Whinhill Primary Validation Report

Validation Report	
School Name: Whinhill Primary	**Name of Validator:** Karen Doherty
Peat Road GREENOCK Greenock PA15 4EQ United Kingdom	**Date of Validation:**
Head Teacher / Principal Name: Elizabeth Ruddy	**Digital Technology Co-ordinator:** Alison Smith & Ilona Dickson
School SEED Number: 1000527	

This report includes validator's comments based on a review of the online submission and the validation visit.

- We are happy to share this report with Education Scotland: Yes
- Would you be willing to be contacted by the programme with the view of contributing an article/blog or other materials to help other schools on their digital journey?: Yes
- We are happy for Education Scotland to contact us to highlight our practice: Yes
- We are happy to share this report with the local authority: Yes

Leadership and Vision *79%*

The vision for development of digital learning and teaching in Whinhill PS is very clear and shared by all personnel. They are working hard to embed digital learning and teaching across the curriculum and the Headteacher praised the team for bringing the vision to life.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
1	The distinctive contribution of digital learning and teaching is integrated into the whole school vision and the School Development Plan.	Whinhill PS have produced a highly detailed School Improvement Plan which includes comprehensive reference to digital technologies and their place in and across the curriculum. The distinctive contribution of digital learning and teaching is integrated into the whole school vision and underpins much of the school development. Everything from visible learning assessment to Gaelic oracy and literacy is reflected. The ICT Coordinators are well supported by the Headteacher and DHT to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence of colleagues through clear and comprehensive documentation. The school's digital strategy document and progression planners are available to all staff and serve as sound scaffolding for consistent progression through the school.
2	The digital learning and teaching strategy is approved by the local authority and is informed by wider research of the regional/national guidance, advice and information.	The local authority has given strong endorsement of the materials produced by the school pertaining to digital learning and teaching though not in a formalised manner. The school has been invited to share its policy and practice beyond the cluster. The documentation fully reflects the national guidance and is informed by research.
3	The digital learning and teaching leader/coordinator has a proactive, operational and evaluative role in supporting learners' digital capability both in school and in their blended learning activities. They also support teachers' pedagogical deployment of digital technology.	The two ICT coordinators work very well in partnership to support teachers in their pedagogical deployment of digital technology and definitely take a proactive, operational and evaluative role in supporting learners' capability both in school and in their blended learning activities. Testimonials from colleagues were effusive and appreciative. Collaborative working was evident. The ICT coordinators had generated progression planners for digital learning and teaching, provided responsive and apposite opportunities for CLPL and developed resource materials to support blended learning.

4	The school frequently and collaboratively reviews its digital learning and teaching strategy by evaluating the potential of emerging technologies and blended learning strategies and best practice scenarios.	Prior to the emergence of Covid19, the school was already well on its journey in developing the application of digital technologies to support learning and teaching. This meant that many staff were highly proficient and that the school was already well resourced. Nevertheless, documentation indicated that there was ongoing review of the digital learning and teaching strategy. Indeed, the school had achieved all of its goals cited in the 2019 action plan and the plans for 2020 were well in hand. The school responded effectively to serve the school community in the early days of lockdown, providing video How To guides and providing informal "helpdesk" opportunities for those families struggling to access the materials provided online. Those, initially, without internet access were given paper based packs but the school is now confident that all families have some form of device and GLOW access at home. The school team regularly and systematically review digital provision to ensure learners are well served.
5	The strategy supports digital learning and teaching CLPL in a range of face-to-face and blended learning contexts including whole-school teaching, peer-to-peer learning, the use of external organisations/personnel and formal training.	The school team has embraced a broad and topical suite of CLPL - previously at cluster joint events and, latterly, virtual or inhouse. CLPL is featured in the SIP, with many staff independently seeking new skills and knowledge pertaining to digital learning and teaching. The ICT coordinators and DHT offer formal instruction and there is also peer to peer learning. Evidence of online learning was amply provided.
6	Outlines the rationale for the use of digital technologies and recognises the distinctive contribution of digital learning and teaching in school and online.	The school digital strategy refers to pedagogical approaches using digital technologies across the curriculum. Staff readily articulated the rationale for the use of digital technologies and clearly recognised the distinctive contribution of digital learning and teaching in school and online.
7	Includes links to both external and school-generated curriculum links.	The school team have collaborated successfully to create progression pathways which take account of the Curriculum for Excellence benchmarks in digital technologies. These detailed pathways act as a welcome scaffold for staff to ensure clarity, consistency and continuity across the stages. Exemplars are readily available to build confidence and knowledge.
8	The digital learning and teaching strategy supports the inclusion of learners with additional support needs and provides guidance on the use of assistive and other technologies for their support particularly when they are working online.	I have upgraded the school's self-evaluation in light of discussions with SLT, learners and class teachers which revealed concerted efforts are made to enable pupils with ASN to access the curriculum effectively. The DHT spoke at length regarding provision made for pupils with dyslexia and was aware of the benefits offered by CALL Scotland. Support staff are also encouraged to engage in PL related to digital learning and teaching to further assist learners with ASN.

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9	Develops teachers', parents'/carers' and learners' understanding of the importance of internet safety and cyber resilience and how they can remain safe online.	Whilst the school digital strategy does take account of the importance of internet safety and cyber resilience, the school team acknowledged that this was an area for development. Their plan is to invite the young Digital Leaders to help draft a new IS and CR plan to complement and develop the existing class visits, assemblies and Internet safety Week programme. Once this draft plan has been agreed and implemented the school hopes to apply for the CRIS award in due course.
10	Provides guidance on the management of digital technologies so that learners have regular access in a safe environment in school and at home.	Resource management is well considered and implemented. Guides for safe working at home are in development but core messaging is understood and implemented by staff. An AUP is in place.
11	Outlines how to make best use of the internet as a resource for learning and teaching in a safe and responsible manner.	Whilst the AUP is in place, the school team recognise that further work is needed to outline, for parents especially, how to make best use of the internet as a resource for learning and teaching in a safe and responsible manner. This work will be in conjunction with that of the Digital Leaders' wider How To provision.
12	Includes an Acceptable Use Policy for working in school and at home. It is implemented throughout the school and shared with parents.	Again, the AUP will be reviewed alongside other strategic and digital guidance documents to ensure it remains fit for purpose. The school team are committed to this ongoing programme of review.

Use of Digital Technology to Deliver the Curriculum *86*%

Staff at Whinhill PS make sound use of digital technology to deliver the curriculum and importantly, they remain open to further developing their knowledge and implementation of such. There was visible excitement and passion as teachers spoke of their digital journey to date and their aspirations going forward. Teachers and learners spoke very positively about the collaborative process of embedding digital technology in learning and teaching.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
1	Digital technologies are a central consideration in all areas of the curriculum and its assessment, at all levels.	Teachers in Whinhill PS described how they are embedding digital literacy across the curriculum as they implement the guidance laid down in the School Improvement Plan. \it was clear that all teachers and learners were using digital technologies extensively when engaging in learning experiences and some teachers were using the Digital Literacy and Computing Science Es and Os to plan for learning. The school team have been on a steady, positive journey in digital technologies for some time and the learning opportunities open to pupils clearly reflect this degree of competence and confidence.

2	Digital technologies are used to enhance and extend learning experiences and to foster independent learning within and beyond the school.	Glow tool usage is widespread across the school by the majority of staff and learners. E-portfolios are in place for transition to secondary school and all pupils are encouraged to write blogs to be included therein. Wider achievement was reflected in the popular Coding club as described by the Digital Leaders. Pupils are highly motivated to be independent learners in and out of school.
3	Digital technologies have a demonstrable impact on learning. Learners and teachers can articulate how learning has been enhanced.	I have upgraded the school's self-evaluation, taking account of the positive narrative in discussions with learners and teachers. All were able to give examples of the demonstrable impact on learning. Teachers were very animated in their descriptions of how useful digital technologies had been for a pupil which significant additional support needs. They spoke of how motivational it was for learners. Additionally, the learners themselves spoke eloquently about the positive impact digital technologies had on mental health during the lockdown period - enabling learners to feel connected to their teachers and their friends. Indeed the school had arranged a "digital playground" so that learners could keep in touch remotely and safely. Learners spoke appreciatively about the learning activities made available to them through digital means e.g. asynchronous lesson content, live video links with teachers. One Digital Leader described the experience of digitally supported learning as "an absolute blast". All of the Digital Leaders were able to cite multiple examples of demonstrable impact through various Microsoft utilities, apps and teacher generated content.
4	Digital technologies are used creatively by learners and teachers to engage with learning, teaching and assessment in school- based and blended learning contexts.	E-portfolios are well established to archive varied multi media content to be shared with secondary staff. Teachers regularly use digital technologies creatively for learning, teaching and assessment. They do so in school based and blended learning contexts. Teachers and learners referred to GLOW, microbits, Forms, vlogs, SWAY, green screen, Chatterpix and more throughout the validation session. Assessment was primarily formative through Sumdog, Education City, and teacher generated Forms with SNSA as the main summative assessment tool. Teachers also make extensive use of video footage for assessment across the curriculum. The learning and teaching experience is clearly highly immersive in nature.
5	Teachers integrate digital technologies into teaching and learning and provide learning experiences that support the transfer of digital skills across the curriculum	Digital Leaders are recruited in P6 and continue in P7, with preparatory training for P5s the norm. Pupils submit narrative to teachers and await selection based upon teacher judgement. The Digital Leaders take their roles and responsibilities very seriously and take great pleasure in supporting younger learners.

6	Assistive Technologies and appropriate software/apps are deployed across all age groups to provide additional and/or differentiated learning for students with additional support needs.	At Whinhill PS teachers were able to offer many examples of appropriate software/apps and more to provide differentiated learning for learners with additional support needs. Immersive Reader was widely used alongside a variety of dyslexia related materials and strategies. It was noted that pupils with EAL found the availability of Immersive Reader very beneficial. One teacher spoke enthusiastically about eye gaze control technology and switch as valuable assistive technologies.

School Culture *84%*

The digital technology culture in Whinhill PS is very positive indeed. It is difficult to accurately capture and reflect the collective enthusiasm displayed during the remote validation session. There is universal acknowledgement of the role and impact of digital technologies in learning and teaching. Pupils and staff alike spoke passionately about what happens in and out of school to support learning and teaching. All described the essential nature of digital technologies as a tool to support their endeavours. If digital technology ran on enthusiasm, then Whinhill PS would be self-sufficient for decades. Crucially, this enthusiasm is reinforced by sound planning, effective implementation and robust evaluation.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
1	There is evidence of a strong digital technology presence throughout the school.	I have upgraded the school's self-evaluation in recognition of evidence submitted and reflecting discussions with personnel and learners. The digital learning and teaching strategy is being successfully implemented across the school. Teachers plans indicated the value placed upon digital technologies as a vehicle to deliver the whole curriculum. Learners gave varied examples of having used digital technologies at home and in school.
2	Teachers and learners demonstrate the motivational capacity of digital technologies	Teachers spoke passionately about the motivational capacity of digital technologies for all learners but especially those with EAL and ASN. Digital Leaders described using digital technologies as fun and more varied than traditional methods. One learner described how he became absorbed in research and discovery in the application of a personal interest, made easier through digital technologies.
3	The school has a website/blog or twitter account that is updated regularly and features learning and achievements.	The school has a very active website and the Twitter account is very popular as a means of sharing information and learning between home and school. Parents made extensive use of it during lockdown and it serves as a very accessible and reciprocal tool in communication. The school also has an app, providing key information to parents and carers. All are used responsibly and securely.

#		Validator's comment
4	The school has positive transition links to ensure there is progression of digital skills for learners.	I have upgraded the school's self-evaluation to take account of progress made since the document was submitted. The school has established digitally enhanced transition mechanisms to address issues created by Covid19 restrictions. Indeed, secondary staff are now digitally supporting transition projects and there are plans to fully incorporate digital skills development through the My WoW programme. Nursery transitions are being reviewed to enable new P1 pupils to fully embrace the learning opportunities on offer at the school. Peer mentoring is already established but is being reviewed to make more of the potential, digitally.
5	Teachers use digital technologies in their own planning and administration.	Teachers were able to speak at length about their use of digital technologies in their planning and administration through Teams, One Note and Forms.
6	The school recognises and celebrates learners' use of digital technologies for their own learning.	The Digital Leaders programme is well established and productive. Assemblies are now virtual and are being redeveloped to further empower individual classes to take a lead, more often. The website, school app and Twitter all offer ample opportunities to share success and wider achievement. there is heavy traffic on these as parents/carers embrace the technology.
7	The school uses digital technology to collaborate with other schools or organisations in local, national or international project work.	This is an area for development as the school has a proud history of showcasing best practice in a range of areas. The school has presented work on eportfolios and Glow blogs at the Scottish Learning Festival and its Twitter account has wide acclaim. Collaboration with other schools and organisations is in development as the local authority is reviewing its policy in light of Covid19. The school expects to use local authority guidance to inform next steps regarding inter school and organisational collaboration.

Professional Development *92%*

The school has a robust system of auditing, evaluating and addressing requirements for professional learning in digital technologies. The teaching staff are well supported and provision is made to increase skills and confidence. There is a great deal of self motivation in evidence, with personnel finding ever more creative ways to support learners and their families. Staff are spending time out of school hours generating new resource material and/or accessing online tutorials to supplement in-school CLPL. Their dedication is to be commended. The narrative around the school's digital learning journey is energising and authentic.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment

1	The digital learning and teaching strategy facilitates professional development in, about and through school-based and online digital technologies.	SLT and teachers described various staff engagements with PL pertaining to digital technologies. Much had been done prior to lockdown since there was a strong action plan already in place. The Headteacher had a clear vision for digital literacy development within the School Improvement Plan and much has been achieved in session 2019. Some aspects of the digital PL were school based, some authority led and some online. All teachers had embraced these opportunities and one teacher praised the ICT coordinators for their support and guidance. She described their digital PL support as " beautifully accessible" and her individual journey in terms of digital technologies was shown to be significant and transformative. Teachers across the school had generally similar levels of proficiency and confidence but the growth in some was admirable. None of this would have been possible were it not for sound planning and implementation of high quality PL. That this improvement and motivation is sustained speaks volumes.
2	The majority of staff have engaged in school-based and other CLPL programmes that are focused on enhancing learning and teaching through the use of digital technologies for in-school and blended learning situations.	Teachers spoke enthusiastically about the variety and nature of digital PL. It had influenced their planning for learning and teaching, as had the digital progression planners provided by the ICT coordinators and the whole school digital strategy and policy. Informal peer to peer sharing of digital literacy was ongoing, complementing the more formal, strategic offerings. The DHT and the ICT coordinators sought out and disseminated key information, skills and resources. Blended learning had been well developed and forms a continuing area for development as the school team recognises the continuing value and potential return of lockdown scenarios.
3	Teachers are encouraged to be innovative and self-directed learners by exploring new strategies for class-based and blended learning pedagogies.	Thanks to the concerted efforts of the ICT Coordinators and the DHT, teachers have been encouraged to embrace self directed CLPL to support digital technologies in learning and teaching. One teacher stated that the school had empowered her and she was now highly motivated to try new strategies and resources to enhance learning and teaching in her classroom and remotely. All teaching staff were successfully utilising digital technologies to deliver across the curriculum. The ICT coordinators enabled colleagues to innovate and there was creativity noted in digital format and multi media productions. One teacher improved so much she generated praise from pupils. Another teacher went to great lengths to produce bespoke Gaelic resources to complement the popular Giglets material.
4	The school utilises the expertise in digital technologies acquired among staff and collaborates with other schools and organisations to inform practice.	Through SLT, staff and pupil discussions it was clear that some teachers were using outside sources to inform their practice. This enriched the whole school approach as cited in the School Improvement Plan. The school has a very collegiate approach to CLPL and there is evident readiness to share expertise and learn from one another. The Headteacher indicated that there was likely to be further development across the cluster and the wider authority in due course. Whinhill PS has historically led delivery of PL across the region and there is a willingness to continue to do so again, specifically with regard to digital technologies.

5	There is an ethos of self and collaborative review, supported by systematic review processes that focus on improvement in teacher pedagogical competence in school-based and online teaching and learning formats.	There was ample evidence in documentation and through discussion of self and collaborative review. Review processes are very robust and the staff present as highly reflective, as individuals and collectively. There were many examples of blended learning and teaching activities cited by pupils and staff. The team were clearly very familiar with the use of Digital Literacy and Computing Science Es and Os. Teachers' planning took significant account of such.
6	Teachers are confident in the safe, secure and appropriate integration of digital technologies in their daily teaching. Learning and teaching is in line with the Internet Safety and Cyber Resilience curriculum.	In discussion, it became apparent that whilst teachers and pupils were aware of how to stay safe online, there is scope for this to further embedded. the school team recognise and acknowledge this. They have been encouraged to bring IS and CR to the forefront of lessons and make reference to such, a daily element of digital learning and teaching. Internet Safety and Cyber Resilience should be core priorities in learning and teaching across the curriculum. Reference is made to such in assemblies but more attention to this in broader, daily lessons is recommended.
7	The school keeps abreast of developments in technological, professional practice and the curriculum in relation to digital technologies Staff are aware of their professional development needs in relation to digital learning and teaching	The DHT described how she, with the ICT Coordinators, were very cognizant of the need to keep abreast of curriculum developments and strategy initiatives in digital technologies. All teachers were aware of their professional development needs in relation to digital learning and teaching. The DHT and ICT Coordinators worked hard to share all necessary information and skills to that staff across the school team were well equipped to support their learners.

Resources and Infrastructure *93%*

The school is well served in terms of resources and infrastructure however improved connectivity to support digitally enhanced Outdoor Learning is recommended.

#	Descriptor	Validator's comment
1	There is widespread access to computers, laptops and/or tablet devices and other physical devices where appropriate in school and outside.	The school is well resourced and stock is well managed. Decisions are taken through measured consideration regarding deployment and implementation. Learners cite regular access to a range of devices, software and apps. Teachers were working collaboratively to make best use of resources and pupils spoke positively about their digital experiences in class and at home.
2	The school deploys digital resources in the most appropriate manner to maximise opportunities for effective learning in school and at home.	The Headteacher and DHT worked closely with the ICT Coordinators to ensure that digital resources were deployed in the most appropriate manner to maximise opportunities for effective learning in a range of contexts.

3	Online environments, including Glow are used responsibly to support a wide range of learning activities within and beyond the school and GDPR issues have been considered.	Staff and learners spoke widely on the use of Glow as a very successful online environment for learning and teaching. Examples of learning activities were provided and/or described. Staff have consulted on GDPR appropriateness.
4	The local authority network is used effectively to create, record, store and share resources and learners' work.	SLT and teachers were able to provide examples of the ways in which a mix of network and cloud facilities are used to record, store and evaluate learning. All staff were making proficient use of available tools.
5	The school has sufficient internet/wifi access throughout.	All classrooms have internet access and/or wifi that learners can access whenever required. There is however scope to improve connectivity with regards to Outdoor Learning. This is an area for development identified by the Headteacher and DHT.
6	The school's software/apps cover a wide range of curricular areas and learning needs.	The school team have been making good use of assorted software and apps , covering a wide range of curricular areas and needs. Personnel do however remain alert and open to new resources and guidance.
7	Teachers frequently use age and ability-appropriate software/apps to support differentiated and targeted learning.	Learners spoke enthusiastically about the means by which their teachers were supporting differentiated and targeted learning. Teachers were notably excited by the opportunities available to them through digital technologies. Teachers described being able to engage pupils digitally who were more reluctant to learn in traditional ways or indeed for whom traditional means might be barriers in themselves.
8	The school is fully compliant with all software/app licencing requirements and are GDPR compliant	The school is fully compliant with all software/app licencing requirements and are GDPR conmpliant.

General Recommendations:

My remote validation session with personnel and young Digital Leaders in Whinhill PS was delightful. Despite suffering authority wide internet outage at the time of engagement, the school ICT Coordinators worked successfully to overcome their validation challenges. Their creative and resourceful response to this unexpected issue was further strengthened by their resolve to continue rather than reschedule the session. This perseverance was echoed in responses from learners who spoke of their school's digital journey. They described challenges to accessibility they had overcome with excellent support from their teachers.

Teaching staff radiated enthusiasm for the opportunities offered by digital learning and teaching. The passion with which one teacher described her personal digital journey was a powerful testament to her receptive response to support from peers and others colleagues. Another teacher described the attention to detail he paid in creating bespoke Gaelic resources with each video lesson becoming ever more complex as his skills improved. Although very modest in his narrative, such was the positive response from parents and pupils, he continues to adapt and hone his resources to meet the needs of his learners. The efforts of the whole school team have been recognised and appreciated. The wider school community are requesting that the suite of materials be expanded to include other curricular areas and purpose e.g. transition. This bank of resources is

continuing to grow and some videos are designed to meet emotional needs as well as educational ones. One example of this was neatly summarised by a pupil who described fun, friendly, teacher generated material as being very important for mental health. She stated that the online togetherness made all the difference. During the remote validation, that togetherness was evident to this visitor too. The digital journey for Whinhill PS to date has been steady, strong and successful; with their clear plan in place this is sure to continue.

It is my recommendation that the school has achieved the Digital Schools Award.
Moreover, I recommend that the school be invited to become a mentor school as there is definite scope to further develop and share their digital skills and knowledge with others.

Signed

Karen Doherty
External validator