was mainly due to a changing cohort of pupils however we will now target individuals and groups impacted by poverty to narrow this gap again.

Expected outcomes for learners			
Who?	By how much?	By when?	What?
Play Continued improved engagement in primary 1-3 through play based pedagogy and outdoor learning will result in most children continuing to progress at the national standard or beyond expectations by June 26. This will result in the following on track: <i>Primary 2</i> 97.5% in Listening and Talking (increase of 2.6%) 94.9% in Reading (Increase of 2.6%) 94.9% in Writing (Increase of 5.2%) 94.9% in Numeracy (Increase of 2.6%) <i>Primary 3</i> 94.6% in Listening and Talking (Increase of 8.5%) 89.2% in Reading (Increase of 3.1%) 89.2% in Writing (Increase of 5.9%) 89.2% in Numeracy (Maintained)			
Numeracy Most learners will demonstrate improved confidence in articulating their thinking in mental maths by June 26. Improved confidence and consistency in approach will lead to pupils on track reaching: 94.9% in P2 (Increase of 2.6%) 89.2% in P3 (Maintained) 95.1% in P4 (Increase of 2.4%) 91.9% in P5 (increase of 2.7%) 88% in P6 (Maintained) 96.3% in P7 (Increase of 0.4% but include 4 new pupils)			
PRAG By June 26, targeted support and interventions will lead to increased progress and achievement for identified pupils residing in simd 1&2 which will result in: 94.7% on track or beyond in Listening and Talking (increase of 5.3%) 90.8% on track or beyond in Reading (increase of 6.6%) 88.2% on track or beyond in Writing (increase of 6.6%) 99.5% on track or beyond in Numeracy (increase of 1.3%)			
If PEF spend is supporting – how much and what?			
£27,134.75 0.4 Teacher £20,351.06 0.4 Teacher DHT Upgrade £7198.16 Total: £55,683.97			

Tasks to achieve priority	Timescale	RAG	Those involved/responsible – including partners	Resources and staff development
Numeracy				
PEF DHT (with responsibility for Numeracy including tracking, monitoring and assessment) to develop training programme for approaches to Mental Maths using Number Talks resources and CPA approach.	Planning Aug-Oct Delivery across the year.		N. Macdonald All teaching staff All support staff	Inverclyde Numeracy Strategy Number Talks
Delivery of team teaching/coaching and modelling in Mental Maths.	Ongoing		N. Macdonald All teaching staff	Inverclyde Numeracy Strategy Number Talks
Whole staff engagement with Numeracy strategy.	By November 25		Numeracy Coordinators N. Macdonald	Inverclyde Numeracy Strategy
Targeted groups for interventions/additionality to be identified, support timetabled and staff delivering briefed.	By end August 25		N. Macdonald J. Blincow Additional teaching staff	Data dashboard Intervention pathways/resources
Monthly check-ins to analyse progress of intervention/support and termly review of pupils receiving additionality.	Ongoing		SLT Additional teaching staff	Data dashboard Tracking information
Play				
Play coordinators to meet with new staff at P3/2 and P3 to training “ <i>Play: The St Mary’s Way</i> ”	By end Aug 25		C. Donnelly A. Grant New staff	“ <i>Play: The St Mary’s Way</i> ” Policy

Tasks to achieve priority	Timescale	RAG	Those involved/responsible – including partners	Resources and staff development
Opportunities for joint planning across P1-3 as appropriate	Ongoing		P1-3 teachers P1-3 PSAs	<i>“Play: The St Mary’s Way”</i> Policy Inverclyde play strategy. Realising the Ambition Relevant Play literature
Continuation of progress made in outdoor learning by accessing the local community on a weekly basis at P1-3. Continue to develop planning overviews for this and look at progression.	Ongoing		P1-3 teachers	Outdoor learning overviews
Review of <i>“Play: The St Mary’s Way”</i> Policy and create a new action plan as appropriate.	By Dec 25		P1-3 teachers	<i>“Play: The St Mary’s Way”</i> Policy Inverclyde play strategy. Realising the Ambition Relevant Play literature
PRAG				
Targeted groups for interventions/additionality to be identified, support timetabled and staff delivering briefed.	By end August 25		N. Macdonald J. Blincow Additional teaching staff	Data dashboard Intervention pathways/resources
Monthly check-ins to analyse progress of intervention/support and termly review of pupils receiving additionality.	Ongoing		SLT Additional teaching staff	Data dashboard Tracking information

Measure of Impact: What we will see and where?

How will we measure this? What does “better” look like? How will we recognise better when we see it?

- Questionnaires will evidence increases in pupil confidence in articulating their thinking.
- Observations of play will demonstrate improved talking and listening skills.
- Attainment data will demonstrate increases identified across the year.
- Tracking and monitoring meetings will evidence targeting of individual and groups.
- DHT will evidence impact of improved pedagogy from coaching and modelling.
- Collegiate sessions will evidence progression in approaches.
- Jotters will demonstrate progress.

Priority 2: Meta Skills and DYW

Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people
Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing

National Improvement Framework Outcomes

- 1. Empowered and accountable education system supporting lifelong learning.**
- 2. Strong partnerships between schools, services, families, and communities.**
- 5. Skilled teachers and leaders delivering excellent, inclusive education.**

[Education - achieving excellence and equity: National Improvement Framework 2025](#)

How Good is Our School/Quality Improvement Framework ELC

- 2.2 Curriculum
- 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement
- 2.7 Partnerships
- 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion
- 1.3 Leadership of change

UNCRC

- Article 28: (Right to education):
- Article 29 (Goals of education):

Developing in Faith

Developing as a community of faith and learning

Rationale for change based self-evaluation including data and stakeholder views

Our approach to developing and refreshing our curriculum has been identified as practice worth sharing more widely by HMIE in our recent inspection (April 2025). We are in a cycle of curriculum development which will continue over the next 4 years until a full curriculum rationale review will take place again. In session 2023-2024, we developed a Curriculum Rationale in consultation with all stakeholders in order to; identify the needs of pupils in our context, the drivers for our curriculum, the job opportunities of the future, the uniqueness of our setting and the skills our pupils will require in life, learning and work. Collegiate sessions in 2024-2025 focussed on diversifying our curriculum in order to develop a range of meta skills (with a particular focus on Critical Thinking, Collaborating, Adapting, Curiosity and Initiative) through experiential learning which improved the understanding of learners of skills for life, learning and work.

As a learning community, we have identified through self-evaluation activities that this work so far is having a high impact on the positive experiences our pupils have in school, is contributing to the “pull to school” as attendance has continued to remain high and improve, is giving pupils a chance to achieve and succeed in other areas and is unique to our school. We now need to continue to develop real-life, skill based learning opportunities and to begin to create progression pathways for the recently introduced developments.

Expected outcomes for learners

Who? By how much? By when? What?

- Throughout the year, identified group of potentially disengaged learners will see improved engagement in school through skill based learning activities.
- By May 26, identified pupils potentially impacted by measures of poverty in P5-7 will have an increased understanding of how the skills they are learning in school can be applied in life, learning and work.
- By May 26, all pupils will achieve all identified practical skill awards to be determined through collegiate working.

If PEF spend is supporting – how much and what?

£5000 for STEM resources to support development of meta skills.

Tasks to achieve priority	Timescale	RAG	Those involved/responsible – including partners	Resources and staff development
Staff collegiate session to review the skill based learning introduced in session 2024-2025.	August 25		All teachers	
Collegiate time to be allocated to working parties to create pathways for skill based activities introduced in previous sessions.	Ongoing		All teachers	Resources from other schools. CFE
Staff training session of My World of Work-My Profile to keep record of achievements and skills.	By Oct 25		All teachers HT lead	SDS website
Introduction of further skill based learning through engagement with stakeholders.	Ongoing		All staff All pupils Parents	SDS Resources Skills awards
Digital Group to be established and work towards Digital Schools award	Ongoing and award by June 26		Mrs McGlashan Pupil leadership group	Digital schools award resources
World of Work week to take place with a showcase for work across the year at the end of the week for parents.	May 26		Mrs Donnelly- lead All staff All pupils Parents	SDS Resources Skills awards Ongoing work Display boards

Measure of Impact: What we will see and where?

How will we measure this? What does “better” look like? How will we recognise better when we see it?

- Observations by SLT will evidence skills as a key feature in lessons and an increase in children discussing these.

Classification : Official

- World of work celebration to evidence work on skills across the year with knowledge of the children on display.
- Skills awards to be displayed in classes and all children to have the opportunity to achieve all awards.
- Leuven scale to be used to track engagement of targeted group of learners at identified points in the year to measure improvement.

Priority 3: Health and Wellbeing

Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education

National Improvement Framework Outcomes

- 6. Positive relationships, behaviour, and attendance in a respectful culture.**
2. Strong partnerships between schools, services, families, and communities.
4. High achievement and reduced attainment gap for all learners.

[Education - achieving excellence and equity: National Improvement Framework 2025](#)

How Good is Our School/Quality Improvement Framework ELC

- 1.5 Management of resources to promote equity
 2.1 Safeguarding and child protection
 2.4 Personalised support
 2.7 Partnerships
 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

UNCRC

Article 3 (Best interests of the child):
 Article 28: (Right to education):

Developing in Faith

Developing as a community of faith and learning

Rationale for change based self-evaluation including data and stakeholder views

In line with national priorities, Inverclyde have identified various areas schools will target which will contribute to improvements in Health and Wellbeing of pupils:

We have increased pupils involvement in decision making across the school and this was recognised by our inspection team in the session 24/25. We aim to continue and further develop pupil voice within the school in line as a rights respecting school.

While our attendance is above local and national average, it is important to ensure this remains high while we also support pupils who have an attendance below our targets in order for this to increase.

National guidance around Bullying has changed and, in line with this, our local authority improvement plan has identified that we will review school based policies to ensure we are using definitions and guidance set nationally.

Expected outcomes for learners

Who?	By how much?	By when?	What?
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By May 26, almost children will again indicate they are listened to, involved in decision making which affects them and are treated fairly in our school.

By June 26, our attendance rate will increase by 0.1 to 95.1% and the gap between simd1-2 and simd3-10 will narrow to under 1.0

By May 26, almost all pupils will recognise the Respect Me definition of bullying and will indicate that either they have not experience bullying or that it has been dealt with appropriately.

If PEF spend is supporting – how much and what?

Tracking of attendance by DHT (PEF) as per priority 1 to narrow the poverty gap.

Tasks to achieve priority	Timescale	RAG	Those involved/responsible – including partners	Resources and staff development
Create a St Mary's attendance policy which takes local and national policy into account which ensures attendance remains high and the attendance gap continues to narrow.	By June 26		SLT lead All staff and pupils	Inverclyde Attendance Policy
Review St Mary's Anti-Bullying charter in line with the Respect-Me definition and taking into account changes to local policy.	By Dec 26		SLT lead All staff and pupils House captains and vice captains	Inverclyde Anti-Bullying Policy Respect Me resources
Review changes to the Inverclyde Promoting Positive Relationships policy with staff and new guidance from the Scottish Government around behaviour in schools.	By June 26		SLT lead All staff and pupils	Inverclyde Promoting Positive Relationships policy
Continue to develop action plans with at school and cluster level through our Equalities Coordinators and Equalities group.	Ongoing		S. Montgomery Cluster partners Equalities Group Elaine McLoughlin	Cluster plans Equalities coordinator group
Senior leaders to participate in Signs of Safety training with HSCP.	By June 26		SLT HSCP colleagues	

Measure of Impact: What we will see and where?

How will we measure this? What does “better” look like? How will we recognise better when we see it?

- Through questionnaires, we will gain pupil feedback on the support they receive in school in which most pupils will recognise that they are listened to, involved in decision making and treated fairly.
- In questionnaires, pupils will recognise that bullying has been handled appropriately.
- Tracking materials will show support for those pupils who indicate lower scores on wellbeing webs and improvements over time.
- Attendance dashboard will demonstrate improvements across the year and by June. 6 weekly attendance monitoring will track attendance closely.

Remaining PEF

- £5000- To be allocated in consultation with stakeholders for extra-curricular activities in order to reduce the cost of the school day.