

# STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2023-2024



## Doofoot Primary School and Early Years Centre



## Introduction

This report has been written in response to the question, 'How good was our school and early years centre in 2023-2024?' The report will explain to you the quality of education at Doonfoot Primary School and Early Years Centre and how the children benefit from learning here.

## Context

Doonfoot Primary School and Early Years Centre is a non-denominational school which serves the area of Doonfoot in Ayr. It is situated in a prime location, close to Greenan Beach and Castle, near the River Doon and is within walking distance of the local parks, Belleisle and Rozelle. The catchment area for Doonfoot Primary is expanding, due to several phases of new housing developments being added to the area. This is bringing a wealth of new families to the area and is creating a more economically diverse context for the school. We have welcomed several new pupils and their families to the school throughout the session and will continue to welcome more over the course of next session.

The school consists of 14 mainstream classes, a 52 week Early Years Centre and 5 communication base classes for children whose primary barrier to learning is Autism. This session, we welcomed an additional 6 pupils to our communication base, taking our roll to 30 children. The school is undergoing several phases of work to upgrade the building, which will continue over the next few years. We are in the process of a carpark upgrade which will improve the safety of our school community. We have had a new ICT suite built, two additional classrooms added on and sensory equipment fitted to one of our original rooms. Plans to improve the EYC and communication base playgrounds are also planned for next session.

The school works closely with other primary schools in the cluster and there are positive and enhanced transitions in place with the local secondary schools. We have strong community links with Burns Cottage, Dolphin House, Alloway Church and Alloway Rotary Club. The school has engaged in a range of outdoor learning opportunities to benefit the local community, including being involved in the Alloway Tunnel regeneration project and helping with the community sensory garden.

The present roll of the school is 370, including 30 pupils within the communication base classes. There are an additional 50 pupils in the Early Years Centre. 17% of our pupils are registered for free school meals and clothing grant entitlement. A small proportion of our school community live within deciles 1 and 2, with the rest of the children spread across deciles 3-10. The school uses free school meal and clothing grant entitlement as a measure of where pupil equity fund is required. Due to the cost of living crisis, we have worked closely with the Pupil Council and Parent Council to reduce the cost of the school day. This has included funding for trips, providing free school uniform and offering free family events.

We have several pupils within our mainstream who have a diagnosis or are undergoing assessment for ADHD and/or Autism. We have approximately 20% of children within the school identified as dyslexic learners and we have strong supports in place for all children. We have a few children who are exceeding national expectations in literacy and numeracy. We continue to have a healthy number of placing requests into the school.

Our average attendance this year is sitting at 93% which is a 1% improvement on last session. We continue to follow South Ayrshire's Policy on maximising attendance and next session have put further measures in place to improve attendance and reduce late coming. There have been no pupil exclusions this session and positive relationships exist across the school community.

### Teaching staff

- 1 Head Teacher
- 2 Depute Head Teachers (School and Communication Base)
- 2 Principal Teachers (one of these is an acting PT- PEF funded management time)
- 26 full and part time class teachers across the school and communication base classes.

### Early Years Centre staff

- 1 Depute Centre Manager
- 1 Senior Early Years Practitioner
- 8 Early Years Practitioners (Full and Part Time)

### The school has an allocation of the following:

- 0.6 Pupil Support
- Brass instructor
- Violin instructor

### Other School staff

- 8 school assistants (Full and part time)
- 2.4 FTE clerical assistants
- 1.5 FTE janitors
- 3 cleaners and 5 catering staff

### **Parent Council**

We have the dedicated support of our pro-active Parent Council. They have been an invaluable support to the school this session, encouraging and supporting projects which help towards funding school trips and additional resources. They have enabled children to lead projects which have helped to reduce the cost of the school day. They held family fun nights, hosted a Christmas and Summer Fayre, held a successful P1 and P6 buddy breakfast and provided school ties to Primary 7 Leavers. They gifted money to the school to purchase a polytunnel to further support outdoor learning as part of our school improvement plan. There is strong parental support throughout the school.

### **Pupil Equity Funding (PEF)**

We continued to fund the management time of the Acting Principal Teacher to allow her to continue to gather and analyse the data trends and oversee the impact of all literacy, numeracy and health and well-being interventions. This funding allows her remit to include overseeing Pupil Support for the school and ensuring equity for all learners affected by the poverty related attainment gap. We have built capacity for the Pupil Support Teacher to take forward next year's plans. Additional school assistant hours were funded to aid the delivery of HWB, literacy and numeracy interventions that we have seen the most impact with over the past few years. This additional time has also enabled pupils to access our Hub and the new sensory room. We created a walking bus to improve attendance at school and will continue to build on this work next session. Full details of this can be found within the PEF plan.

### **Communication Base**

Our communication base welcomes 30 pupils across five classrooms. This provision is for children of primary school age who have been assessed as experiencing communication difficulties related to the Autistic Spectrum. The Communication Support Base is an integral part of the school. Children who attend, follow individual milestones and/or Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes as appropriate to their level. The Communication Base directly addresses the communication needs of

pupils and seeks to include the pupils into the mainstream primary classes as fully as possible, where appropriate to the needs of each individual. Awareness raising is key within Doonfoot Primary and our mainstream pupils' welcome pupils from the communication base into their classes to participate in shared activities.

The staff in the Communication Support Base employ a range of teaching techniques and learning resources according to the specific needs of each pupil. Individualised targets are set across the year in consultation with school staff and parents. Targets are set to focus on Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing. Many of the targets are set around the principles of Nurture and tackling 'barriers to learning' as a result of the pupils' additional support needs. The classroom is structured so pupils understand where to be, what they can do and how to do it, as independently as possible, using the TEACCH approach, colourful semantics and zones of regulation. Pupils follow an individual daily work-plan as part of the classroom structure. This gives each pupil direction for certain times in the day. The format of the plan can be written or presented pictorially.

Where there is a benefit to pupils joining their mainstream class, there is joint planning between the base teacher and the mainstream teacher to ensure there are strategies in place within the mainstream classroom to ensure pupils feel a sense of belonging, calm and able to engage in appropriate activities. For those who find accessing a larger class overwhelming, the base teacher facilitates a smaller group where pupils are joined with one or two peers from mainstream to share an activity. For others, attending a small group with the nurture teacher can be a positive way to build friendships and confidence in working with mainstream peers.

## **Challenges and Achievements**

Although we had hoped for a more settled year, the cost of living crisis and staff absences have continued to impact the school community. Despite these challenges, the team have strived to ensure consistency and continuity for all pupils and have driven forward school improvement priorities. This session the school has achieved our 5<sup>th</sup> Eco Flag, with the action plan and evidence been recognised as outstanding practice and to be shared nationally. Our annual boat race showcased the canoeing talent of our upper school pupils, who demonstrated the skills they had learned from their canoeing lessons. We have continued to see an improvement in our attainment levels in literacy and numeracy. Our work in the local community has been recognised as a strength, with all P1-7 pupils taking part in the Alloway Tunnel art project. Their hard work was showcased on STV news, shared on social media platforms and celebrated through assemblies. We will continue to build on this positive work next session.

## **Vision, Values and Aims**

At Doonfoot Primary School we are proud to provide an inclusive, nurturing and stimulating learning environment where our pupils feel valued and inspired to achieve their full potential.

Our vision, "*Education without walls*" demonstrates our commitment to overcoming the barriers that our children face within our unique context. The unique setting of our school, next to the beach, Greenan Castle, the River Doon and local parks, enables our pupils to experience a range of outdoor learning opportunities right on our doorstep.

Our pupils, parents/carers and staff proudly celebrate the school vision.

### **Values**

We are proud to be part of the Doonfoot community and we encourage everyone to uphold our values:

1. RESPECT
2. HONESTY
3. KINDNESS
4. INCLUDED
5. RESILIENCE

Our values are linked closely with Rights Respecting Schools and classroom charters and they form the basis of our Positive Relationships Policy. Our values are embedded within our practice across the school.

### **How evidence was gathered this session.**

As part of the information gathering process, the school continues to implement a programme of self-evaluation, which is timetabled and agreed with all staff. Our Parent Council and our Pupil Council provide evidence throughout the year. This process is linked to How Good Is Our School 4 and How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare Centre, as well as the local authority's expectations and the National Improvement Framework. We have worked closely with Education Scotland to gather evidence as part of the Adaptive Teaching Pilot.

The aim is to identify areas of good practice and areas for improvement.

Some examples of gathering evidence to support this during session 2023/2024 are:

- Annual monitoring calendar
- Informal observations of learning and teaching and pupil voice
- Moderation built into planning and assessment processes
- Monitoring of jotters
- Pupil Progress/Attainment meetings and target setting/points for action
- Attendance and Late coming Monitoring
- CLPL programmes and feedback
- Professional review and development/ Professional Update
- Child, parent/carer, staff and stakeholder surveys
- Summative and formative assessments
- Self-evaluation through quality indicators within HGIOS4, HGIOELCC and HGIOURS
- Engagement and professional dialogue between staff during meetings
- Communication between home and school
- Monitoring Pupil Equity Funding, by evaluating progress of interventions
- Local Authority PEF Impact visit
- Team with the Family reviews for pupils
- Education Scotland Adaptive Teaching Pilot Feedback

## What key outcomes have we achieved?

### Reporting on Curriculum for Excellence Levels

The table below shows the percentage of children achieving the appropriate CFE levels for literacy and numeracy at P1, P4 and P7 over the past 3 years.

	Early Level (P1)			First Level (P4)			Second Level (P7)		
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Listening & Talking	71	86	82	88	87	80	85	94	95
Reading	60	74	79	76	78	76	79	80	87
Writing	60	74	73	73	72	70	75	76	82
Overall Literacy	60	74	73	68	72	70	74	76	82
Numeracy	69	86	79	78	77	78	77	80	84

\*The data above includes mainstream and communication base data collectively.

## Audit of Progress of the School Improvement Plan 2023-2024

### Priority 1: Raising Attainment in Literacy

**NIF Priority: Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.**

**Links to HGIOS 4 / HGIOELC :1.1,2.3,3.2  
Links to Children's Services Plan:1, 2, 3 & 5**

#### **Progress and Impact:**

We have continued to work hard in all areas of literacy and have seen improved attainment levels for cohorts of children over the past few years. Literacy attainment overall for P1,4 and 7 combined has increased by 9% from June 2021- June 2024.

#### **Listening and Talking:**

Talkboost sessions were led by an Early years' practitioner, and the targeted group of children who took part in the intervention increased the number of literacy and communication milestones they achieved. There was also an increase in post assessment scores from the baseline assessments for all pupils involved in the project. Whilst aiming to become a communication friendly school, symbols were created across the EYC and school to enable pupils with language and communication difficulties, including pupils with EAL to be able to communicate effectively, locate resources, and be able to fully access the curriculum. Self-evaluation work is ongoing and we will continue to build on this work next session by taking part in South Ayrshire's Communication Friendly Environment Project.

#### **Reading**

All staff are aware of the vision for South Ayrshire Reads and have attended training linked to this initiative. Although our school is part of Phase 3 of the pilot, we intend to focus on the teaching of reading skills and reading for enjoyment as parts of our school improvement plan for next session. We continued to use GL literacy assessments, alongside Burts reading, PM benchmarking and teacher

professional judgement to ensure pupils were attaining at the appropriate levels. There have been significant gains in reading ages of pupils who have taken part in Reading Wise decoding and zip phonics so we will continue with these proven interventions next session.

### **Writing**

Our Talk for Writing Lead has upskilled staff in almost all classes in the delivery of fiction and non-fiction units. She has modelled and team-taught lessons for new staff members. Almost all pupils have shown improvement in their hot write from their cold pieces of writing. Pupil and teacher feedback have shown an increase in motivation to write, especially for our reluctant writers and our dyslexic learners. Our staff have taken part in high quality moderation activities across stages and within the cluster, which have led to agreed standards in writing and has strengthened teacher professional judgement.

In addition to Talk for Writing, our literacy lead has worked on a progressive plan of delivering drawing club, poetry basket and helicopter stories to EYC and P1 pupils. This work has been recognised by the University who have asked for the leading staff to deliver sessions for staff and students next session. This writing programme will be rolled out across P2 next session and features within our learning, teaching and assessment policy.

### **Dyslexia Inclusive Practice Award**

This session we have continued to maintain the high standards that were recognised last session when we achieved our Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice Award (DIPA). This visit acknowledged the hard work of our pupil committee, who have continued to raise awareness of how dyslexia can present and how to address barriers to learning. The pupil steering group have continued to lead at assemblies and share good practice across the school. We have received placing requests into the school which acknowledge the positive support for our dyslexic learners.

**Next Steps:** Continue to improve attainment in literacy for all pupils with a particular focus on reading and writing next session. All staff will implement the new learning, teaching and assessment policy to ensure a consistent approach to teaching reading and writing. We will participate in further cluster moderation events. The school will purchase Accelerated Reader to encourage reading for enjoyment and to improve reading comprehension skills. This will be used at P5-7, alongside a consistent approach to teaching reading skills through North Lanarkshire Active Literacy. We will take part in South Ayrshire Communication Friendly Environment Project which will encourage staff to link with the speech and language team, join communication champion meetings, audit our environment and implement further supports. The school will start the accreditation process to be recognised as a communication friendly school.

## **Priority 2: Raising Attainment in Numeracy**

**NIF Priority: Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.**

**Links to HGIOS 4 / HGIOELC: 1.1,2.3,3.2 Links to Children's Services Plan:1, 2, 3 & 5**

### **Progress and Impact:**

We have continued to see an improvement in numeracy attainment for individual cohorts of children over the past few years. Numeracy attainment for P1,4 and 7 combined has increased by **9%** from June 2021- June 2024.

### **Numeracy Pedagogy**

Staff training continued to be provided for concrete, pictorial and abstract approaches to the teaching of maths. Staff confidence levels in delivering lessons have increased and most staff now feel confident moving forward into next session. Support will continue to be provided by the numeracy lead for new staff joining the school. Improved attainment in numeracy has been evident for cohorts of children across the school.

### **Primary 5 Cluster Maths Project**

Our Primary 5 teacher took part in a cluster maths project which involved observing modelled lessons, by the local authority maths lead, in three other Primary schools, then delivering the lessons back to her own class, with other staff observing. This helped to upskill staff in the delivery of lessons using concrete, pictorial and abstract approaches to teaching areas of numeracy and maths. This session the focus was on fractions and decimals. Links have been made across the cluster schools and shared resources will be provided to staff across these schools to use next session. Parents/Carers were also invited into a range of parent and child workshops led by the authority lead. Feedback from the events continue to be positive.

### **Play-based Learning**

The Early Years Centre and Primary 1 have strengthened their play-based learning approach to numeracy and maths, ensuring pupils have a solid foundation and are able to demonstrate greater number sense. Primary 1 staff took part in nine online sessions to enhance their delivery of a play-based approach to learning. The HT and PT took part in sessions to support classroom monitoring in a play-based environment. Classroom observations confirmed the positive impact of these sessions and the increased engagement of pupils. Class teacher observations showed improvement in pupil engagement through use of the Leuven scale in their focused pupil observations. Parents/carers were invited to stay and play sessions in the EYC and Primary 1 and 2 classes. Again, feedback was positive in terms of being able to support their child's learning.

**Next steps:** Numeracy will move onto our maintenance agenda, as we feel we have made significant improvements to our teaching pedagogy and we have seen continuous improvements in maths attainment over the past few years. All new staff will continue to be trained in number talks, CPA approaches and positive maths mindset as evidenced in the learning, teaching and assessment policy. Refresher sessions will be available for staff across the year. Our infant numeracy lead will take part in a cluster project next session to build on the work of our upper member of staff. We will continue to offer parent/carers workshops as these have been well received.

### **Priority 3: Wellbeing, Equity & Inclusion**

**NIF Priority: Improvement in children's health and well being.  
Improvement in employability skills and sustained positive destinations for all young people.**

**Links to HGIOS 4 / HGIOELC: 1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3  
Links to Children's Services Plan: 1,2,3 & 5**

### **Progress and Impact:**



The health and wellbeing of our children, young people and staff remains at the forefront of all that we do. It contributes to their readiness to learn and the ability to benefit from high quality learning and teaching, therefore enabling them to achieve their full potential. Several children and staff have benefited from wellbeing supports this session such as Seasons for Growth, which has enabled participants to manage their emotions around separation, loss and bereavement.

### **Adaptive Teaching**

The school took part in the Adaptive Teaching Pilot with Education Scotland. Teachers and pupils audited the classroom environments and implemented changes to classes, which included better labelling of resources, creating cosy and relaxed corners, stuck strategies and displays to support an inclusive learning environment for all. Our children were involved in using wee HIGIOUS to evaluate the impact of the changes and staff shared best practice with other schools across the South West Regional Collaborative. The second part of the project involved teachers engaging with scaffolding strategies to improve explanations when explicitly teaching in lessons. Improvements in differentiation through using scaffolding strategies were highlighted in classroom observations. For the final part of the project, the school decided to work on challenging our highly able learners. This involved identifying our most able learners, taking them in focus groups to see how they felt about their current learning and any changes they would like to happen to improve their engagement. At the end of the year, pupil feedback highlighted the positive impact of the project on their learning and pupils were able to talk more confidently about their targets and next steps in learning with most feeling more appropriately challenged.

### **Nurture Principles and Positive Relationship Policy**

Almost all staff across the school and EYC took part in training around nurture principles and de-escalation techniques as part of our refresher training. Pupil consultation at assemblies led to adaptations to our positive relationship policy. The staff training and policy implementation has had an improvement on behaviour across the school, with far less children requiring restorative conversations with members of the senior leadership team. There has been an increase in pupils modelling the school values and managing their own relationships across the school. A nurturing approach and ethos are well embedded within the school. All visitors comment favourably on this. Recognition for pupils who uphold the school values were celebrated through weekly school assemblies.

### **Wellbeing Supports**

GL PASS assessments were used to complement the range of baseline and follow up assessments that are currently being used for assessing wellbeing across the school. The whole school completed wellbeing-webs and in conjunction with parent and staff feedback, targeted support was then put into place for pupils falling below 7 in specific areas or those who were highlighted as a concern from the GL PASS assessments. Appropriate interventions such as Draw and Talk, Bereavement Box, Seasons for Growth, Let's Introduce Anxiety Management (LIAM) were delivered in line with results. These assessments were re-administered following the targeted interventions and almost all pupils showed improvement in the targeted areas. These interventions are shared with parents and specific, measurable targets are put in place on staged intervention paperwork. Pupils who experience sensory difficulties have had daily access to the Hub and newly created sensory room. Both are a safe and nurturing space where children can self-regulate. This experience has increased their communication skills, decreased anxieties and supported relationship building. This is also an important opportunity for inclusion between base and mainstream pupils.

38 children across P2-7 have benefited from small group Seasons for Growth sessions, which have supported pupils experiencing change or loss. A further 3 pupils benefitted from LIAM and it is hoped

that capacity to deliver these 1:1 sessions will increase. Feedback from parental surveys demonstrated the positive impact of the sessions on their child's wellbeing. Our HWB lead also participated in training for Adult Seasons for Growth and has been able to support staff members with weekly sessions after school.

**Next Steps:** Our focus will continue to be on the health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. Interventions and supports are well embedded within the school. Our PEF plan contains further information about the supports we will continue to provide and how the impact will be measured. Following on from the Adaptive Teaching Pilot, we will create Doonfoot non-negotiables around an inclusive classroom environment for all, which will create a consistent classroom standard. We will continue our work into challenging our highly able learners, while continuing to support and boost all other pupils.

**Priority 4: All pupils will have access to high quality learning experiences with regards to Learning for Sustainability where they will explore the concepts of sustainable development, global citizenship and outdoor learning.**

**NIF Priority: Improvement in children's health and well being.**

**Links to HGIOS 4 / HGIOELC: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3,1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.7,3.1, 3.2, 3.3**  
**Links to Children's Services Plan: 1,2,3, 4 & 5**

**Progress and Impact:**

We have continued to offer a range of high-quality experiences to all pupils as detailed below:

**Outdoor Learning**

As part of our outdoor learning programme, our Early Years Centre children worked alongside Primary 1 pupils as part of Forest Kindergarten. Pupils worked together to assess risky play. Parents were invited along to four of the sessions to work with their children. This was positively received by all who took part. Our outdoor learning lead created bespoke outdoor learning sessions for Primary 1 and 2. Our EYC secured land to be used as an allotment for future projects. Our Primary 5 to 7 pupils experienced canoeing sessions on the river. The school held their annual boat race which is a whole school event celebrated by families and the local community. House and Vice Captains, alongside pupil representatives from P5-7, raced against each other. The winners then raced against a staff team. Pupils demonstrated teamwork and resilience, the skills they had developed from their taster canoeing sessions. Bikeability 1 and 2 sessions were delivered for Primary 6 and 7, alongside swimming lessons for P5.

**Outdoor Working Party**

The Outdoor Learning working party created a bespoke template for planning and assessing pupil progress against the meta-skills, during outdoor learning opportunities. Staff across the school and communication base trialled these during World Outdoor classroom day/week and fed back on ways to improve the planning for next session. A range of outdoor learning activities were showcased through learning journals and X (Twitter).

**Community Work**

Almost all pupils from Primary 1 to 7 worked closely with the artist Chris Rutterford to have their artwork displayed in the Alloway Tunnel. This community project involved children from the local area creating individual and group pieces of artwork that have been displayed in the tunnel. This

regeneration project is benefitting the local community by making the area an attractive place to visit and encouraging pupils to show respect and take pride in looking after their local community.

### **Sustainability**

Our Parent Council have completed several fundraising activities and are in the process of purchasing a polytunnel for the school to develop outdoor learning opportunities next session. We were awarded a further Eco Flag for our commitment to our Eco work over the last two years. Our action plan and evidence were recognised as outstanding and we have been asked to allow it to be used nationally for schools looking to apply for the award. Our Pupil Committee will continue to build on the strengths in this area next session.

**Next Steps:** Our outdoor learning and science working party will liaise to develop plans for outdoor science at Early, First and Second level for use across the school, making additional use of the local area. We will invest in improving our outdoor areas for the EYC, communication base classes and school grounds to enhance outdoor experiences. Our science lead and working party will develop a programme of outdoor science lessons focused on establishing baseline data on the biodiversity in our school grounds. Classes will set up a useable polytunnel and start a planting cycle of native fruit, vegetables, and flowers. Learners will be upskilled in the planting, maintaining and harvesting from the polytunnel and will look to use the produce as part of an enterprise project.

### **Priority 5: Increased opportunities for developing skills for lifelong learning and work (STEM).**

#### **NIF Priority:**

**NIF 1, 2, 3**

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

#### **Links to HGIOS 4 / HGIOELC: Links to Children's**

**Services Plan: .1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3**

**SAC P1, 3,6/ CSP 1,2, 3, 4, 5 / ESP 2, 3, 5**

#### **Progress and Impact:**

There has been an increase in the number of children participating in STEM opportunities this session and learning about the world of work from a variety of experts and visitors to the school.

#### **STEM**

All classes took part in the Primary Engineer Leaders Award Competition this year. Two of our Primary 1 pupil entries achieved Highly Commended and one of our P6 pupils was the overall winner for their year group. Our P6 classes took part in the Road to RIAT Space STEM Day. All classes had at least one visiting engineer from a variety of specialisms, ranging from software development to marine accident investigation. The visits were to inspire and expose pupils to different career opportunities.

Our Laboratory Technician Group took part in the Edina Trust's Spring Bulb Investigation this year, with their work on recording daily weather conditions as well as the height and blooming date of their bulbs being Highly Commended. The Laboratory Technician Group hosted a science gadget stall at the Summer Fayre, raising money for the Parent Council to support towards the purchase of the Polytunnel.

The school took part in the MARS Balloon Project for this first time this year, sending three different types of wildflower seed to experience Mars conditions. When returned, they will be grown and

compared to their Earthling peers to see if there is a difference in their germination rate.

On the lead up to the Air Show, the school engaged with the Royal Aeronautical Engineering Society, Prestwick Branch and took part in the council-led competition at Early, First and Second Level. We had two runners-up and one winner.

Our Primary 6 pupils worked towards and achieved their Young STEM Leader Level 2 Award after researching inspirational scientists, exploring stereotypes and how they can combat them and then preparing and delivering a science lesson to at least two different classes. All classes from P1 to P5 benefitted from the visits, as did all the Communication Base Classes. This brings our total of Young STEM Leaders to 132.

**Next Steps:** See Priority 4 for next steps. As part of our outdoor learning and STEM work, we will continue to develop the skills of our young workforce in the local community.

### Priorities for 2024/2025

The school improvement priorities for next session will focus on:

- Raising attainment in Literacy with a particular focus on reading and writing
- Ensuring high quality outdoor learning experiences for pupils, which support progression through the Meta-skills Framework.
- Enhancing learning across the school, using digital technology, whilst promoting cyber resilience and internet safety.

### 1.3 Leadership of Change

Staff, children and parents/carers are consulted on the school vision and values. Children are confident when talking about each of the values and these are referenced through classroom charters and permeate throughout our positive relationship policy. Our vision and values are ambitious and provide strategic direction to the school, which in turn continues to inform change. The school's vision "Education without Walls" demonstrates there are no barriers to our pupils' learning and the unique location of our school, affords pupils a range of outdoor learning opportunities right on our doorstep. The vision is embraced by all stakeholders.

The Senior Leadership Team are effectively managing the strategic direction and pace of change. There are agreed remits and responsibilities which play to the strengths of the team. Almost all teaching staff are confident in leading parts of school improvement planning and the number of staff members looking to be involved in leading developments next session continues to increase. Significant professional and collegiate learning has taken place over the last session to improve the pedagogy in the teaching of numeracy and writing and in our approaches to play based learning. Staff have been involved in joint planning, peer reviews and classroom visits to other schools. They have engaged in CLPL with the local authority leads. This has been linked to maths priorities and block play in the Early Years. We continue to aim for a consistent approach to high quality learning and teaching across the school.

Staff are committed to improving outcomes for all children. They are clear on the changing context of our school community. We use a range of data to inform our PEF planning to ensure we are removing barriers to learning for our most vulnerable learners. Staff are committed to reducing the poverty related attainment gap. We are seeing the positive impact of this funding on attendance and readiness to learn.

Self-assessment and quality assurance processes are regularly planned into our calendar. We have continued to improve the link between our self-evaluation, professional learning and school improvement plan. Staff have spent time looking at moderation in literacy to quality assure teacher judgement in CFE. Through PRDs staff are identifying their strengths and areas for development and they recognise where they can lead or contribute to school improvement planning. Despite staff absences, the team have managed to continue to successfully lead developments which have led to a positive impact on our pupils. The school have worked closely with Education Scotland on the Adaptive Teaching Pilot. This has brought about positive change through adaptable, inclusive and stimulating learning environments.

Children contribute their views to what is working well and areas for improvement within the school through HGIOURS. Our school committees lead on areas of improvement and take ownership of their display boards and continue to share information through assemblies and communication platforms. They have been involved in developing our positive relationship policy, pupil charters linked to Rights Respecting Schools and throughout the school, children take on various roles and responsibilities, including House and Vice Captains and Ambassador roles.

The Pupil Council are involved in school improvement planning. They created padlets, linked to HGIOURS to capture pupil views on school improvement planning during assemblies. They gathered evidence throughout the year to demonstrate what had been achieved on the school improvement plan. Our Primary 5- 7 pupils have been provided with high quality Science experiences from our STEM lead. This came from their suggestions for more quality Science in school. The STEM teacher has also received recognition through the ERA Foundation for her outstanding contribution in the field of STEM. This has led to several pupils winning awards and being inspired to develop an interest in future careers in STEM.

The Parent Council make valued contributions to school improvement planning and suggestions have been taken on board to introduce new ways of sharing the learning with parents. They strive to engage our community as much as possible and continue to fundraise and support events within the school. The school sends out termly curriculum flyers, monthly newsletters and updates on X (formerly twitter) to share and celebrate achievements and success.

Staff, pupils and parents/carers will continue to work collaboratively to self-evaluate against HGIOELCC, HGIOS4 and HGIOURS to ensure continued improvements lead to positive changes within the school.

The overall evaluation in this area is good.


### **2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment**

There is a positive and nurturing ethos across the school and this is underpinned by our school values and RRS charters. Committed staff know the children and the context of the school well. Positive relationships are evident and staff and children feel valued by each other. Children are proud of their

work and of the school. Learning environments are of a consistently high standard with examples of pupil work on display. Most children are enthusiastic, confident and responsible in their learning. The school has strong parental support and established links within the community, which support a range of events and projects linked to developing lifelong skills for work.

Almost all staff have high expectations for children and are developing their understanding of new pedagogical approaches to learning and teaching. Play based learning is embedded within our Early Years Centre, Communication base classes and Primary 1 classes and is leading to improved outcomes for pupils. More staff are beginning to engage with Realising the Ambition and are looking to incorporate a play-based approach/active learning within classes. Pupils, staff and parents/carers have engaged with concrete, pictorial approaches to teaching numeracy and maths and we can see the benefits of this approach on pupils understanding of number sense and an improvement in numeracy attainment. Staff are embedding Talk for Writing approaches within the classroom and are quality assuring their writing across the level and with stage partners in other schools across the cluster.

In most lessons, instructions are clear and children understand the purpose of their learning. In some lessons, pupils co-create the success criteria. Following self-evaluation work around learning, teaching and assessment we developed our see, hear and feel resource for every classroom. We collectively agreed what a child, parent/carer, staff member or visitor should expect within any class within Doonfoot Primary School and we continue to use this as part of our monitoring processes:

Doonfoot Primary School & EYC Learning, Teaching and Assessment		
See	Hear	Feel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Smiles and happy faces ☺</li> <li>Children actively engaged in their learning</li> <li>Independent work, collaborative work, supported work, play based and active learning</li> <li>Making use of the local environment including outdoor learning opportunities</li> <li>Children being appropriately challenged and supported</li> <li>Pupil choice of activities and different learning styles catered for (including TEACCH approach)</li> <li>Children leading learning</li> <li>Various concrete materials and resources to enhance learning</li> <li>Purposeful and calming wall displays</li> <li>Learning being shared out with the classroom (parents/community)</li> <li>Consistent approaches to formative assessment</li> <li>Lessons enhanced by technology</li> <li>Relevant and meaningful contexts</li> <li>Interdisciplinary learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Laughter</li> <li>Discussions around learning, including links to real life contexts, sharing of learning intentions and success criteria</li> <li>Collaborative and supportive conversations</li> <li>Effective questioning (Higher Order)</li> <li>Positive and respectful language</li> <li>Celebrating effort, success and achievements</li> <li>Acknowledging mistakes and feedback on how to improve</li> <li>Constructive and purposeful teacher and peer feedback</li> <li>Connections being discussed and made</li> <li>Continuous positive encouragement using the Language of Growth Mindset</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A nurturing and welcoming ethos (Part of a whole school family/community)</li> <li>Safe</li> <li>Nurtured and cared for</li> <li>Respected</li> <li>Included and accepted</li> <li>Supported, valued and listened to</li> <li>Happy</li> <li>Enthusiastic</li> <li>Motivated</li> <li>Part of a team</li> </ul> 

Children have a range of opportunities to learn independently and in groups. We will continue to ensure that all children are supported and challenged effectively. Teachers interact and question children positively using higher order thinking skills in many classes, with some using MTV strategies. Staff know their children well and can confidently talk about the learning of their pupils. The teaching environment provides real life experiences and sensory experiences for our children. Children are benefiting from increased outdoor learning opportunities which are beginning to be linked to the meta-skills. We identified the need to increase the pace and challenge of learning to ensure all pupils were appropriately supported and challenged. The school participated in the Adaptive Teaching Pilot with Education Scotland, which has led to improvements in the learning environment, differentiation, and further challenge for our highly able learners. Challenging our more able learners will continue into next session.

Teachers are continuing to be upskilled in using data to plan appropriate interventions. They have been supported by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and pupil support teacher. Moderation activities allow us to make informed decisions and we are planning more opportunities to share expectations and standards across other schools. The SLT work closely with staff to analyse data on a termly basis. As a result, learners who are not on track are identified at the earliest stage to allow interventions and support to be put in place and those who require further challenge, including our highly able learners are identified and planned for appropriately. Staff at P1, P4 and P7 have engaged with stretch aim data and this has given them a focus on ways to improve attainment. The expectation throughout the school is that all children are supported appropriately, barriers are removed and that there is a positive ethos of inclusion for all. Pupil Progress/Attainment meetings have taken place to ensure each child is discussed as an individual and their well-being and learning needs are met. Pupils are confident in their learning and CFE data has identified pupils working significantly beyond their levels, additional challenge is being provided for these pupils. Pupils working below expected levels have been highlighted, discussed and planned for, with specific targets and interventions. The senior leadership team effectively track and monitor the attainment and well-being of all care experienced pupils, young carers and those entitled to Pupil Equity Funding within the school.

We will continue to consult with children when planning lessons and experiences. Pupil voice will be added to outdoor learning plans and weekly plans. A new policy on learning, teaching and assessment is being developed following consultation exercises. Next session, this will be implemented along with a refreshed curriculum rationale. Our monitoring programme will continue to take place to ensure the consistency of learning, teaching and assessment across the school and will incorporate parts of the Adaptive Teaching pilot. Staff will continue to take part in CLPL opportunities linked to professional development and school improvement planning.

The overall evaluation in this area is good.

### **3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equity and Inclusion**

Wellbeing, Equity and Inclusion underpins everything that we do at Doonfoot Primary and EYC. Staff are up to date with current legislation regarding safeguarding, child protection, GIRFEC and risk assessments and are confident in ensuring the wellbeing of all children. We fulfil all our statutory duties including keeping up to date with changes to ASN legislation. A recent safeguarding visit from the local authority team confirmed the appropriate policies and procedures were in place.

Staff continue to engage with CLPL and with outside agencies, to improve outcomes for pupils and their families. There is strong partnership working with the Educational Psychologist, CAMHS, Social Work, Speech and Language, Barnardo's, Young Carers and Active Schools, to support children's wellbeing. However, due to the pressures on outside agencies, the school has upskilled members of staff to deliver a range of health and wellbeing interventions to support our children. Regular Team with the Family meetings take place to support our care experienced children, young carers, pupils on staged intervention paperwork and all children within the communication base classes. Pupils are involved in these meetings where appropriate, and pupil voice is encouraged.

Children completed SHANARRI wellbeing webs twice per year and complete GL PASS assessments to ensure appropriate wellbeing supports are in place. Baseline and follow up assessments appropriate to

their interventions were carried out to ensure suitable progress. Our school strives to maximise the support given to all children who are experiencing social and emotional challenges including Seasons for Growth, Therapet, LIAM, Draw and Talk and developing life skills.

The Pupil Equity Funding has enabled additional school assistant hours to support children to access a range of new experiences and opportunities which develop their social skills and talents. We realise that to enable our children to attain, we need to address their health and wellbeing needs first and ensure their readiness to learn. Although Doonfoot is considered an affluent area, new affordable housing and placing requests into the area are creating a more economically diverse community. We have pupils with English as an additional language who work closely with the EAL teacher and support staff. Our communication friendly symbols have helped support children with EAL as well as children who are on the Autism Spectrum. Our 'Hub' remains a safe place to self-regulate and meet individual pupils' sensory needs. The addition of our new sensory room, has had a positive impact on our learners with ASD, improving the calmness of classes and readiness to learn. Individual sensory profiles have been created for pupils within our communication base classes. Staff continue to promote positive relationships within the school and playground to ensure a safe and nurturing learning environment. We have developed our positive relationship policy to ensure equity for all. Our Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice Committee have continued to promote inclusion and celebrate diversity.

Our pupils contribute actively to the life of the school and the wider community and benefit from a range of leadership opportunities. They participate in a wide range of activities within the community to promote citizenship. Our pupils are confident and our school values underpin all that we do within the school. Pupil voice was recognised as key strength during a Rights Respecting Schools visit. Pupils have led areas of school improvement and have demonstrated positive impact in STEM, children's rights, dyslexia and inclusive practice, road safety, outdoor learning and online digital safety and this has been recognised through accreditation visits. Children within the base classes have been part of friendship groups and integrate within their mainstream classes. Mainstream pupils have been identified as Inclusion Ambassadors to support individual pupils within base classes, especially with transitions into school and at the end of the day. The Pupil and Parent Council worked closely to support reducing the cost of the school day. Class enterprise projects have enabled class trip costs to be reduced significantly or fully covered, allowing all pupils to participate. Parental feedback also highlights the inclusive ethos of the school.

The overall evaluation in this area is good.

### **3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement**

Pupil attendance continues to improve with the school sitting in line with the South Ayrshire average for the past few years. We have made significant improvements in attendance and late coming for most of our identified PEF cohort and our plan for next session will focus on improving attendance and reducing late coming for other targeted groups of pupils. We continue to have no exclusions and inclusion is successful for almost all pupils.

The Senior Leadership Team have improved the way they track and monitor attainment and use the South Ayrshire Attainment Tracker and the data pack from the local authority. The HT and DHT track cohorts of children and have separate data for the communication base and mainstream classes as well as overall school data to ensure the most accurate data is available when tracking cohorts of children over time. Pupils are continuing to show improvement in literacy and numeracy from last session across



Primary 1 and 7 cohorts. The SLT can identify where support is needed at an earlier date and can put interventions in place. Staff are confident in gathering and analysing data to improve outcomes for children in the key areas of literacy and numeracy. By upskilling staff in literacy and numeracy pedagogy and engaging with Education Scotland in the Adaptive Teaching pilot we have seen improvements in teacher assessment judgments of a level. We will continue to build on this work by focusing on pace and challenge.

Most pupils are attaining at the appropriate CFE levels at key stages with almost all achieving at the appropriate level at certain stages. We are aware of those who require additional support and further interventions, as well as the cohort of children who are exceeding national expectations and require further challenge. Attainment levels in Literacy and Numeracy remain a key priority for next session. Teachers are becoming increasingly confident in discussing their pupils' learning and justifying their professional judgement against the four stages of progress and have benefited from moderation events with schools in the cluster.

GL and NSAs assessments were administered to address any gaps in learning to be planned for and to further support teacher professional judgement. Primary 1 pupils have been supported based on their transition information, taking into consideration their achievement of developmental milestones. CFE levels have continued to be recorded for the new Primary 1 cohort.

Children have developed very good skills and knowledge in STEM at Second Level with a number of children winning local and national awards. Our Science Teacher was recognised by the ERA Foundation for her dedication to STEM and was also awarded the David Clark Outstanding Primary Teacher award for the whole of the UK in May 2023. This prestigious prize highlights the work of teachers who have gone above and beyond to inspire students to consider a career in engineering. Our pupils are highly motivated and engaged in science opportunities and we can see this will lead to future careers in STEM. Our science teacher has continued to use the prize money to develop sustainable opportunities for STEM experiences for our pupils.

Children are encouraged to develop new skills and take part in a diverse range of experiences. We regularly celebrate our pupil achievements within and out with school. We value what each individual child brings to the school. Our children take part in a range of committees that have led to positive changes within the school. The impact of these committees has been recognised through various accreditation visits to the school. The excellent work of the ECO Committee was recognised through achieving their 5<sup>th</sup> Green Flag. Work on the global goals and sustainable development was seen as a key strength. The school has achieved Gold Rights Respecting Schools status demonstrating our commitment to children's rights. Our children experience a wide range of outdoor learning and sporting opportunities.

Throughout our school community, there are a number of barriers children face and we work with a range of partners to break down these barriers. Our PEF plan details the range of supports that are available for our families. Regular Team with the family meetings also enables additional supports to be provided.

The overall evaluation in this area is good.

## What is the school's capacity for improvement?

There is a clear and shared vision for continuing to move the school forward. The Senior Leadership team know the school context and are clear on priorities for improvement. The Acting Principal Teacher has secured a promoted post within the central team, meaning the existing Leadership team will take on these responsibilities next session. Senior leadership remits will be considered and will play to the strengths of the team.

We have two newly qualified teachers joining us next session who will be supported and mentored by two class teachers and overseen by the Depute Head. This will provide capacity to release members of staff to lead areas of improvement across the school. We are delighted to welcome two new peripatetic teachers to the school as permanent members of staff and look forward to the new ideas and enthusiasm they will bring to the school. The staff team are clear on the priorities required to move the school forward, and although there will be a reduction in the size of the leadership team, there is a collective willingness for school improvement to continue this session with more staff taking on leadership opportunities.

The school will continue to work closely with cluster schools to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy. The health and wellbeing of all pupils will remain a priority and interventions will continue to support specific children. There is clear evidence of strong teamwork and leadership at all levels. Each member of staff will be part of a development group, leading change linked to the School Improvement Plan and their own professional development and interests. The commitment of staff, support from parents and the confidence of pupils, will ensure key priorities are achieved over the course of the next session. The positive work of the pupil committees has been recognised through Rights Respecting Schools Gold Award, Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice Award and Eco schools and pupils will continue to build on this positive work and lead learning across the school community. Attainment will continue to be tracked and monitored regularly to ensure all pupils are being supported or challenged appropriately.

The Early Years Centre will continue to offer 1140 hours to families across a 52 week period. The Acting Depute Manager will continue in post until the Depute Manager returns from her maternity leave in November. Processes are in place to ensure a smooth transition between both Deputes. Following her maternity leave, the senior has returned part time and is sharing her role with another member of staff who has received a promotion. They will continue to lead the large and dedicated team of staff to support children's wellbeing and to provide opportunities for children to achieve their developmental milestones.

Construction work is taking place within the car park and playgrounds, which should ensure safer areas for our school community. Work will also take place to enhance the outdoor space for the EYC, communication base classes and school. We have new teaching and support staff joining our communication bases who will bring experience and enthusiasm to the established team.

Our proactive Parent Council are stepping down after two years in post, but 4 new members have been appointed who will continue the positive work. We remain optimistic about the changes ahead and look forward to collectively driving new initiatives forward next session.