



Extended Learning and Achievement Visit Report Auchtergaven Primary School 6 and 7 May 2019



BACKGROUND

To support the school in the process of self-evaluation, a team of officers from across Education and Children's Services (ECS) visited Auchtergaven Primary School on 6 and 7 May 2019. The themes for the review were Achievement, Learning and Leadership. These themes were subject to scrutiny through core Quality Indicators from *How good is our school?* (4th Edition).

At the time of the visit the school had a pupil roll of 118 organised in 5 classes. The school provides early learning and childcare for 44 children within the Nursery. The school is led by the headteacher who is supported by a principal teacher.

The school has an attendance level of 96% which is above the Perth and Kinross Council (PKC) and national average.

Information was gathered from class visits, scrutiny of data and evidence of children's learning, discussions with children, parents/carers and staff, and displays of children's work around the school.

ACHIEVEMENT

Attainment information at June 2018 indicates that the majority of children at primary one achieved early level in listening and talking, writing and numeracy and most achieved in reading. In primary four, almost all pupils achieved in line with national expectations at first level in reading and listening and talking with most achieving in writing and the majority achieving in maths. In Primary 7, most children achieved in line with national expectations at second level in reading, writing, listening and talking and maths.

Data at June 2018 identified that attainment over time in P1, P4 and P7 has been variable and over a three year period has decreased. Data held by the school indicates that by the end of June 2019 progress will continue to remain variable.

The Headteacher meets three times per year with teaching staff to discuss pupil progress and attainment and is making use of the Perth and Kinross tracking system to support these discussions. Staff use a range of assessment information to support their professional judgements. The information from assessments and tracking discussions should be used more widely across the school to support individual pupil and whole school planning and impact positively on attainment and achievement.

The staff are aware of children's needs in Auchtergaven and are benefiting from staff development opportunities to gain an increased understanding of these. Senior leaders have identified the need to review and audit additional support needs in

order to develop a strategic approach to meeting the needs of all learners. The school is in receipt of additional funding through the Pupil Equity Fund and work is being undertaken to support pupils with aspects of health and wellbeing including the use of self-regulation. This work is ongoing and should be closely monitored and evaluated whilst continuing to remain a focus of improvement for the school in session 2019 – 20.

Pupils in Auchtergaven are given a range of opportunities to achieve within and outwith the school. Pupils access sporting activities such as football, rugby and netball and some have been part of a walking group and Bikeability activities. A group of pupils have had the opportunity to train as Junior Community Wardens and have participated in quizzes as part of this experience. The school also organises trips out of school related to pupil learning such as the National Museum of Scotland. Pupils spoke positively about a trip to the local Stewart Towers Farm. Parents in the nursery told us that they like the new digital approach to sharing children's learning and achievements and welcome the informal updates at the end of each nursery session.

In the Nursery, children are given a range of opportunities to learn across the curriculum through visits within the local community to the park, church centre and shops.

Pupils with identified additional support needs have planning in place. Staff are familiar with the principles of getting it right for every child and engage with a range of partners when planning for pupils. There is recognition of a need to ensure a consistency and high quality of planning with agreed outcomes focussed on addressing barriers to learning.

As identified last session, there has been a planned focus on improving relationships across the school including the use of restorative approaches and self-regulation. The pupils we talked to told us that the behaviour of a few pupils was having an impact on their school work and emotional wellbeing. They told us that the staff in the school listen to them but that they do not feel some aspects of behaviour are dealt with effectively. Parents praised the hard work and commitment of all staff in school but told us that they feel their children's school experience is being adversely affected by the behaviour of some pupils. The hard working staff demonstrate a commitment to meeting the needs of all the pupils in Auchtergaven and they approach this as a team, supporting each other in this work. The school must now work with education services colleagues to ensure that appropriate and effective actions are in place and these are regularly monitored and reviewed.

LEARNING

The headteacher and staff are committed to creating a nurturing and supportive environment and this should continue to be a focus for the school. They know the children well and children benefit from positive relationships with teaching and support staff within their classrooms. Over the last two sessions, work has been undertaken to review the school vision, values and aims along with the curriculum rationale. There has also been a school focus on developing approaches to teaching

writing. The school should now undertake a review of the curriculum offer within Auchtergaven to ensure that there is appropriate planning, progression and challenge in pupil learning. This will also give an opportunity to review and consider the use of the school environment to support pupil learning and engagement.

In the Nursery, through using the language of the wellbeing indicators in ongoing conversation, children are beginning to develop an awareness and some understanding of them. The wellbeing indicators have also been introduced to children through a visible wheel in the nursery. Children are praised for efforts within each indicator and are invited to post their photograph on the relevant area on the wheel. This is beginning to help children to recognise achievements in learning. This information is then communicated to parents through learning journals.

In classes across the school most children are engaged and motivated in their learning. In most lessons observed, the intended learning was shared with children, and they understood how they could be successful in their learning activities. In the best examples observed, learning was differentiated appropriately and the feedback given to children supported their understanding of their progress. In a few observations formative assessment strategies were used to involve the children further in understanding their strengths and next steps in their learning. The quality and presentation of written work was of a high standard in a few classes and supported teacher judgements of pupil progress. This high standard now needs to be consistent across all classes in the school.

Parents and pupils spoke enthusiastically and positively about a recent successful learning context which resulted in children performing their 'Tattybogle' show. Learning had been planned and delivered in an interdisciplinary way with parents involved within the classroom supporting the production. Staff and parents would welcome more opportunities to work in this way and the school plans to take this forward next session.

The school would benefit from work which develops consistent and effective approaches to learning and teaching. This work should lead to the creation of a learning and teaching policy, which outlines expectations of all and enables staff to share practice within Auchtergaven and across other schools.

LEADERSHIP

The headteacher, principal teacher and staff are committed to the school and have worked with the school community to develop the vision for the school. Parents, staff and pupils spoke positively about the headteacher and the school staff.

Relationships and behaviour should continue to be the focus of the work of the headteacher and the school in taking forward school priorities. The headteacher and all staff need to work together to agree approaches to managing behaviour. There is work to be done to develop an ethos of respect across the school set within standards and expectations. This should be done in collaboration with parents and pupils.

The structured calendar of self-evaluation and quality assurance is in place. The Headteacher should now ensure it is implemented and has a positive impact on school improvement. This should be led by the headteacher and principal teacher and involve all staff, pupils and parents across the nursery and school.

Conclusion

The whole staff team in Auchtergaven Primary are committed to continuous improvement. The headteacher and principal teacher along with all staff work hard to build positive relationships. They understand and are committed to their key priorities for improvement.

We identified the following strengths of the school:

Strengths

- The supportive and hard-working staff team who demonstrate a real commitment to the school and all the pupils.
- Pupils who are open, friendly and ready to participate more fully in the life and work of the school.
- The example of the collaborative working with parents as partners in the early years through the 'Tattybogle' project.

We discussed with the headteacher and the principal teacher how they might continue to improve the school in light of their own self-evaluation and feedback from the Extended Learning and Achievement Visit team. The following areas for improvement were agreed:

Next steps

The headteacher should lead the school in taking forward the identified actions:

- plan and implement a structured approach to self-evaluation, quality assurance and improvement planning involving all members of the nursery and school community from August 2019
- work with the whole school community to develop consistent, agreed approaches to successfully manage relationships and behaviour across the school from May 2019
- develop and implement agreed standards and approaches to delivering high quality learning, teaching and assessment from August 2019
- develop the leadership of all staff in taking forward collegiate approaches to sharing practice and standards within school and across other schools from August 2019
- develop the curriculum offer in Auchtergaven to ensure children experience relevant learning that takes into account the four contexts for learning, skills for life learning and work and opportunities for wider achievement from August 2019

ECS officers will work closely with the school through an action plan for improvement during session 2019 – 2020. Officers will closely monitor progress against this action plan and will return within a year to evaluate the school's progress towards taking forward the recommendations for improvement.

[HMI Report](#)

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