



## Standards and Quality Report

Straiton Primary School and Early Years Centre  
Session 2022-2023  
(September 2023)



## Context of the school/early years centre

Straiton Primary is a small rural school serving the community of Straiton and surrounding area. We have three buildings within our schools' grounds. Our main school, which has two classrooms; our gym hall which also serves as our dining room; and our school house which accommodates our school office, staff room and SMT offices. The school is non-denominational and co-educational with a current roll (June 2023) of 17 primary children. The EYC accommodates 3 and 4-year-old children. As of June 2023, it accommodated 2 ante-pre and 1 pre-school child.

Free school meal entitlement was 5% this session, below the South Ayrshire average of 22%. All our pupils live in decile 6 where 1 is the most deprived according to the Scottish multiple Index of Deprivation (SIMD). Our attendance average for 2022-23 was 96.75%, a significant increase from the previous session and well above the South Ayrshire and National averages. There were no placing requests into Straiton Primary this session.

23% of our pupils are on Staged intervention paperwork. During the course of this session we have engaged with several external partnership agencies including SALT, the Learning and Inclusion Team, the Occupational Health team, Outreach and our School Nurse to provide further support where required.

In June 2023 our teaching staff entitlement was 2.1 FTE.

The school has a supportive Parent Council. The school also has very strong links with the local community and take part in a wide range of local village activities. Straiton School is part of the Carrick Cluster Group. We have excellent links with all 7 cluster primary schools.

The most recent external evaluation of education provision was undertaken in October 2018 by Education Scotland which resulted in a positive report. The Early Years Centre was inspected by The Care Inspectorate in February 2019. This too was positive.

We have a history of strong business links within the community, which enables the children from an early age to develop their knowledge and an appreciation of the World of Work. The school enjoys partnerships with many local businesses including Dalduff Farm, Straiton Stores, Balbeg Cottages and Blairquhan Estate. We strive to involve all parents and carers fully in the life of the school and their children's learning through assemblies, concerts, family learning events and other whole school events. This has given parents and carers opportunities to see the learning that their children are involved in and has enabled us to build positive relationships with all of our families. We also work closely with the Thriving Communities Team and partners such as Active Schools to deliver vital services directly in the village; importantly this helps tackle rural poverty.

## Our Vision and Values

At Straiton Primary School and Early Years Centre we set high standards with the view to giving our young people the best possible start in life – through active learning, teamwork, nurture and by making use of the picturesque setting in which we are lucky enough to learn and have fun in each day. We strive to do our best in all areas. We understand the importance of effective communication in all its forms, the need to be supportive and most importantly, aim to be positive about all outcomes. Everyone at the school wants to play our part in making Straiton, and the wider world in general, a positive, more equitable and sustainable place to live, work and play. We value community in its truest sense, and understand the need to be creative thinkers.

### VISION

At Straiton Primary and Early Years Centre we have aim to create a culture of thinking, built upon a culture of wellbeing, where we look to make a positive difference to the lives of all.



**“Small school, big heart”**

### THIS IS HOW WE DO IT HERE

Every interaction that takes place between a member of our school community is underpinned by 3 key values that we have all agreed to try our best to live by...

**Positive**

**Supportive**

**Compassionate**

## Aims

At Straiton Primary School and Early Years Centre we aim to:

- Create a positive school ethos promoting inclusion, equity, team work and health and wellbeing.
- Provide a stimulating, challenging, active and enjoyable curriculum for our pupils.
- Improve the standards of achievement and attainment in consultation with the learner, parent or guardian.
- Assist the pupils’ personal and social development and to promote the values and responsibilities of citizenship in an effective democratic society.
- Promote an effective partnership that links home, school, parish and the local community.

**PEF**

Our PEF allocation for session 21/22 was £13200. The focus of this was 0.2 targeted support for a selected cohort of pupils. Improvement in attainment can not be fully quantified due to the impact of COVID and school closure. The 0.2 targeted support will continue as a priority for recovery in session 21/22

**School Improvement Priorities - Progress and Impact**

Leadership and Management	Learning Provision	Success and Achievements	NIF Drivers
1.1 Self-evaluation for improvement 1.2 Leadership of learning 1.3 Leadership of change 1.4 Leadership and management of staff/practitioners 1.5 Management of resources to promote equity	2.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection 2.2 Curriculum 2.3 Learning, Teaching and assessment 2.4 Personalised Support 2.5 Family learning 2.6 Transitions 2.7 Partnerships	3.1 Improvement wellbeing, equality and inclusion 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement/ Securing children’s progress 3.3 Increasing creativity and employability	1. School and ELC leadership 2. Teacher and practitioner professionalism 3. Parent/carer involvement and engagement 4. Curriculum and assessment 5. School and ELC improvement 6. Performance information
<b>NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK PRIORITIES</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education</li> <li>Improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing</li> <li>Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people</li> <li>Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people</li> <li>Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.</li> </ul>			



## School Priority 1 : Raising Attainment In Literacy

To raise attainment in literacy for all children whilst closing the gap through collaborative dialogue around learning and teaching, data literacy and high quality professional development across the Carrick Cluster.

**NIF Priority:** 2 & 4

**Links to HGIOS 4 / HGIOELC:**

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

### Progress and Impact

- We continue to develop assessment and moderation with support and guidance from authority and cluster collegiate working but changes to lead staff delayed progress. To ensure less impact of staffing changes, the cluster staff will benefit from working more closely with cluster colleagues in order to become more confident in creating valid and reliable assessments. Staff should continue to access CLPL focussed on assessment through play and skills-based activities.
- Learner conversations were regular and informative, further enhancing children's ability to articulate and discuss their learning and next steps. The quality of feedback to children has continued to improve; the consistent use of Seesaw to note progress and share it with families was an important aspect of this improvement.
- Children benefit from direct teaching as well as independent exploration, P1/P2 continue to develop a play-based pedagogy however further training will be required to fully embed this. All stages in the school made use of the play based open area and exploration space, beginning to enhance play across middle and upper stages.
- Talk for Writing is thoroughly embedded and is being used across all stages in the school. Curriculum Development Days allowed the Talk for Writing lead to provide staff with CLPL opportunities and support in order to increase confidence in delivering the programme effectively, with Non-Fiction approaches now being well used as confidently as Fiction.
- Staff work collaboratively across the school and are keen to take on leadership opportunities, these are linked to PRD, CLPL activities and the school improvement plan and further enhance and develop literacy provision at all stages as staff implement improvements.
- Clear progress was noted from targeted interventions at all levels that included Reading Wise, 5minute box, Toe-by-toe and Word Wasp. Our Principal Teacher was trained on Catch-up Literacy and continued to develop practice in relation to neurodiverse thinking.
- HT has monitored progress and attainment at tracking meetings discussing termly assessments, interventions and class assessments. Assessments are being carried out twice yearly to support teacher planning and inform pupils support needs, with a concise assessment timetable in place. This has been aided by the Local Authorities purchase of the full suite of GL Assessments.
- EYC staff are quick to report concerns around achievements of milestones and difficulties with speech and language. Free flow and play pedagogies are well embedded and staff regularly encourage pupils to articulate their learning. EYC pupils began to work more closely with the infant classes, particularly as part of a clear transition plan. There is some room to develop this practice further as the infant teacher becomes more confident with play-based pedagogies.
- Planning formats were streamlined and simplified, with collegiate staff planning helping support high quality teaching and learning across lev
- While reading pedagogy is sound in the school, further work to fully develop a culture of reading and encourage more reading for enjoyment would benefit learners.

### Pupil Equity Fund

- An array of interventions was implemented across the school with targeted groups and individuals receiving extra support for Literacy from PEF funded school assistants and the Pupil Support Teacher.

### Next Steps

- Explore high quality teaching, learning and assessment approaches with cluster schools and promote moderation at both school and cluster level.
- All staff have the opportunity to develop play-based learning approaches through the use of Active Literacy and Talk for Writing and using these in a cross-curricular context.
- Develop a reading culture, including reading for enjoyment, with the purchase of a new reading scheme, working alongside reading specialists from across the council to support this.

## School Priority 2 : Raising Attainment In Numeracy

To raise attainment in numeracy for all children whilst closing the gap through collaborative dialogue around learning and teaching, data literacy and high quality professional development across the Cluster.

NIF Priority: 1 & 2

Links to HGIOS 4 / HGIOELC:

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

### Progress and Impact

- Concrete pictorial abstract (CPA) was further embedded with a continued focus on pedagogy and use of resources which saw an increase in staff confidence and capacity. A strong collegiate approach to planning and team teaching really enhanced maths provision, with pupils benefitting from working across stages to support and scaffold each other's learning.
- South Ayrshire's Numeracy Development Officer continued to work with all staff and classes to support the development of CPA and bar modelling, but with less frequency than last session due to an increase in staff capacity and the development of expertise and leadership within the school.
- Number talks remain an important part of numeracy routines but are now immersed as part of the CPA pedagogy, with learners challenged on a day to day basis to articulate their thinking and mental processes.
- Differentiation is clearly evident and pupils are challenged to push themselves in a supportive manner,
- Numeracy resources are becoming embedded in daily practice, with a variety of concrete and pictorial resources used to develop understanding and mathematical thinking.
- The targeted intervention used to support numeracy was the 5-minute box, with this aimed at a small number of identified children. However, more school assistant time was offered to support in-class learning, with the focus of this being early and first level pupils.
- Staff engage in tracking and attainment meetings where they discuss attainment of pupils in their class as well as reflect on their own practice in order to bring about improvements. Assessments are being carried out twice yearly to support teacher planning and inform next steps, with a concise assessment timetable in place.
- Staff made greater use of maths in context, in part due to the introduction of Curriculum Development Days. They should continue to seek ways of immersing this practice in their daily teaching routines to help pupils understand the importance of mathematical thinking.
- EYC staff are quick to report concerns around achievements of milestones and difficulties within numeracy. Free flow and play pedagogies are well embedded and staff regularly encourage pupils to articulate their mathematical thinking. EYC pupils share the same space

### Pupil Equity Fund

- As with literacy, a toolkit of interventions was implemented throughout the school with targeted groups and individuals receiving extra support.

### Next Steps

- Staff should continue to explore options for numeracy learning across the curriculum, making links to real-life concepts.
- Continue to develop the use of play-based learning across the school to enhance mathematical thinking in context.
- Develop further opportunities to engage families with CPA approaches through use of Learning Journals, videos and open events.

## School Priority 3 : Wellbeing, inclusion and equality for all

To improve children, staff and families ( Local Community) HWB

NIF Priority: 1 & 3

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

### Progress and Impact

- A whole school Wellbeing approach is evident in all classes and the EYC. The lead member of staff for Health and Wellbeing continued to support staff to ensure mindfulness routines were a daily part of school life, with a variety of strategies in place including:
  - Whole class soft starts increased for pupils to 'check-in' around mood.
  - Daily meditation.
  - Brain breaks and mindfulness walks.
- Information was shared with parents to support wellbeing and online workshops, with parents in many cases up taking to help support their children with ASD or other mental health conditions.
- All staff aware of statutory obligations including named person, LAC and child protection.
- Staff make excellent use of outdoor spaces to promote a healthier lifestyle and the culture of lifelong learning on a frequent basis.
- There is strong multi-agency working with a range of partners and specialist services e.g. Educational Psychology, Social Services, Doonfoot Outreach and Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service providing universal and targeted supports to families.
- The outdoor spaces are well used by all staff to allow children fresh air and time out of the classroom in a relaxing setting.
- Staff use SMART targets to make Staged Intervention Action plans specific to individual learner needs; parents are actively involved in the planning and reviewing process.
- The mindfulness/sensory room is being used with better guidance and protocols in place to support children with neurodiverse thinking and offer others quiet space as required. A new path in the school grounds means a more inclusive area for wheelchair users.
- Opportunities for staff to explore their own wellbeing and promote a culture of wellbeing, including yoga and fitness classes.
- Strong links with Active Schools. Upper school pupils completed their Junior Coaching Award and have had extra-curricular opportunities across the session.
- Visiting PE and sports specialists enhanced pupil skill and promoted teamwork.
- A new school vision and values based on Paul Dix approaches were developed across the school community with input from all stakeholders.

### Pupil Equity Fund

- Extra teacher staffing allowed Principal Teacher to support in class and increase adult to pupil ratio, offering more time for wellbeing conversations.

### Next Steps

- The introduction of the 'Treehouse' mental wellbeing resource will be used to help give a clearer structure to mental wellbeing inputs – with parent and staff workshops also used to demonstrate the importance of good mental health for all.
- Introduction of a quiet/sensory space will widen the scope of environments already available, giving pupils a place to relax and take time out as required.

School Priority 4 : Outdoor Learning Framework

To focus on improving staff confidence and competence in relation to outdoor learning and loose parts play.

**NIF Priority: 1 & 2**

**Links to HGIOS 4 / HGIOELC**

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

### **Progress and Impact**

- Staff began to develop the outside spaces, introducing an outdoor classroom which was used regularly, with pupils encourage to explore and enquire through loose parts play.
- Evidence of strong links with local businesses to supply materials and offer specialist input, clearly evident at events such as the World of Work Day.
- More outdoor learning experiences are taking place in the EYC and upper school classes due to the new resources purchased.
- Lead staff member supported colleagues in developing knowledge and skills in relation to outdoor learning, further enhanced by the regular Curriculum Development Days.
- Lead staff member attended a variety of CLPL outdoor learning training to help further support the implementation of outdoor learning across the school.
- Head Teacher worked as part of authority outdoor learning group and helped develop a plan to support the delivery of outdoor learning.
- All classes engaged in outdoor learning experiences, with the lower primary and EYC involved in weekly visits into the local area.
- Cluster working groups focussing on science, STEM and technologies all played a positive role in staff development, leading to a wide variety of valuable learning experiences for the pupils.
- A good breadth of science outcomes and more depth within outcomes was evident, due to increased understanding of concepts being explored as part of outdoor learning and other curricular areas.
- Early years pupils are given exciting learning opportunities through regular outdoor learning and messy play, with the introduction of Forest Kindergarten further enhancing the learning opportunities. Parents were included in this and benefitted from the family learning opportunity.
- Pupils and parents gave very positive feedback about experiences in relation to this priority. Pupils describe them as fun, exciting, interesting, challenging and educational showing their positive attitudes to learning in different ways and in different contexts. Parental feedback showed an enthusiasm to continue Curriculum Development Days and an understanding of the wider benefits of learning in this way.
- The school worked with cluster schools and an outdoor expert for World Ocean Day where the children experienced a different aspect of outdoor learning within a context.
- Stronger links have been made with the cluster secondary around science, STEM and IT, with secondary colleagues teaching within the school and also supporting staff working parties.

### **Pupil Equity Fund**

- NQT in other school helped reduce class contact of outdoor lead staff member, allowing them more time and opportunity to support colleagues with outdoor learning.

### **Next Steps**

- Introduce clear and consistent thinking routines across all areas to develop the thinking culture within the school. MTV expertise from the secondary and links with the authority lead practitioners will play a key role in this development.

## **Evaluation Summary**

Quality Indicator	Comments
<p>1.3 Leadership of change</p> <p><b>Very Good</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff are committed to ensuring they achieve the highest possible standards and success for all learners while pupils are aware of these high expectations. Pupils have opportunities to take on roles around the school and this helps to develop their understanding of the ambitious vision of the school.</li> <li>• Pupils, parents and staff were involved in the creation of the vision and values of the school, which will help foster a better sense of community and allow for true collaboration moving forward. The pupils designed a new school logo and wrote and recorded a song to enhance support the vision.</li> <li>• The Head teacher manages the strategic direction and pace of change, which was showed signs of continued improvement, with positive staff relationships and trust between colleagues and other stakeholders as the foundation of these changes. Staff were visibly more engaged in curricular developments and keen to be a part of creating the school improvement plan.</li> <li>• Audit information is shared with all stakeholders through curriculum events, letters, Parent Council meetings, Pupil Council meetings, assemblies, etc.</li> <li>• Staff are data literate and information is used to inform decisions about support for learning and school improvement.</li> <li>• Stakeholders' views were sought much more regularly throughout the session, with views on wellbeing approaches and school improvement. The School Improvement Plan was discussed with parents in depth, and agreed that this practice would continue moving forward with the school budget being included in discussions to determine best use of funding and prioritising of resources. The annual authority questionnaire described a very positive picture of the school, with parents very happy with the quality of care and education being offered.</li> <li>• Staff remits and SIP objectives are closely aligned through a focussed PRD process and team approach to agreeing school priorities. All staff are reflective of their own practice and show a commitment to professional dialogue, accessing additional CLPL, collegiate learning and self-evaluation – with the newly introduced Curriculum Development Days proving to be an excellent vehicle for staff development. A vision for continuous improvement and achieving high standards is clearly developed in the practice of all staff.</li> </ul>
<p>2.3 Learning and teaching and Assessment</p> <p><b>Very Good</b></p>	<p><u>Learning and engagement</u></p> <p>Across all areas of the school there is a calm, purposeful and welcoming ethos and all children engage in their learning tasks. Children interact well with each other when working in pairs and small groups. There is a range of well-planned activities which enable children to contribute very effectively to the life of the school and the wider community. Pupil groups ensure that children's views are sought and these views are shared at staff and parent meetings.</p> <p><u>Quality of Teaching</u></p> <p>Overall the quality of teaching is very good with excellent practice evident at times. Staff use a variety of learning and teaching approaches, with active learning, play/exploration-based approaches and collaborative learning being used across all stages. Staff know the children very well and have achieved an inclusive and supportive learning environment founded on their values. All teachers share the purpose of learning with children. In both classes children are well supported and there are increasingly high expectations from staff, children and parents. Teaching staff make effective use of questioning to encourage children to think about prior learning and build on this, with collegiate planning and whole schools topics creating a wonderful flow between classrooms. Distributed leadership roles across the school promote a positive learning environment for all children.</p> <p><u>Effective use of assessment</u></p> <p>A range of assessment techniques are used across the school to provide evidence of children's progress and are used to identify potential barriers to the children's learning. Teachers mostly use high quality assessment tasks to support learner conversations and offer a robust evidence base, increasing the validity of assessment data. There remains further scope to create moderation opportunities across both school and cluster, as well as further explore the use of high quality assessments. We used the whole suite of GL assessments to determine starting points for pupil learning.</p>

<p>3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion</p> <p><b>Very Good</b></p>	<p><u>Wellbeing</u> - Staff understand their responsibilities in relation to child protection and safeguarding, with annual refresher training, and the school also complies with its statutory requirements and codes of practice regarding additional support needs, wellbeing and inclusion. All staff have undertaken Child Protection and RRS training, and some staff took part in Nurture and ACES training this session. Some staff have a responsibility for after school clubs which are well attended by pupils. Pupil surveys state that all children feel safe and cared for in school and know who to go to if they need help. There is a nurturing approach across the whole school with very positive relationships between pupils and staff. A whole school culture of wellbeing was created this session and targeted interventions were put in place to support those struggling with health, particularly mental wellbeing. A sensory room has been developed and pupils have engaged with outside services to support growth mindset and mental wellbeing.</p> <p><u>Fulfilment of statutory duties</u> - We comply and actively engage with all statutory requirements and codes of practice such as GTC registration, 2 hours of high quality physical education, ASN legislation and Health and Safety. Our policies link clearly to RRS, GIRFEC and on-line safety advice and promote a positive approach to the values and ethos of the school. We use the South Ayrshire Staged Intervention process and the SEEMIS Wellbeing assessments to ensure that appropriate trackable targets are identified for children. Whole school staff receive training on Child Protection and Wellbeing at beginning of session.</p> <p><u>Inclusion and equality</u> - We are a highly inclusive school and we understand and celebrate diversity within our school and the communities that we serve. We have effective strategies in place to support children who are facing challenges.</p>
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<p>3.2 Raising attainment and achievement</p> <p><b>Very Good</b></p>	<p><u>Attainment in literacy and numeracy</u></p> <p>The school data shows that all children at early level P1 are making expected progress at the appropriate levels of attainment in reading, listening and talking, writing and numeracy. At first level, many children are struggling to achieve appropriate CfE levels and this has been identified as a target area for next session. Data from across the council has shown that this is a similar story in other schools and likely due to the impact of COVID enforced closures. At second level, most pupils are making expected progress at the appropriate CfE levels, despite the challenges of COVID. Children with additional support needs are making good progress towards their targets.</p> <p><u>Attainment over time</u></p> <p>Most children are making good progress from their prior levels of attainment. Although the school has continued tracking attainment and progress, the early closure due to COVID-19 meant that there is a gap in tracking data from previous sessions. Children who may require additional support with their learning are supported well. Pupil attainment across the school has undoubtedly been affected by the pandemic but we will continue to use data to inform where support is most required.</p> <p><u>Overall quality of learners' achievement</u></p> <p>Children appreciate the many opportunities they have to succeed in community events, sports and a wide variety of lunch and after school clubs. There are opportunities within the schools for children to develop the four capacities and to participate in the wider life of the school including, celebration of success assemblies, house captains and eco schools. Achievements are regularly celebrated and displayed within classes and corridors and shared on Twitter. Children can achieve a range of awards through school and active school participation. Children regularly get opportunities to develop their skills in being responsible citizens through the various pupil voice groups and charity work. We support children who have particular interests and talents to enable them to develop their skills at clubs within their community and we offer financial support where required.</p> <p><u>Equity for all learners</u></p> <p>The school has received pupil equity funding (PEF) and is targeting the use of this money as identified by the Scottish Government to support in closing the poverty related attainment gap. While there are clear plans for using the Pupil Equity Fund based on accurate data, better tracking systems are required around the success of interventions and pupil wider achievements.</p>
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## What are the key priorities for improvement in 2023/24?

### Literacy and English

- To raise attainment in Literacy and English for all whilst closing the attainment gap between our most and least disadvantaged.
- Develop a reading culture within the school, as part of the South Ayrshire Reads initiative, including the number of pupils reading for enjoyment.
- By June 2024, increase the number of pupils showing expected or better than expected progress in GL Literacy Assessments.

### Numeracy and Mathematics

- To raise attainment in Numeracy and Mathematics for all whilst closing the attainment gap between our most and least disadvantaged.
- Increase the number of pupils showing expected or better than expected progress in GL Numeracy Assessments.
- Develop further opportunities to engage families with CPA approaches through use of Learning Journals, videos and open events.

### Health and Wellbeing

- The introduction of the 'Treehouse' mental wellbeing resource will be used to help give a clearer structure to mental wellbeing inputs – with parent and staff workshops also used to demonstrate the importance of good mental health for all.
- Further specialist inputs would enhance pupil learning and improve staff knowledge in relation to all aspects of wellbeing; increased collaboration with educational psychology will be an important factor in this improvement.

### Developing a Culture of Thinking

- Create more opportunities for key staff to share expertise and build capacity across team.
- Explore the use of free flow between learning spaces during whole school topics.
- Link play-based learning to different outdoor learning and loose parts play.

### Early Years

- To explore opportunities to create free flow and consider how we will continue to meet the needs of all children if 2-year-old places are to be introduced.

## What is the capacity for improvement?

The school has a strong staff group who are motivated and open to new ideas, with supportive families and excellent ties to the local community. This stands the school in good stead as it continues to raise attainment and achievement for all, embedding the vision of the National Improvement Framework.

The capacity for improvement has been measured through the careful analysis of triangulated quality assurance evidence alongside 'How Good is our School 4' and 'How Good is our Early Learning Centre.' Additional evaluation of Pupil Equity Fund projects and targeted interventions has allowed the school to analyse the strategic gains made towards ensuring both excellence and equity for all and identify future opportunities for strategic growth.

Continuing to make tracking and self-evaluation procedures even more robust will ensure the high quality of education being delivered in Straiton Primary School and Early Years Centre will also continue to improve as we develop our pedagogy and practice. Family Learning events this session have continued to be well attended and this is an area that we will continue to build on, taking account of the views of our families and partner agencies.

The school is very well placed to continue delivering high quality teaching, learning and assessment.