

School Improvement Report



Stow Primary School

2024-25

Review of Progress 2024-25

Context of the setting

Stow Primary is a small, rural school situated near Galashiels, serving a diverse and vibrant community. In session 2024–25, the school roll comprises 62 pupils in the primary setting and 20 in our Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) provision. The school operates three classes taught by three class teachers, supported by a Support for Learning (SfL) teacher and visiting PE and Music specialists.

This year, the school faced staffing challenges. Our P1/2 teacher was on long-term absence and subsequently took a career break, resulting in three supply teachers covering the class. Additionally, our SfL teacher also took a career break; a temporary appointment was successfully made in November. The ELC team consists of one Early Years Officer (EYO), three Early Years Practitioners (EYPs), and an additional EYP providing lunchtime cover. Until December 2024, the ELC setting received targeted support from the Early Years Team.

Stow Primary is committed to providing high-quality education within a nurturing, inclusive, and safe environment. The school's vision is captured in the acronym **ON TRACK**—Outstanding, Nurturing, Tolerant, Respectful, Achieving, and Kind. This ethos underpins the daily life and culture of the school.

We work closely with partner schools in our cluster to extend learning opportunities, share resources, and promote professional collaboration. Our values are rooted in mutual respect and a strong focus on Learning for Sustainability and interdisciplinary learning. Pupils are encouraged to engage in a wide range of experiences that support their intellectual, social, and emotional development.

This holistic approach is made possible through the commitment of a hardworking staff team and strong partnerships with parents and the local community—ensuring that Stow Primary remains a cornerstone of its community.

Stow Primary School has been awarded the Digital Schools Awards Scotland in recognition of excellence for digital learning and teaching.

PRIORITY 1

Learners will benefit from a consistent Literacy and Numeracy curriculum.

Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy will increase.

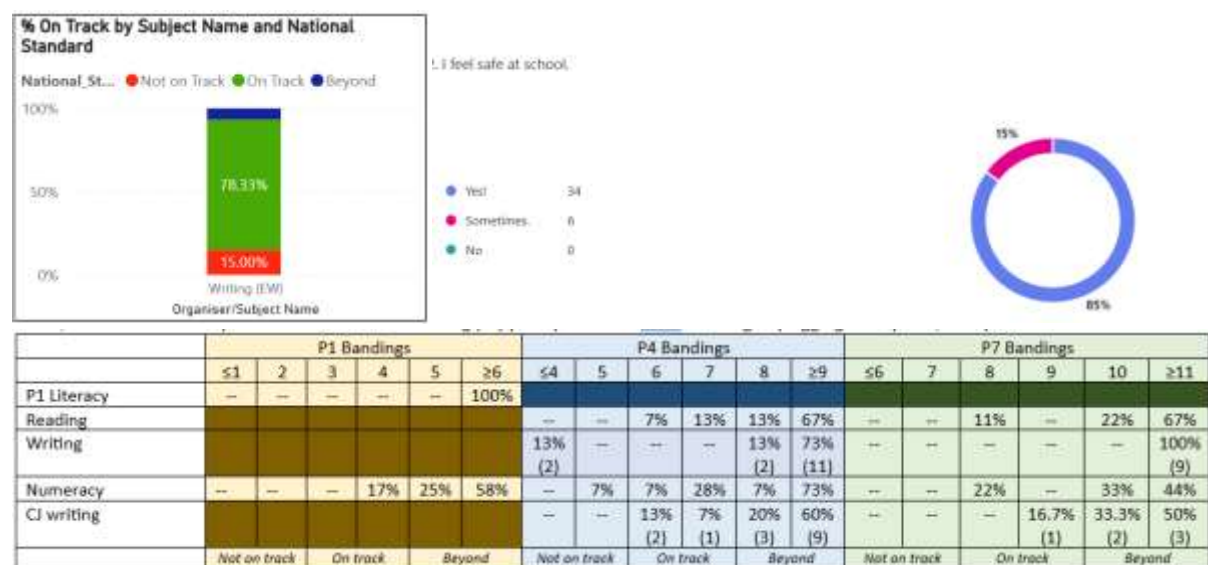
All staff will engage with the #SBCway Breakthrough Curriculum and use progression pathways to support planning and tracking.

How well are you doing? What's working well for your learners?

Almost all staff are confidently engaging with the SBC Breakthrough Curriculum and using progression pathways effectively to plan high-quality learning experiences. Talk for Writing and Emerging Literacy approaches are now embedded in daily practice, leading to well-structured, purposeful lessons. Showbie is being used consistently across most stages to support digital learning and home-school communication. Classrooms reflect a strong learning culture, with most learners demonstrating increased independence, engagement, and confidence in Literacy and Numeracy tasks. Collegiate planning and moderation are well established. Most of our learners are happy and feel safe at school while few say they feel happy and safe sometimes. They expressed they appreciate the staff and feel supported by them. Through recent improvements in our interventions and planning, we see the positive impact it has had on our progress and attainment. Feedback is used regularly and effectively to move learning forward. In line with SBCWay, we use a variety of assessment approaches to allow learners to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, skills, attributes and capabilities in different contexts across the curriculum. Our themed weeks, e.g. Science, Health weeks are very popular amongst our learners and staff. We work hard on making our curriculum more engaging and exciting by inviting external visitors to provide workshops for our learners.

How do you know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners?

SNSA data show that almost all learners across P1, P4, and P7 are on track or beyond expected levels in Literacy and Numeracy. Writing attainment has improved by 9% across most levels, supported by regular cold and hot write assessments. Learning walks and peer observations evidence a consistent approach to pedagogy and classroom environments that support high-quality teaching. Professional dialogue during tracking meetings and termly SfL consultations has enabled early intervention for learners requiring targeted support. Parents and community members attend our open mornings events during which our children showcase their learning. Pupils' feedback is positive, and their voice is used in the planning and choice of contexts for learning.



	B	C	D	E
	Start time	Completion time	Email	What do you like most about learning at our school?
1	10/22/2024 10:12	10/22/2024 10:17	anonymous	Getting smarter
2	10/22/2024 10:13	10/22/2024 10:17	anonymous	Reading's
3	10/22/2024 10:14	10/22/2024 10:18	anonymous	Help me get smarter and I have lots of fun
4	10/22/2024 10:15	10/22/2024 10:18	anonymous	Getting smarter
5	10/22/2024 10:17	10/22/2024 10:19	anonymous	Science and engineering
6	10/22/2024 10:11	10/22/2024 10:19	anonymous	Getting smarter
7	10/22/2024 10:14	10/22/2024 10:19	anonymous	Reading
8	10/22/2024 10:14	10/22/2024 10:19	anonymous	Maths: iPads
9	10/22/2024 10:16	10/22/2024 10:20	anonymous	Tessellation
10	10/22/2024 10:16	10/22/2024 10:21	anonymous	Maths
11	10/22/2024 10:19	10/22/2024 10:21	anonymous	Writing
12	10/22/2024 10:15	10/22/2024 10:22	anonymous	I like learning on the iPads
13	10/22/2024 10:16	10/22/2024 10:22	anonymous	Maths
14	10/22/2024 10:14	10/22/2024 10:22	anonymous	Maths, Writing, Learning with Mrs Waddel Mrs Collins and Mrs Curry sometimes
15	10/22/2024 10:15	10/22/2024 10:23	anonymous	Writing stories
16	10/22/2024 10:19	10/22/2024 10:23	anonymous	Maths and painting
17	10/22/2024 10:18	10/22/2024 10:24	anonymous	You are helping
18	10/22/2024 10:18	10/22/2024 10:25	anonymous	I like using the iPad
19	10/22/2024 10:13	10/22/2024 10:28	anonymous	Art
20	10/22/2024 10:18	10/22/2024 10:30	anonymous	Learning on the iPad
21	10/23/2024 9:00	10/23/2024 9:14	anonymous	Social study
22	10/23/2024 9:00	10/23/2024 9:14	anonymous	Lots of variety so much PE
23	10/23/2024 9:01	10/23/2024 9:14	anonymous	Art and craft
24	10/23/2024 9:00	10/23/2024 9:14	anonymous	I like learning mathematics
25	10/23/2024 9:00	10/23/2024 9:15	anonymous	Social studies
26	10/23/2024 9:00	10/23/2024 9:15	anonymous	PE
27	10/23/2024 9:00	10/23/2024 9:15	anonymous	I like art drama and music
28	10/23/2024 9:00	10/23/2024 9:16	anonymous	It's very diverse. And I like how there are people that come in and teach us stuff that we maybe don't normally get taught. I like that there is a lot of PE.
29	10/23/2024 9:00	10/23/2024 9:16	anonymous	PE
30	10/23/2024 9:00	10/23/2024 9:17	anonymous	There is a lot of variety or learning
31	10/23/2024 9:00	10/23/2024 9:18	anonymous	Having fun while learning
32	10/23/2024 9:00	10/23/2024 9:19	anonymous	I like that we get two hours of PE
33	10/23/2024 9:00	10/23/2024 9:19	anonymous	PE I love running about
34	10/23/2024 9:00	10/23/2024 9:19	anonymous	We get 2 days of pe
35	10/23/2024 9:00	10/23/2024 9:19	anonymous	People come in from the community and talk to us
36	10/23/2024 9:00	10/23/2024 9:20	anonymous	All the teachers are very supportive, understanding and listen to our opinions (I also really like the weekly awards from Mrs Robertson)
37	10/23/2024 9:15	10/23/2024 9:20	anonymous	Art
38	10/23/2024 9:00	10/23/2024 9:20	anonymous	It is for fun and I like it
39	10/23/2024 9:00	10/23/2024 9:20	anonymous	Social studies

What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?

Our next steps will focus on raising attainment in Numeracy, as SNSA results indicate that performance in this area is not as strong as in Literacy, especially in P1 and P7 cohorts. We will align our planning and pedagogy with the SBCWay Numeracy framework, ensuring consistent use of progression pathways and shared expectations across all stages. Additionally, we will work on developing a Stow PS Learning, Teaching and Assessment Toolkit to guide high-quality learning, teaching, and assessment practice. Given that around half of our learners have identified additional support needs, we will prioritise the use of differentiation to raise attainment for all learners. This includes more personalised approaches to teaching, flexible groupings, and targeted interventions. We will also enhance moderation and collaborative planning to strengthen staff confidence and ensure consistency in professional judgements, particularly within Numeracy.

PRIORITY 2

Create a safe and inspiring place to learn, where children are respected, their talents are nurtured, and they are able to thrive.

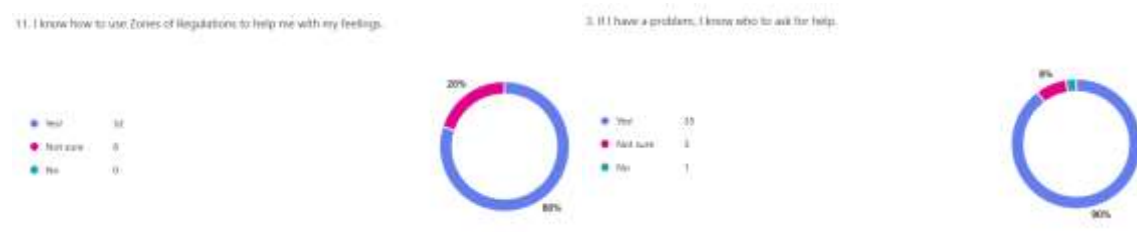
How well are you doing? What's working well for your learners?

Stow PS has made substantial progress in embedding inclusive, nurturing practices across the school. The Ready to Learn Policy, developed collaboratively and aligned with SBC guidance, has provided a consistent and robust framework for relationships and behaviour. The Zones of Regulation have been introduced, and the language is being used effectively and consistently by almost all staff. Classroom environments are purposefully adapted in line with the CIRCLE framework, and nurture principles are now becoming well-embedded, particularly in the ELC and early stages. Almost all learners are demonstrating increased emotional literacy and readiness to learn. Staff show a shared and clear understanding of

wellbeing and inclusive practice. The school offers a wide range of interventions to close and narrow the gaps in Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing. Support has been put in place for pupils with additional needs, e.g. enhanced transition, TD1, Inclusion and Wellbeing Team, CHIMES, Quarriers. The SfL systems are more robust and clear allowing children to access the support they need. The school has a positive relationship with other agencies, e.g. school nurse, OT.

How do you know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners?

There is reliable and meaningful evidence of improved wellbeing and self-regulation among learners. Wellbeing Webs, the Glasgow Wellbeing Tool, and pupil voice feedback show that most pupils feel safe, included, and confident expressing their emotions. Observations and learning conversations confirm that all classes are using the Zones vocabulary with growing independence. Parental and pupils' feedback highlight the positive impact of the school's ethos and support structures. Environmental audits show that the most of classroom spaces are effectively adapted to meet individual needs. Tracking data indicates appropriate or better progress for most learners with identified additional support needs.



I like Stow Primary School because...

9 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	It nurtures a family-like caring community and supports our different children to thrive. Staff are genuine, committed, approachable and dedicated. The school balances creative and varied ways of delivering the curriculum and engaging our children with the topics at hand
2	anonymous	It is walkable and my child's friends go there
3	anonymous	The disrupters have finally stopped taking over all the children's learning.
4	anonymous	It is a small inclusive, community centred school. Parents are made to feel welcomed and children are allowed to thrive - although the past three years have not allowed for this we are hopeful of a fresh start.
5	anonymous	It's friendly, welcoming, approachable, has our children's needs and best interests at heart. My children have been happy there, and when there are problems, staff have strived to address them in consultation with us.

6	anonymous	My children are part of a community that they have access to out-with school, community bond is important for us. My children are able to be in the same setting despite their different ages making family life much easier and less stressful. The teachers and staff clearly want the best for the children. There is support for parents if you ask for it. There is after school support in place at the moment and this makes the school very attractive for parents, however I understand this is under threat. The nursery has been transformed over the last year under the guidance of Ms Stewart. Our new headteacher is clearly listening to parents and what they find challenging. I can see evidence of this listening in many different ways over the past few months and this makes me feel heard as a parent. I love that the children begin languages at an early age and this is something I want to see more of.
7	anonymous	My children are very happy at Stow PS. They love the school and the teachers. I also feel that because it is a smaller school my children are receiving the support they need.
8	anonymous	I like that the staff know every child in the school and nursery. My child looks forward to going to school. The sustainability work that Stow has achieved has been amazing and so important. The staff have also worked very hard and have been dedicated to ensure the children have had stability and also fun during turbulent times.
9	anonymous	The teachers care about the pupils and do the best they can to support them.

What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?

We will now focus on embedding the Zones of Regulation language and strategies consistently across the school. We will continue to embed the CIRCLE tools systematically, ensuring that at least 90% of learning environments reflect inclusive design and proactively support a wide range of learner needs.

Given that nearly 50% of our learners have identified additional support needs, we will enhance our use of differentiation strategies to ensure that universal and targeted supports lead to improved engagement and attainment for all. As a result of the cluster trauma-informed training programme, staff will continue to apply nurture principles across all classes, routines, and relationships, contributing to a whole-school approach that supports wellbeing and readiness to learn.

Additionally, we will embed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) throughout our ethos and curriculum, ensuring children's rights are visible, understood, and lived across the school. This will help ensure all learners feel respected, valued, and actively involved in shaping their learning and environment. Our learners expressed their wish for this and are very keen on achieving RRS awards.

As a cluster, we will embark on implementing LGBT Inclusive Education, offering development programmes to our support staff around supporting children who struggle with mental health and are neurodiverse.

What should we do?

● Yes, I think this is very important! 😄 ● This is quite important. 😊 ● I'm not sure. 😐 ● I don't think this is important. 😞

Keep making your learning exciting and challenging with the SBCWay Breakthrough Curriculum.

Make sure P1-P3 have lots of play-based learning and P4-P7 learn by asking big questions.

Have more outdoor learning as part of our school day.

Make a special Stow Primary Learning and Teaching Guide to help teachers.

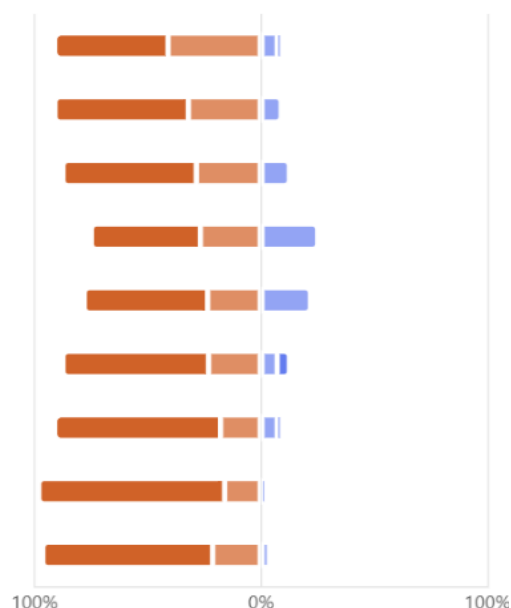
Update our school values (what we believe in and work towards).

Learn about LGBTQ+ inclusion, so everyone feels welcome at school.

Learn about children's rights (UNCRC) and work towards special awards for being a Rights-Respecting School.

Make sure all children get the help they need to do their best at school.

Keep learning about Nurture Principles, so everyone feels happy and safe in school.



PEF 24-25 Summary

In session 2024–25, Pupil Equity Funding was used to provide targeted support for a small cohort of learners identified as being affected by poverty-related barriers to attainment. Interventions focused on Literacy and Numeracy, with regular diagnostic assessment and weekly targeted support delivered by Additional Needs Assistants. Resources including Bug Club Phonics, Sumdog, Colourful Semantics and ear defenders were purchased to improve engagement and access to learning. Progress tracking showed that two of the three learners made measurable gains in Writing and Reading. Learner confidence and emotional regulation improved, evidenced by pupil voice. Professional dialogue and moderation confirmed that interventions contributed positively to narrowing the attainment gap. Remaining funds were ringfenced to maintain subscription access into the next session to sustain progress.

PRIORITY 3 Early Learning and Childcare

A clear and consistent approach to teaching learning and assessment across early level.

How well are you doing? What's working well for your learners?

Stow ELC continues to offer a well-considered and nurturing environment that supports high-quality early learning. The indoor and outdoor spaces have been purposefully developed using the SBC Audit Tool and EY CIRCLE guidance to ensure they are open-ended, engaging, and meet the developmental needs and interests of all children. Interactions between staff and children are consistently positive and increasingly responsive. A culture of

reflective practice is well established, with almost all staff (91–99%) engaging in self-evaluation, peer observations, and ongoing training.

Observations and assessments are becoming more consistent across the team. Staff use Showbie to document learning effectively and involve families in the process. The use of the Wait, Watch, Wonder model and focus on high-quality interactions have contributed to a positive ethos where learners are curious, confident, and increasingly independent. We have recently implemented the Key Worker system. This has enhanced communication with parents, giving them a key point of contact. Workload has been distributed and allowed for ownership of tasks and allowed staff to better understand the children as individual learners. Relationships have developed building more meaningful and consistent bonds. Our transition process has been designed to provide a more comprehensive plan, offering children multiple visits to the setting. This ensures their early learning and care experience is positive, with a personalized approach developed if needed. Additionally, we have created transition booklets for both parents and children to help enhance their familiarity with the setting before attending.

How do you know? What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners?

Learning walks, floorbooks, and tracking data show that almost all children are engaged in purposeful play and progressing in early Literacy and Numeracy. Planning is clearly informed by observations and next steps. Children demonstrate improved communication, problem-solving, and social skills. Staff reflections and self-evaluation tools indicate increased professional confidence in identifying and supporting learning. Parental engagement with Showbie is strong and valuable, and feedback from families reflects satisfaction with the ELC experience. At our most recent stay and play, almost all parents attended, showing their support and inclusion in their child's learning journey. Almost all interactions observed are of high quality and promote sustained thinking and emotional wellbeing. Due to the stronger relationships with staff, all children are happier, more confident, resilient and display secure attachment with care givers. All new children enrolling in the setting have settled in quickly and are beginning to develop meaningful relationships with peers and staff. Our holistic approach to transitions has best supported each child's needs and interests.

What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?

We will continue to embed a literacy- and numeracy-rich environment through consistent planning and resourcing aligned with the SBCWay curriculum. The focus will remain on ensuring all spaces are inclusive, stimulating, and designed to support progression in learning. We will strengthen our approach to moderation of observations to improve consistency and ensure that documented learning is meaningful and reflective of each child's developmental journey.

We will build on our existing strengths in responsive interactions by continuing to develop staff confidence through peer learning, coaching, and shared reflection. As a result of recent

ELC team training, staff will apply shared strategies to ensure interactions are purposeful and sensitive to the needs of every learner.

We will also take steps to further embed the UNCRC within our ELC practice, making rights visible and central to the daily experiences and language used with children. This will support a sense of agency, belonging, and respect across the setting. We will continue to develop our outdoor space to best suit our learners. We are in talks with our parent council to help facilitate purchasing of new resources and have been fundraising to facilitate the purchasing of outside resources. Our woodland area is currently being assessed and developed to safely use this area more frequently, moving forward. This will be done with engagement and support from parents and will allow for linked up learning opportunities with Primary 1/2, which will further enhance our transition process.

Further to recent training that the minority of staff attended, regarding promoting STEM in the early years. Staff are looking to undertake the STEM Nation Award. This will help staff in ensuring STEM is embedded throughout our practice. We have allocated a STEM lead for the setting to ensure that the approach is consistent and high quality and inclusive to all children.

We are currently developing the provision of annual planning. This will allow staff more time to plan provision and experiences as well as responsive planning to the children's needs and interests. This will also promote consistency as all children will cover outcomes multiple times with meaningful experiences.

Evaluate the following QIs against the six-point scale:

Excellent	this aspect of the school's work is outstanding, high quality and sector-leading
Very Good	major strengths, very few areas for improvement
Good	important strengths, yet there remain some aspects which require improvement
Satisfactory	the strengths within this just outweigh the weaknesses, basic provision for learners
Weak	important weaknesses, there may be some strength, the important weaknesses, either individually or collectively, are sufficient to diminish learners' experiences in substantial ways
Unsatisfactory	major weaknesses within which require immediate remedial action

Quality indicator	School self-evaluation	Nursery self-evaluation
1.3 Leadership of change	VERY GOOD	GOOD
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment (Including digital)	GOOD	VERY GOOD
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion	VERY GOOD	VERY GOOD
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement/ Securing children's progress	GOOD	GOOD

Our capacity for continuous improvement is: GOOD