



Barr Primary School and Early Years Centre



Standards and Quality Report June 2023



The purpose of this report is to provide an answer to the question - 'How good was our school in 2022-2023?' The following pages will tell you about the quality of education in the school and Early Years Centre (EYC) and how the children benefit from coming here.

Vision

Our School Community is a place where everyone is encouraged to grow and learn in an inclusive and nurturing environment. Pupils are motivated and challenged to be the very best they can be.

Values

Kindness Respect Honesty Confidence Achievement

Aims

- To create a welcoming atmosphere with a positive ethos where there is a safe, relaxed and secure teaching/learning environment.
- To involve and encourage parents, carers, partner agencies and the wider community to play an active role in supporting learning and celebrating success both at school and at home.
- To ensure that school staff work within a professional environment where they can take advantage of opportunities for further training and development in order to enhance learning and teaching, ensuring that we offer the highest quality learning experiences for our pupils.
- To promote the well-being of all children through opportunities to develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually, developing a positive attitude and high self-esteem.
- To provide the highest quality of learning and teaching by providing experiences that enable children to enjoy their education, through a variety of teaching approaches and learning styles.

Context of the School/Early Years Centre

Barr Primary School and Early Years Centre is a rural, non-denominational school serving the village of Barr and surrounding district. School capacity is 61 and this session the roll is 21 pupils with 4 EY pupils: all pupils live in SIMD decile 4, 29% of pupils are entitled to a free school meal (local Authority average is 21%), 52% of pupils are on staged intervention level 1b or above, and current average attendance is 90.1% (local Authority average is 92%) - with no exclusions.



There are 2 classes: P1-3, P4-7 plus an Early Years Centre, with staff working closely together to support and challenge pupils. Pupils also benefit from weekly additional music tuition from a percussion teacher and being supported by the Active Schools Co-ordinator. Children in the EYC access 1140 hours. We do not receive any additional cluster pupil support.

Our staff team consists of Head Teacher, shared with Barrhill PS and EYC; Principal Teacher (0.5); 1.9 Class Teachers; 2 fulltime Early Years Practitioners; 1 school assistant; 1 clerical assistant; 1 janitor and 1 catering assistant. The Head Teacher has been in post since the 23rd of January 2017 and was awarded The Standard for Headship in March 2018. The Principal Teacher is fully class committed. All staff have a leadership role and develop areas such as language and communication, outdoor learning, play pedagogy.

The school offers educational facilities for boys and girls between the ages of 3 and 12 years and is non-denominational.

The school enjoys links with our partner school, Barrhill; cluster primaries and feeder Secondary, Girvan Academy and organise projects throughout the year e.g. transition projects, Health Week, Developing the Young Workforce event, fundraisers. The school is well supported by the Parent Council who work hard to secure funding for school activities and the annual residential for P6-7.

During another tricky year, with a high level of pupil and staff absence, the improvement plan focussed on the health and wellbeing of our learners and staff team, with a clear emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Attainment data was gathered by the school using the 4 stages of progress, National Standardised Assessments and GL Assessments. As this is a small school, general statements about progress have been used.

Attainment in Health and Wellbeing

Most children are making good progress towards achieving expected CfE levels in Health and Well Being, with a few children working beyond expected levels. Most children who require additional support for their learning in Health and Well Being are making good progress towards their individual targets.

Attainment in Literacy and English

Across the whole school, the majority of children are currently making good progress towards achieving expected CfE levels in Literacy and English, with a minority working beyond expected levels. The minority of children who require additional support for their learning in literacy are making good progress towards their own targets.

Attainment in Numeracy and Mathematics

Most children are making good progress towards achieving expected CfE levels in Numeracy and Mathematics, with a minority of children working beyond expected levels. Almost all children who require additional support for their learning in Numeracy are making good progress towards their individual targets.



Attainment in the EYC

All children achieved 8 or more of the Developmental Milestones in Maths and Numeracy; the majority of them achieved in Health and Wellbeing and the minority in Communication and Language.

The school adopted a new approach to teaching and assessing writing last year and the impact of this is beginning to be seen across the school. The new reading scheme and methodology is also beginning to show success.

Progress over time is closely monitored and tracked using in school systems. Support is allocated flexibly to support pupil need. In all cases pupils who have not achieved expected levels are supported by an action plan and are in our system of staged intervention.

Please see appendix 1 for detailed statistics and trend data.

What key outcomes has the school achieved?

Progress towards our improvement priorities continued throughout this very difficult year. Self-evaluation processes allowed us to gather reduced evidence through:

- A very positive HMI visit
- School monitoring programme
- Class/EYC observations
- Staff feedback information
- Staged intervention paperwork
- Planning and assessment information
- Staff training records
- Summative and formative assessment results
- Focus group feedback
- Attendance monitoring
- Work scrutiny
- Minutes of staff meetings
- Data analysis

The School Improvement Plan has impacted positively on the school and EYC with achievements and attainment in all curricular areas. At close of school/EYC in June:

- Across the school, all pupils increased their reading and spelling ages and most their numeracy age.
- Each pupil has been involved in leading aspects of the school improvement plan through leadership roles and at Assemblies.
- Our vision and values continue to underpin school policies.
- The positive behaviour policy has allowed every pupil to achieve individual success and gain house points.
- High quality staff development continued, impacting on each child and across the staff team.



Pupil Equity Funding provided one morning of cover to allow Mrs McBirnie out of class. This enabled our highly trained Mental Health First Aider to support and track identified pupils; provide exciting activities for staff to use with their children; deliver CBA sessions; access further training; support whole school events and motivate staff through wellbeing challenges.

Summary of progress

School Priority 1: Improvement in attainment for all, particularly in literacy and numeracy.	
NIF Priority: Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children.	Links to HGIOS 4/HGIOELC: 1.2, 2.2, 2.5, 3.2, 3.3
Progress and impact <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a shared understanding of the place of play pedagogy in our curriculum, with staff confidence in implementing this growing within the upper stages. Environments have been co-created with the children to ensure children's needs and interests are valued and accounted for.• A range of Talk for Writing strategies and new literacy resources are being used to develop literacy skills, with a reported impact on enjoyment and confidence of pupils and an increase in spelling attainment.• The Numeracy Working Party led a trial of 'Big Maths', to great success, with an increase in retention and motivation shown.• Pre-school children have regular access to the junior class to play and learn, this has facilitated a smoother transition process.• There have been improvements in Early Years' vocabulary through focussed communication work, resulting in more confident children.• There is regular use of the wider environment to enhance pupils' learning, resulting in more imaginative play.• PEEP/Bookbug sessions were held with high parental attendance.• The daily focus on handwriting skills is beginning to show improvements across the school.• Interventions continue to support pupils to achieve success with their targets. Ongoing training facilitates this.• The literacy environmental checklist was used as a tool to extend print within the EYC and highlight gaps.• Use of the new attainment tracker is bringing together relevant data and allowing a more cohesive method of tracking progress.• Staff have engaged in moderation activities, particularly in literacy, to agree expectations and confirm professional judgements.	



- Planning has moved to an online process to ensure a consistent and progressive approach to skill development. Play-based learning opportunities are clearly identified within planning documents with floorbooks being used in the junior class for planning and tracking.
- Staff have engaged in professional development around high-quality learning and teaching, designing posters which detail what the children should expect from staff. This ensures consistency across the school and EYC.
- Pupils learn in a broad range of contexts, which are relevant, meaningful and matched to their interests.
- Pedagogical research and developments have been facilitated through high quality PL opportunities both in house and out. All Early Years Practitioners and Teachers have had four full days out of school and planned collegiate time to focus on a curricular area of their choice. The subsequent learning was then cascaded across the two school teams to ensure equity and best outcomes for pupils.

Next steps

- Embed Big Maths across the school and offer parental workshops.
- Link with speech and language colleagues to extend work on communication.
- Increase use of the outdoors.
- Explore digital technologies through play and learning.
- Share effective practice through timetabled peer visits and stage meetings.
- Participate in the South Ayrshire Reads initiative.
- Introduce Giglets to enhance literacy learning.



School Priority 2: Improvement in children's and young people's health and wellbeing.

NIF Priority:

Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing.

Links to HGIOS 4/HGIOELC:

1.2, 2.1, 2.7, 3.1

Progress and impact

- Soft-starts are well established with pupils benefitting from the daily wellbeing check-ins.
- Scrutiny of the Glasgow Motivation and Wellbeing Profile targets those most in need with boost groups and a weekly input on resilience and self-esteem.
- A range of events and family learning opportunities were offered this year with all parents attending most of the events. The children note this as one of their highlights.
- The daily 15-minute physical activity is enjoyed by staff and pupils and leads to increased focus and concentration. All children have daily access to fresh air and exercise in many forms.
- Pupils have attended a few sporting events this session, enjoying the experience and mixing with other children across the cluster and further afield.
- Planning to develop the outdoor areas continues, with pupils working with the community group this year to improve the local walking trail.
- EYC children and parents set their Care Plan next steps with their key-worker, which are then documented on their Learning Journal. Targets are regularly discussed and evaluated.
- The PEEP/Bookbug programme was delivered within the EYC with a high level of engagement and success.
- Building on the whole school Health and Wellbeing for All document, staff prioritise health and wellbeing throughout the year.
- Pupils and staff have access to a highly trained Mental Health First Aider who has undergone a wealth of additional training in e.g. cognitive behaviour approaches, Place2Be, happiness and positivity. This session she continues to deliver 1:1/group sessions based on CBA approaches.
- Growth mind-set, happiness and positivity is an integral part of school/EYC life to help alleviate anxieties and worries with calming resources/quiet areas available in all learning areas. This year, with help from additional funding, we have developed a small cupboard into a sensory area. Children have used this as both a quiet space and an individual learning area.
- P4-7 completed the Playground Leaders programme with the Active Schools Coordinator, with the 6s and 7s then achieving their Junior Coaching award.
- Pupil voice is evident through leadership opportunities, leading learning and in committee work.
- Children's rights are celebrated with consultation high, leading to school improvement.
- Parents have access to their child's Learning Journal and are encouraged to comment and upload home achievements.



Next steps

- Increase the range of after school/lunchtime clubs to encourage and increase the involvement of more children e.g. homework club, science.
- Increase children's understanding of diversity and inclusion, therefore promoting tolerance and acceptance of others.
- Further develop the outdoor area, particularly in relation to food production.

School Priority 3: Sustainability and Creativity

NIF Priority:

Improvement in employability skills and sustained positive school leaver destinations for all young people.

Links to HGIOS 4/HGIOELC:

1.2, 1.3, 2.2, 2.3, 3.3

Progress and Impact

- Partnership links this year with, for example, Barr SCIO, Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere have allowed the pupils to be creative and develop their understanding of the local area.
- An Eco Schools' committee was established and is in the process of putting together a plan to move forward. All children participated in a village litter pick.
- The development of children's rights and age and stage appropriate pupil voice continues to be a positive aspect of our vision and ethos, with each pupil contributing through leadership roles, committee work and school improvement.
- The P7 School Captain and pupil group have been involved in driving changes, developing leadership skills in the process.
- Training on and the use of Floorbooks in the junior class, detailing Possible Lines of Development is increasing pupil voice.
- Pupils set termly targets and participate in learning conversations. This is beginning to be evidenced in Learning Journals, by both pupils and staff.
- Loose parts are an integral part of the playground and junior class. The senior classroom layout has changed to make more room for play, which will be developed further next session.
- All pupils have performed to an audience: class assemblies, Scottish Afternoon, Nativity, School Show, Music Showcase, developing creativity skills in the process.
- The reinstating of interhouse challenges throughout the year has led to a focus on teamwork and problem-solving.



Next Steps

- Further develop business and community links within the local area.
- Staff training in outdoor learning to further enhance teaching and learning in the outdoors.
- Ensure children are aware of their role and purpose in taking forward improvements and help them to recognise the important skills they are developing through these activities.
- Have a focus on World of Work/Masterclass type activities in order to Develop the Young Workforce.

Cluster Priority: Science Framework

NIF Priority:

Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children.

Links to HGIOS 4 / HGIOELC:

1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3.2

Progress and impact

- We started the session with a very successful Science Week. There were a variety of different themed experiences offered at each of the stages. The EY focused on outdoor and nature science experiences, the juniors spent time learning about space and the seniors took part in a range of different experiences including making slime. The children really enjoyed this week and within the EY the parents commented positively on their STEM walk.
- All teaching staff have worked in trios with other members of the cluster to moderate science experiences using the TAPs resource. This has been a very positive experience, allowing staff to observe good practice within different settings across the cluster and gain feedback on their own practice.
- Cluster trios were set for a range of stages allowing staff to see where the pupils will go or have been, to better enhance progression of science through the stages.
- Science funding has been applied for through Edina Trust to help develop play in the upper primary through STEM based learning.
- Early Years Practitioners have taken part in moderation activities within the cluster, sharing good practice. This has increased the amount of science learning taking place within the settings. Science is much more explicit within the settings.
- Extra training by our Science Mentor has been carried out with Early Years during the in-service day in October. This in-service focused on training from the National



STEM CLPL Resource and aimed to develop the language of STEM and the use of questioning within STEM to boost creativity and curiosity. This was very well received from staff with a lot of positive feedback given.

- The new programme of science has been used successfully to plan and track science experiences over the course of the year. Science experiences take place weekly, either as standalone or through IDL based on our rotation of outcomes.
- TAPS activities are being used to assess children's progress in science, consistently.
- The new planning document is helping to cut workload and provide consistent experiences within science. Science is covered at least once a week and the school overview helps to ensure coverage of all aspects.
- Staff are much more confident planning assessment through use of the TAPS resource.
- Staff have developed confidence and gained new ideas in teaching science through observations of colleagues from different schools. Children responded positively to visitors to their class and this has increased engagement.
- Areas of development have been highlighted through the TAPS pyramid assessment.

Next Steps

- Continued use of the TAPS resource to self-evaluate and assess science.
- Continued increase in teacher confidence through more CLPL experiences and evaluation of impact.
- Move planning programme into a digital format.
- Link play-based learning to different science topics within the school's science programme.
- Use STEM activities to help increase play opportunities within the senior class.

Evaluation Summary

1.3 Leadership of change

The aspirational vision, values and aims are clear within the school and EYC and there is a strong commitment from the whole team to secure positive outcomes for children. Our values are reinforced and celebrated through our ethos, Assemblies, class charters and Values awards. The children understand them extremely well and use them in conjunction with the United Nations Rights of the Child.

Through the well-planned calendar of self-evaluation, staff meetings and stakeholder consultation, we have a clear vision of where we want to be and what we need to do to get there. The school is consultative and data rich and this helps inform our next steps. Staff are encouraged and empowered to lead innovative change within the school and EYC and collegiate working across the two schools is the norm.



Staff within the school are fully committed to improvement and have high expectations of all learners. Clear remits and expectations across the two schools have led to leadership opportunities at all levels and all staff have engaged in further training and development - locally and for some nationally, which is a key driver for change. Self-evaluation is at the heart of our development priorities. Professional staff use their Leadership of Learning time to develop pedagogy, support each other and improve the quality of learning and teaching.

Overall, we show very good leadership of change across the school and EYC.

2.3 Learning and teaching

The ethos we champion is extremely positive and staff focus on getting it right for every child. Almost all children demonstrate confidence and engagement during learning activities. Staff know the children very well and are attuned to their needs. Through observations and regular professional dialogue, it is clear to see that the experiences offered are enjoyable and well matched to pupils' needs. Staff empower children to make decisions about their own learning and our children are involved in the wider life of the school e.g. committees.

Teachers adopt a wide range of strategies to meet the varied needs of their pupils-providing high quality, individualised learning. Staff are keen to improve and work collegiately with partners in a positive way. The school environment, inside and outside, is used effectively by all the staff and pupils. We use a variety of approaches to allow our learners to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Children experience a broad and balanced curriculum. Our curriculum and planning processes are designed to ensure all our children receive a high-quality experience across all curricular areas through breadth, depth and application of learning. Staff provide appropriate encouragement and scaffolding to enable children to learn successfully through their play.

Most pupils use peer/self-assessment to effectively plan next steps in their learning and can talk about what they have been learning. They are involved in evaluating and setting their learning targets termly. Teachers have a very good understanding of the moderation cycle and use this well, helping to give them an improved understanding of national standards. Online Learning Journals are used to track learning journeys, with many pupils and parents contributing to the process.

Staff meet termly with the HT to predict, track and improve learner outcomes. Learners are involved in aspects of planning learning; digital learning is progressive and taught within relevant contexts.

Overall, the quality of learning, teaching and assessment across the school and EYC is very good.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion

Staff have a shared understanding of wellbeing and work together to promote our values and high expectations, ensuring all children feel secure and valued. Relationships across the school community are extremely positive and each child is treated as an individual.



All pupils receive 2 hours of quality PE each week, with specialist knowledge and skills shared across the school. We have increased staff and pupils' knowledge of children's rights through RRS work in class and at Assemblies. Children have a very good understanding of the wellbeing indicators and how they link to our values. Staff have received input on current legislation and particular policies relating to wellbeing.

At Barr, all staff are committed to improving the health and wellbeing of our pupils. Our positive relationships with pupils and their families lead to excellent support and positive outcomes. Staff have received guidance and training on staged intervention and wellbeing processes and pupils and parents are fully involved in evaluating and setting targets. The teachers and our school assistant provide high quality support to pupils experiencing difficulties in literacy, numeracy and self-regulation. Pupils who require additional support for their learning or with emotional and behavioural needs are closely monitored through the staged intervention process, with appropriate strategies and supports in place.

Staged intervention procedures lead to improved outcomes, with individual action plans in place, where appropriate. Where children experience barriers to their learning, interventions are put in place. Pupil Equity Funding is effectively deployed to target the needs of identified learners. 1:1 literacy and numeracy interventions are improving outcomes for identified learners.

Staff identify pupil needs in a timely manner and early intervention strategies are used to target support needs. Appropriate links are made with other professional partners including: educational psychologist, school nurse, speech and language therapist.

Overall, the school and EYC is very good at ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion needs are met.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

Attainment, evidenced through formal measures, has been positive this year and every child has made good progress from the start of the school session. This is evidenced through ongoing assessments, baseline/value added assessments, observations, feedback and confident teacher judgements. Support is in place for pupils who are not making expected progress. More able learners are being challenged in specific areas.

Due to our small numbers, we track individual pupil results over time rather than cohorts of pupils to get a more accurate assessment. Through rigorous tracking procedures in place, it is clear that most pupils are making progress from prior levels of attainment. Attainment data is being used to identify progress and next steps.

Pupils' wider achievement is valued and celebrated and can be noted in their growing pupil profiles.

We have effective systems in place to track all pupils with a particular focus on those identified as being most vulnerable. At tracking meetings this information helps inform decisions and allocation of resources.



Overall, the school is good and the EYC is very good at raising attainment and achievement.

What are the key priorities for improvement in 2023-2024?

From the National Improvement Framework, the key priorities for Barr PS and EYC for session 2023-2024 are:

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children.
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing.
- Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people.

What is the capacity for improvement?

The school/EYC is in a very good position with definite capacity to make further improvements and we have a clear strategic vision for moving forward. The over-riding focus will continue to be on closing the gap and ensuring our young people are safe, happy and supported in their wellbeing.

There is an effective and supportive monitoring process in place with a self-evaluation calendar ensuring regular opportunities to evaluate learning and teaching. Leadership of change is well managed and at an appropriate but challenging pace. The staff are enthusiastic and motivated and through self-evaluation, collegiate working, moderation opportunities and ensuring high expectations, our pupils will continue to receive an excellent education and 'be the very best they can be!'



Appendix 1 - Attainment data (due to our small numbers, data isn't broken down into stages)

Attendance (%)

2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
95.6	97.3	96.2	87.1	90.1

% Secure or Better at the Appropriate Stage (P1, 4 and 7): Literacy

2017/2018			2018/2019			2020/2021			2021/2022			2022/2023		
Reading	Writing	Listening and Talking	Reading	Writing	Listening and Talking	Reading	Writing	Listening and Talking	Reading	Writing	Listening and Talking	Reading	Writing	Listening and Talking
75	58	75	87	55	93	25	38	38	60	60	40	14	0	14

% Secure or Better at the Appropriate Stage (P1, 4 and 7): Overall Maths

2017/2018	2018/2019	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
92	92	63	90	29