



Standards and Quality Report Symington Primary  
School / Early Years Centre 2022-23



Proud to be Part of the Pride

## Introduction

Symington is a village school which is well supported by the community and parent body. We are proud of our achievements and maintain high standards for our learners who willingly engage. Our key strength is the ethos of the school and what we value. We know our learners well and have high aspirations and expectations of them.

## Values

### Vision

Take pride in yourself, inspire your learning and work together to become the best you can be.  
"Be proud to be part of our PRIDE"

### Values

Positive

Rights Respecting

Inclusive

Determined to Succeed

Excellent



## Aims

Staff at Symington Primary School aim to enable all young people to become: confident individuals, successful learners, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

- **We aim** to work as a team with parents, children, staff and the wider community, maintaining good relationships for all.
- **We aim** to provide an interesting and stimulating curriculum that is relevant and accessible to all learners, whilst maintaining high standards of learning and teaching.
- **We aim** to develop children's self-esteem, confidence and life skills to enable them to become passionate learners for life and overcome the challenges of the future.
- **We aim** to promote every child's aspirations and support them to reach their learning and personal goals.
- **We aim** to value and respect other people's views, beliefs, cultures and religions promoting equality and inclusion and encouraging all to be Rights Respecting.
- **We aim** to maintain high standards of attainment and achievement ensuring that all learners reach their full potential.

## Context of the school / early years centre

Symington Primary is a friendly and welcoming school situated in South Ayrshire, serving the village of Symington and the surrounding district including Craigie Village. The area is rural and many of the children are brought to school by bus and taxi. The school has a free meal entitlement of 10% and currently has 15 children attending on placing request.

The school was last inspected by HMIe May 2011. You can access this report at <https://www.educationscotland.gov.uk> This report was followed through as is normal at the 2 year point and the school was visited by Local Authority Inspection Team in May 2013. The school also had a Local Authority Improvement visit in March 2020 just before COVID lockdown began.

The school serves a mixed community despite SIMD spread being between 4 and 7, The village setting means SIMD is not a valuable indicator, families experience considerable differences in circumstance. The village is well known for easy access to A77 and catches many commuting families for work. The community is currently undergoing significant building works with the building of around 200 family homes. This will have future impact on the school. The school showed an absence rate of 7.7% until March 2023 which is in line with authority levels but more than previous years. We also had no exclusions in this session.

This session the school has an Early Years Centre offering sessions to both three and four year old children. EYC still offers 1140hrs per child with 51 children enrolled for the year. Our school roll this year was 148 children making a class structure of P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6 and P7. Our team of staff is complemented by having 6 full time Early Years Practitioners, 2 Pupil Support Assistants and 2 clerical staff.

All staff at Symington work very much as a team, supporting and helping each other in our aim to ensure that we offer a caring, happy and stimulating learning environment for all the children in our care.

The school offers an excellent environment for learning and teaching and both pupils and staff are understandably proud of their school. Displays reflect the work being carried out within classrooms and are bright, colourful and stimulating.

Symington has a very supportive Parent Council. It has worked over the session in assisting the school by raising money to help enhance the children's experiences during the cost of living crisis. This has included ensuring all children were paid for to experience pantomime at the theatre and continuing to build on our outdoor experiences.

Most children from Symington Primary transfer to Prestwick Academy for their secondary education alongside our cluster schools; Monkton, Heathfield, Kingcase and Glenburn. We worked extensively together to provide a smooth transition for all pupils involved.

At Symington, we encourage all children to wear school uniform, which is a dark green sweatshirt and grey trousers or skirt. Our nursery children wear bright yellow t-shirts and sweatshirts.

## What key outcomes have we achieved?

During this last session, we have been working towards the targets identified in our school improvement plan in order to build on our successes and address the areas for development that were highlighted through our self-evaluation procedures. We have continued engage with the self-evaluation toolkits, *How Good Is Our School 4*, and *How Good Is Our Early Learning and Child Care* to guide us in our pursuit of excellence. To inform our practice we have planned opportunities not only to look inwards to identify our key strengths and next steps, but through collegiate working with our cluster, family of schools and local authority, we have looked outwards, learning from what happens elsewhere to challenge our thinking.

The school has robust process and procedures in place to support self-evaluation in order to secure improvements. This data comes from range of evidence:

### Quantitative Data

- Analysis of pupils' progress and attainment using Curriculum for Excellence and Assessment for Excellence results.
- Attendance levels
- Exclusion levels

### Documentation/Evaluative Data

- Annual evaluation of School Improvement Plan by staff and pupils
- Teachers' records and strategic and operational plans
- Pupil Progress Meetings
- Tracking of Monitoring of Individualised Education Programmes / Staged Intervention
- Personal Achievement and associated data.
- Plans and evaluations of interdisciplinary topics reflecting the children's involvement
- Transition plans for Early Years to P1, stage to stage and P7 to S1
- Minutes of staff meetings - monitoring progress and achievement of School Improvement Plan priorities
- Staff PRD/PDR and Professional Update
- Records and evaluation of CLPL activities
- Interagency Working
- Remits/timetables of teachers, support staff and specialist staff

### Direct Observations

- Focussed classroom observations, including sampling pupils' work and views on their learning
- Peer Observations

### Views/Questionnaires

- Questionnaires to pupils/ parents/staff - This year the PIE survey and Scottish Government HWB survey.
- Views from monthly school elective and committee groups

**School Priority 1 : Learning Teaching and Assessment**

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

**NIF Drivers:**

Teacher professionalism;  
Parental engagement;  
Assessment of children’s progress;  
School Improvement;  
School Leadership  
Performance Information

**Links to HGIOS 4 / HGIOELC**

**HGIOS4 QI:**

- 2.2 Curriculum (Learning Pathways)
- 2.3 Learning teaching and assessment
- 2.4 personalised support
- 2.6 Transitions
- 2.5 Family Learning
- 3.1 ensuring well being, equality and inclusion
- 3.2 Raising Attainment and achievement

**Progress and Impact**

- **Children experience high quality learning, teaching and assessment approaches across the school** Teachers use curriculum mapping to ensure breadth and challenge across all stages. Robust data is used to triangulate teacher judgements and strengthen assessment approaches for different learners.
- **Early Years Centre Play based curriculum continues to meet the needs of all children due to the development of the quality of play pedagogy** This has successfully extended within P1 and tentatively within P2 using the triangle approach to provocations for learning. This has seen learners adopt a more investigative and individualised approach to problem solving and learning.
- **Improvements in the use of Planning, Assessment & Moderation in literacy to ensure outcomes for learners are consistent.** – Moderation and extended work across the cluster are well underway and continue to develop influencing next year’s improvement plan.
- **Children’s experiences will benefit from greater stakeholder involvement in planning of Numeracy** - Children are successfully using different thinking methods and displaying their learning in a variety of interactive ways. Following feedback from maths workshops parents have asked for help in understanding some maths methodology for next session.
- **To ensure high quality transition activities through an audit of current provision and impact and identify next steps in improve processes and ensure consistency in maths (Cluster Collaborative)** –successfully implemented to ensure better outcomes for learners across the cluster, this has included parent information sessions and transition between primary and secondary.

**School Priority 2 : Improvement in children and young people’s health and well being at Symington Primary and Early Years Centre**

**NIF Priority:**

Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing

**National Improvement Framework Drivers:**

Assessment of children’s progress  
Parental engagement  
School improvement

**HGIOS 4/HGIOELCC QIs**

- 2.1 Safeguarding and child protection
- 2.2 Curriculum
- 2.4 personalised support
- 2.5 Family learning
- 2.7 Partnerships
- 3.1 ensuring well being, equality and inclusion

**Improvements to learners’ physical, emotional and mental wellbeing. -**

**Increased range of curricular and wider achievement activities available to all learners.**

This year has seen the school successfully target and celebrate the wider achievements of youngsters by providing different clubs and electives to spark interest in learning. Youngsters have also taken up leadership roles in developing these activities, organising and leading their own clubs following their interest and developing in confidence.

**Staged intervention targets are well matched to the needs of learners** – there remains work to be further explored here due to review changes to STINT and post COVID long term effects

**Building mental health and resilience in all children-** this continues to a maintenance agenda for all as we continue to develop emotional well being and resilience in our youngsters. We have used ‘Emotionworks’ to help the children identify and name their feelings and emotions by physical and behavioural reactions providing them with skills in emotional intelligence and appropriate ways to share.

**Cluster Priority** : Working collaboratively, to endeavour to reduce workload and provide consistent approaches, pedagogy and systems to promote high quality learning and teaching across the cluster schools.

**NIF Priority:**

Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

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

National Improvement Framework Drivers:

- Teacher professionalism
- Assessment of Pupil progress
- Performance information
- School improvement
- Parental engagement

**Links to HGIOS 4 / HGIOELC**

- 2.2 Curriculum (Learning Pathways)
- 2.3 Learning teaching and assessment
- 2.4 personalised support
- 2.6 Transitions
- 2.7 Family Learning
- 3.1 ensuring well being, equality and inclusion
- 3.2 Raising Attainment and achievement

- **Ensure pupils have appropriate challenge to make progress in writing. Provide appropriate support to meet all learners needs-** to be further developed
- **Develop Cluster training for School Assistants and EYPs to best meet needs of Cluster learners**
- **To engage all learners with the community by exploring ways to further develop values and ethos - Develop a sense of community, pride and belongingness for all pupils and their families**
- **To increase skills and awareness in STEM building capacity and excellence for STEM learning**
- **To engage all learners in Mathematics through a cluster approach to Maths Week Scotland**

Very good progress made in all areas of cluster planning with colleagues. Particular impact felt from the additional training being offered to School Assistants to meet the needs of learners. Increased understanding of pedagogy and approaches have seen youngsters supported in their learning more effectively and increased achievement for individuals.

The Cluster approach to Maths Week Scotland has ensured a consistent and positive look at the wider use of mathematics in real life context for our youngsters and parents alike. This has increased interest in problem solving and in turn also increased attainment within mathematics, especially for those who have a barrier to learning.

STEM remains a focus for further development across the school and cluster.

## Evaluation Summary

Quality Indicator	School Self Evaluation
1.3 Leadership of change	<p><b>Developing a shared vision, values and aims.</b>            All staff are committed to achieving the highest standard for our learners, with this this in mind our vision is aspirational and reflects the experiences of our learners. Our vision, values and aims have been reviewed 2020 and involvement of all stakeholders was high. Review of vision will take place within 2 years.</p> <p><b>Strategic Planning for continuous improvement.</b>            Symington has a consistent and strong Senior leadership Team who have been heavily involved in the delivery of learning and teaching. Changes in school roll and size of centre will lead to further review of remits for the coming year. Staff take ownership of strategic direction of change throughout the school. Staff are leading at authority level in certain areas and willingly undertake leadership roles. There have been clear links within our School Improvement Priorities and CLPL undertaken by staff to lead change and improvement.</p> <p><b>Implementing improvement and change</b>            Over the past year staff have been consistently involved in self evaluation including self, peer and cross cluster where appropriate.</p> <p>We have creative and innovative ways to involve children in reflection and making change within the school and feel that they are listened to and involved in making change and improvement.</p> <p>Currently staff are clear on the context for our children and school. We have rich information regarding our local context to enable evaluation and support.</p> <p>Overall the school displays good leadership of change within current circumstances.</p>



2.3 Learning and teaching

**Learning and engagement**

Almost all of our learners display a high level of engagement in their learning, are motivated and interact well with quality learning experiences..

Pace and challenge- learners experience opportunities to be independent in their learning and take responsibility for their own learning and in the wider life of the school.

Pedagogy of play continues to make its way throughout the school moving from early level into first and reforming as Discovery Learning in the later stages. A variety of methods are used to engage with use of the outdoors to support and deepen learning emerging.

Staff hold high expectations of all learners and promote academic and wider achievement. Teaching episodes are of good quality and staff are keen to continue to promote and develop higher order thinking skills Children have opportunities to work independently, in pairs, groups and as a wider group. A variety of feedback methods are used effectively to inform improvement in learning. Digital technologies are used to enhance learning experiences across all classes within a limited infrastructure. Staff are committed to ensuring high quality experience for all learners and evaluate, support and challenge each other in doing so. They provide very good links across learning and encourage learners within context and making links with the world of work. We are being joined by new members of staff and hope to continue and enhance the quality of learning and teaching by embracing new pedagogy.

**Effective Use of Assessment**

Across the school staff know the children well and speak with the children about their learning and wider achievements. Children understand their next steps in learning in order to improve.

We have clear links between our planning learning and reporting procedures. Therefore, staff are able to plan appropriately to meet the needs of learners. Almost all of our teachers use information well to talk to children about their learning progress/targets. Recording of this is once again being reviewed. Staff take part in moderation within house and across cluster and wider to ensure reliable data.

Assessment is being embedded into the planning process for staff and can be tracked across curricular areas. Evidence of peer and self- assessment is to be found across the school, learners are involved in setting success criteria and making judgements on their learning. Staff are engaged at cluster and national level of moderation of assessments and are making good judgements. A variety of assessment approaches including holistic assessments have been developed in order that learners can demonstrate their knowledge and understanding.

**Planning, tracking and monitoring.**

We are planning more opportunities to share moderation of learning and teaching and standards,

SLT hold regular meetings to track progress, as a result, learners not meeting expectations are identified at the earliest stage and interventions put in place.

While planning across curricular areas clearly ensures progression, learners could be more involved in overall planning. We plan using different timescales to best meet the needs of learners. Good and manageable provision is made for



	<p>tracking and monitoring children's progress, including vulnerable groups and interventions which are evaluated regularly. Teachers use good quality data and are involved at every level to track and improve learner outcomes.</p> <p>Overall the school provides Good - learning and teaching experiences.</p>
<p>3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion</p>	<p><b>Wellbeing</b>  Positive relationships are central to the work of the school. Ethos and relationships are central to our school.  We have a shared understanding of behaviour expectations and as a result - review and refresh relationships  Staff have a good understanding of wellbeing and their responsibilities.  Children in our school feel confident in giving their views and that staff will take cognisance of their views.  Our school has shared understanding of well-being and inclusion implemented across the school. We are a re-accredited Rights Respecting School Gold Level. We work hard to help our families share this understanding especially with challenging/vulnerable children and using positive behaviour strategies. GIRFEC principles are promoted by staff and children and are written into our standards.</p> <p><b>Fulfillment of statutory Duties</b>  All staff are trained in child protection procedures and are fully aware of what they need to do to keep children safe.  We comply and actively engage in with statutory requirements in ASN and staff registration requirements and all staff receive child protection training. All learners meet the requirement 2 hours of PE, with ease. Our early years establishments make good use of care plans to ensure well being of children.</p> <p><b>Inclusion and Equality</b>  We ensure that early identification of barriers and evidence based interventions improve outcomes for our learners. Individualised plans are used to support learners and have clear targets and outcomes both in short and long term circumstances. Appropriate care plans completed in a timely manner. Curricular programmes ensure a breadth of understanding and inclusion of faith, gender, race etc. School works with the wider community in developing understanding the benefits and challenges of inclusion. School ensures that we focus on the entitlements of all and continue to foster this in our parent body. The school is making mitigations to combat the effects of poverty and the cost of the school day, using PEF to ensure experiences and time support the learning of youngsters whilst raising attainment.  Overall the school has a very good ethos of inclusion and equity.</p>
<p>3.2 Raising attainment</p>	<p><b>Attainment in literacy and numeracy</b></p>

and achievement

Almost all children across our school are making good progress in their own targets in BGE split -into early, first and second level.  
Symington is a high attaining school.

Literacy -

The school manages to maintain a high level of attainment in reading across the school using a mix of schematic and planned active learning. We will continue to focus on the attainment of skills in writing and reading and transference into application and life skills.

Numeracy -

Whilst the general attainment in numeracy is still high -tracking of cohort groups sees a maintain and slight gain in numeracy attainment but this remains with room for improvement especially with those are most vulnerable to deprivation. The school has made plans to target this area in future improvement plans with particular interventions.

**Attainment over time**

The school has made gains in attainment throughout the last 3 years in Mathematics and maintained high levels of attainment in literacy, generally above South Ayrshire and National averages. However, the school puts more importance in tracking the learning journey of individuals.

The senior leadership team, working alongside class teachers, tracks and monitors each individual child's attainment over a prolonged period of time to ensure teacher judgement and high standards.

Staff are confident in analysing and using data to improve outcomes for children.

We use a variety of data to identify our vulnerable groups and have raised attainment for most of our vulnerable learners. Attainment levels in literacy and numeracy are a central feature of the schools priority for improvement and raising attainment. (It should be noted however that children can be easily identified through data publishing with such small numbers in classes and the school takes care to avoid this.)

CFE levels achieved at age appropriate time in Literacy								
	2018/19		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		% ASN		% ASN		% ASN		% ASN
Development Milestones			76%	5%	90%	0%	85%	11%
Early Level	88%	6%	95%	5%	95%	15%	96%	8%
1 <sup>st</sup> Level	96%	17%	72%	31%	65%	41%	85%	19%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Level	82%	23%	92%	33%	87%	26%	92%	16%

CFE levels achieved at age appropriate time in Mathematics								
	2018/19		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		% ASN		% ASN		% ASN		% ASN
Developmental Milestones			86%	5%	90%	0%	96%	11%
Early Level	88%	6%	100%	0%	100%	15%	96%	8%
1 <sup>st</sup> Level	92%	17%	77%	31%	82%	41%	96%	19%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Level	75%	23%	92%	33%	91%	26%	92%	16%

#### **Overall quality of learners' achievements**

There are many Pupil leadership opportunities across the school with School Electives, Focus groups, community and charity events.

We track children's attainment and wider achievement and participation in order that we ensure children have a range of opportunities to choose from. Our youngsters are afforded a wealth of experiences by school and parents. Each of these achievements are recognised and celebrated at an individual and school level. This information is used to help guide children into choices which recognise their talents and help influence the whole school. Almost all of our senior pupils take part and achieve in Awards of Ambition and John Muir Awards.

#### **Equity for all learners**

We use effective strategies to track and ensure access to HWB opportunities and wider achievement are open to all of our learners across all stages. We use effective targeted strategies to close the attainment gap for individual learners and show improvement in this especially at first level.

Overall the attainment in the school is very good.

## What are the key priorities for improvement in 2023/2024

In line with guidance from the National Improvement Framework, the key priorities for Symington Primary and Early Years Centre for session 2022/2023 are:

- ✓ Learning, Teaching and Assessment across the Curriculum
- ✓ Improvement in children and young people's health and well being with emphasis on Outdoor learning.
- ✓ Cluster working for South Ayrshire Reads initiative

## What is the capacity for improvement?

The school has grown in size over the past year, an increased number of pupils and current staffing placement means considerable change in the staff. The following year will see over 40% of new teaching staff. This brings new opportunities and challenges for improvement over the coming year as we take account of previous priorities and develop consistent pedagogy for the future of our learners.

The school staff continue to develop their skills in self evaluation and work with the challenging questions of HGIOS4 using this information to reflect on learning and teaching within the school. In turn this influences our current approach to learning. We refresh our practice and keep abreast of new developments and initiatives in education. We continue to develop national and local authority objectives. The staff at Symington operate as a team taking things forward in a collegiate manner designed to include and value all.

We continually track and monitor the progress of all pupils, including those on the staged intervention process, and ensure that they are supported and challenged suitably to ensure improvement; working alongside the appropriate outside agency to build upon school capacity. Continued development of Cluster working and consistent tracking and monitoring of comparable data sets to share views and standards. This is also under review at authority level

We use adaptive leadership throughout the school providing opportunities for all to lead: from pupils, through classroom practice and appropriate forums, to staff taking a collegiate approach to new developments.