



Education Resources
Curriculum and Quality Improvement Service
School Improvement Plan and Standards and Quality 2024/25

Carmichael Primary School



Strategic Improvement Priorities over 3 year cycle

Timescale: 2023-2026

| Strategic Priority | Year 1 2023-2024 | Year 2 2024-2025 | Year 3 2025-2026 |
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| 1. | Revising our school vision, values and aims with our school community and partners. | Increase attainment in writing. | Audit and extension of numeracy and mathematics programmes with a focus on application of mathematical skills. |
| 2. | Extending the opportunities for pupil participation through the use of HGIOURS and participating in the Young Leaders of Learning programme. | Improve/embed approaches to nurture and trauma informed practice. | Supporting parental engagement and family learning through a variety of approaches including in-person sessions and use of ICT. |
| 3. | Development of play pedagogy in our infant class linking to South Lanarkshire's Skills Framework. | Improve digital literacy across our school community. | Revision of school approach to modern languages. |
| 4. | | Implement the Circle Framework for Inclusion across school. | |

Maintenance Agenda

| Key actions | Relevant stakeholder involvement | Timeline for completion |
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| Our Young Leaders of Learning will start visits to other schools focusing on relationships across their schools and develop an action plan. | Whole School | On-going |
| We will continue on our Rights Respecting Schools Journey, further developing pupils' understanding of the UNCRC and how it relates to them. | Headteacher | Sept/Oct 2024 |
| We will continue to explore and embed the South Lanarkshire Skills Framework across all curricular areas. | | |
| Continued commitment to sustainability through Eco schools, Rights Respecting Schools programme, and development of Cost of the School day policy and practice. | Whole School Community | On-going |

Context of school

Carmichael Primary School is a small school in a very rural area of Clydesdale in South Lanarkshire. The current roll is 36 pupils over 2 classes. In the local area there is a mixture of privately-owned housing, social housing and farms as well as a village hall and a church. Both the church and village hall are under threat and the community is working hard to maintain or take them over. There is no public transport available for the village of Carmichael. The new school building was opened in 2010 and provides an excellent, modern environment in which our children can learn and achieve.

In Carmichael Primary School our vision is to create a safe and nurturing environment which encourages independence and resilience, inspiring pupils to reach their full potential. Our school values are kindness, resilience, confidence, creativity and respect, we aim to promote these throughout our school community and the curriculum. Our school motto 'Shine Brightly' was devised by the children and selected by all stakeholders as a mantra for our school.

Our role remains steady with a healthy intake of P1 pupils over the last few sessions. The projected role for session 2024/2025 is 36 children. We have a small number of pupils who are SIMD 1&2 or FME. We have an active and engaged Parent Council who play an integral role in school life. They support our aim to limit the cost of the school day by securing funding through grants and fundraising.

Our Principal Teacher is midway through a two-year career break, an acting Principal teacher has been appointed from our partner school who was already familiar with the school and staff. We are part of the Lanark Learning Community and continue to share good practice with colleagues across the learning community. This year we continued our Learning Community aligned CAT sessions focusing on practitioner enquiry. The aligned CAT sessions were welcomed by all staff and evaluated very positively.

We work closely with Lanark Grammar on their extensive P7-S1 transition programme, and also with Biggar High as a number of our pupils often attend. Carmichael Primary has also strengthened the working relationship with our partner school, Braehead Primary.

Carmichael Primary Standards and Quality report 2023-2024

Strategic Priority 1 – Revision of school vision, values and aims.

| <p>Carmichael primary vision, values, and aims have not been updated since 2017. Recently there has been significant changes in staffing with a new Headteacher in post and a long-established principal teacher leaving to take a career break of at least two years. Following Covid 19, four academic years of parents and carers have had a compromised experience of the school community, with limited face to face contact with school. Covid has also made us all, as a society, question our values and priorities. It is important that we take time to revisit our existing vision, values, and aims and have our whole school community invested in our future vision and curriculum rationale.</p> | |
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| Progress and Impact | Next Step(s) and rationale to inform SIP for 2024/2025 or establishment maintenance agenda |
| <p>School values</p> <p><i>A consultation was undertaken with all school stakeholders starting with the pupils, who discussed and compiled a list of values which they thought were important for our school. The process of identifying and defining values was valuable in it's own right and provoked engaging discussion around what was most important to our pupils. This initial list was streamlined to a list of 20 values that our school community voted on. Pupils, staff, families and partner agencies were asked to select the 5 values that they felt were most important. The adults found this a difficult exercise because all the values were important and reflected our own priorities and experiences. Most children appreciated and respected that everyone is different, and everyone is entitled to their own opinion. The top five values as voted for by our community were; Respect, Kindness, Creativity, Resilience, and Confidence. These values are displayed around the school and are being incorporated into classroom discussions and assemblies.</i></p> <p>Curriculum Rationale</p> <p><i>The headteacher and principal teacher participated in West Partnership Primary Curriculum programme. This enabled us to share practice and link with senior leadership teams across Scotland to focus on the design and rationale of our school curriculum. Education Scotland's Curriculum tools were used to frame consultation questions for our pupils, staff, families and stake holders. We wanted to know 'what was unique about our school context', 'what do you want for your child?', and 'what is important about the curriculum'. Responses were gathered through assembly activities, post-it note boards at</i></p> | <p><i>Next session we will formally include recognition of these values into our school rewards systems at a class and whole school level.</i></p> <p><i>Staff and pupils to make explicit links between our school values and the South Lanarkshire Skills Framework.</i></p> <p><i>Curriculum rationale will be shared in a variety of formats – paper version, QR code, Thinglink.</i></p> <p><i>Curriculum rationale to be revised June 2026 or earlier if appropriate.</i></p> |

school events such as curriculum workshops and parents' night, CPD activities, and a google form to capture the widest range of responses. These responses informed the content of our curriculum rationale.

Staff considered formats used by other schools to present the up-dated curriculum rationale, we decided to develop a Thinglink with embedded information which is more user friendly and will be available on the school website, alongside a paper version which will also be available for anyone who wishes to access it, being mindful of some of the connectivity issues in our community. A draft version is about to be shared with our pupils and families, once adaptations are made it will be available on the website.

School Motto

Pupils and staff felt very attached to our Motto: Shine brightly, and it was decided we did not want to change it because it reflects our values and ethos at Carmichael Primary.

Partnership Working with Braehead Primary

Partnership working with Braehead has increased significantly. This was aided by a member of staff from Braehead Primary taking on a PT role in Carmichael on a two-year fixed term basis to cover a career break, this created a natural 'bridge' between the two schools. Staff agreed to joint in-set and CAT sessions through the working time agreement which allowed meaningful liaison around school improvement and quality assurance issues across the school year. Staff have noted the benefit of support from peers across both schools with particular skills or interests in terms of planning and delivering high quality teaching experiences. Staff have taken on leadership roles which span both schools. Staff have benefitted from working jointly on aspects of curriculum development and moderation rather than working in isolation as we do not have stage partners. Staff are comfortable and confident using the joint schools calendar which allows staff to plan and collaborate more naturally when they can see what is happening across both schools.

Staff fully participated in the Learning Community CAT sessions, working with schools across the extended learning community, this was so successful that we have informally started working as a quad with the other shared headship schools in our learning community, Kirkfieldbank and New Lanark. This relationship has been further strengthened by working together on the Young Leaders of Learning project, and aspects of our Reading Schools project, such as the online book club. There has also been a marked improvement in cross curricular projects, for example, all staff incorporating elements of the Rights Respecting Schools Programme, ensuring it is embedded and not left to one member of staff to deliver and co-ordinate.

Joint School Visits

Continue joint moderation sessions, with a focus on HWB and writing.

Introduce peer visits across the two schools.

Discuss possibility of PT meetings for Carmichael, Braehead, Kirkfieldbank and New Lanark as a professional network.

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| <p><i>We have now hosted 3 joint school visits, each with a different curricular focus, we have covered literacy, STEM, and Maths and numeracy. Each joint day was planned collaboratively with pupils from both schools, who also led many of the sessions when the two schools were together. The pupils evaluated the visits very highly and they featured in discussions about highlights of our school year. In addition to key learning on each joint day, pupils involved in the planning and delivery demonstrated important collaborative, organisational, and leadership skills. It has been crucially important for two small schools with approximately 35 pupils in their whole school to build a broader range of friends and peers who they will transition to High School with. Both schools recognised the difficulties pupils had meeting new people and working in new contexts, this is a work in progress and some of the older pupils have found this more challenging, but the younger pupils think it is normal and look forward to either visiting or hosting their partner school. Some of the older pupils have made connections across the schools and clubs which they have identified as important, particularly after the residential trip to Lockerbie Manor.</i></p> | <p><i>Continue with termly joint visits supplemented by online links, such as online book club, joint pupils planning and evaluation sessions, and online Young Leader of Learning meetings.</i></p> <p><i>If online meetings are successful, look for opportunities to include other schools, particularly Kirkfieldbank, New Lanark and Braehead who are out YLL partners.</i></p> |
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Strategic Priority 2 – Introduction of Play Pedagogy and South Lanarkshire Skills Framework

| <p>Attainment in literacy and numeracy is good but we have not yet moved towards a more play-based pedagogy due to concerns about the impact on attainment of learners in a multi-composite class.</p> <p>Staff have consulted with the South Lanarkshire Play Development Officer and Carmichael Primary has been offered a place on Play Pedagogy training cohort 4. Our partner school, Braehead have already started developing play pedagogy and have shared their experiences of the early stages of the transition to a play-based approach linked to the South Lanarkshire skills framework. Carmichael primary will be able to disseminate the formal play pedagogy training across both partner schools.</p> | |
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| <p>Progress and Impact</p> | <p>Next Step(s) and rationale to inform SIP for 2024/2025 or establishment maintenance agenda</p> |
| <p><i>Play audits</i></p> <p><i>Play audits were carried out in June and November, the first audit was carried out in consultation with the Play Pedagogy development officer. Staff re-organised the classroom space to create clear zones for different types of play, which replaced individual pupil desks and chairs. There was extensive discussion around organisation and access to resources to maximise space and minimise distractions for learners.</i></p> <p><i>Additional Resources</i></p> | |

Additional play resources were purchased to complement existing resources using PEF money and a Tesco grant to support play, and teachers being creative in recycling and repurposing items. Staff also considered use of other areas of the school to create more space for pupils, such as the corridor and the lodge, however this was dependent on staffing to supervise.

Staff Evaluations

Staff were impressed by the vocabulary the pupils used when they focused on pupil led play, they also felt that it initially allowed them to focus on and rotate groups when they were working with four different stages in the multi-composite setting, especially when the teacher did not have access to a support assistant. Staff could also see how a play-based approach linked into the skills framework. However, staff were concerned about the impact on the P3s and 4s who were used to a more structured approach to learning and were now finding the constant unstructured activity in the classroom distracting. Assessment data in November also showed a dip in expected attainment, particularly spelling. Staff also found that there was a significant negative impact on pupils with additional support needs who required a high level of structure and/or were highly driven by their own agenda. As a result, staff decided to try using a hybrid approach, using a more structured approach in the morning with increased opportunities for play throughout the day. Staff used areas of the school and support assistants when they had one creatively to maximise learning opportunities for pupils.

Play Pedagogy Training

The principal teacher participated in the South Lanarkshire play pedagogy training which she found beneficial when re-organising the class and thinking out structuring play experiences, however, it was focused on straight classes, and adaptations to a multi-composite setting seemed to be an afterthought. In the final presentation she fed back the limitations she had experienced and the adaptations she had implemented to develop a hybrid model to suit the needs of our learners. Our principal teacher delivered a joint CAT session for both Carmichael and Braehead primaries which was evaluated very positively by staff.

The Principal teacher also worked in a learning Community practitioner enquiry group, focusing on Play Pedagogy, she became part of a sub-group of teachers in multi-composite classes who worked together to create a more hybrid model that suited their learning environments. They delivered a presentation on the challenges and solutions to the whole learning community.

Pupil evaluations

Pupils enjoyed the increased play experiences, and it was noted that when we initially started using a pupil led play approach in June, pupils who had spent at least a year in a more structured environment made good use of the resources and opportunities and were generally calmer within the learning environment. However, once we introduced a new cohort

We have produced a draft information booklet for parents on the importance of play and how they can support learning through play this will be distributed at the beginning of session 2024-2025.

Staff will evaluate impact of hybrid model of working January 2025.

of P1 pupils the dynamic changed significantly, and it was more difficult to focus groups of pupils on tasks. The new pupils needed input on how to use resources safely, how to tidy up resources, and to generally be aware and respectful of other children in the learning area because they had never done it before. Some pupils were asking for 'work', and the older pupils were at times displaying signs of frustration.

Pupils now have jobs that they need to do first and then they follow up with play, staff work hard to reinforce that play is 'working and learning' and take time to reinforce links to curricular concepts and creativity.

Flipp Programme

Staff attended training and introduced the FLIPP programme into the classroom. They were very impressed by the structure and range of resources available. Resources were differentiated to accommodate the needs of a multi-composite class. Staff found within a multi-composite setting it would be better to use a rolling programme and they did not complete all books because the older pupils were needing to move on at pace. Elements of the programme, such as Foundations of writing have been used consistently throughout the year.

South Lanarkshire Skills Framework

The South Lanarkshire Skills Framework has been discussed with pupils through assemblies. It is being introduced to classes informally through linking to learning intentions and success criteria, and through more formal pupil tracking sheets for next session. These will compliment work on Pupil Voice and give pupils an individualised focus for discussion around their existing skills and areas they want to develop.

Staff will continue with FLIPP but using resources on a rolling programme to avoid repetition in a multi composite context

South Lanarkshire resources launched in May '24 will be prepared and distributed to classes for August 2024.

Strategic Priority 3 – Extend and develop opportunities for pupil voice across the school

Due to the small size of our school and a whole school nurturing approach pupils naturally have a greater degree of participation in most school matters. All pupils have taken on roles within pupil voice groups re-established since covid. It has also been noted that some pupils' interpersonal skills appear to have decreased since Covid. We believe that the time is right to take a more strategic approach to pupil participation across the school; to improve the quality of pupil participation in school improvement, raise attainment through greater pupil engagement with their learning, and support relationships through understanding of rights and responsibilities

Progress and Impact

Next Step(s) and rationale to inform SIP for 2024/2025 or establishment maintenance agenda

Evidence of Pupil Participation Activities

Leadership roles

We started the year by appointing a range of leadership roles to our pupils, including, House Captains, Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSO), Eco Monitors, and Reading Schools Ambassadors. Pupils were supported by staff to lead each of these groups, drawing attention to the skills they were utilising in different aspects of the role. All our pupil leaders commented on an increase in confidence, and pride in overcoming fears such as speaking to whole school assemblies, attending events in unfamiliar locations or meeting with pupils from other schools. Our pupil leaders contributed to meaningful learning experiences across our school, the impact of their efforts was evidenced in an extensive list of pupil highlights, and being awarded our silver Rights Respecting Schools award, our second LEAF award, our GOLD Reading Schools award, and our 5th Eco Schools Green Flag.

Pupil Led Clubs

This session we introduced pupil led clubs; senior pupils could decide on a club that they would like to run for the junior class at lunchtimes. Throughout the year senior pupils ran pokemon club, rugby club, football club, dance club, drama club and art club. These clubs were reviewed very positively by the younger pupils, all junior pupils participated in at least one lunchtime club. The senior pupils had to prepare a club proposal, outlining the learning intentions of the club, the practicalities such as time/venue/resources, the skills they would be using and then evaluate the club once finished.

Playground developments

Our Eco committee worked in partnership with Lanark Men's Shed to make our playground more interesting and fun. They discussed ideas with the Men's Shed in school and then visited the Men's Shed base in New Lanark to finalise the plans. Most of the items have now been built and installed and an official 'opening' of our new playground is planned for the 24th June with volunteers from the Men's Shed joining our pupils and families to celebrate.

Joint School planning

As part of our joint learning days with Braehead pupils from each school came together in person or online with staff to plan and deliver our themed days, this year we focused on literacy, STEM, numeracy and Maths. Pupils displayed creativity, leadership and communication skills, as well as building a broader social network which will ultimately ease their transition to high school.

Continue to ensure all senior pupils have a leadership role within school and track over time for whole school.

Maintain awards and accreditation

Continue with pupils led clubs.

Introduce masterclasses delivered by P7 pupils.

Continue with joint school visits planned and delivered jointly by pupils.

Young Leaders of Learning (YLL)

An important role for some of our pupils this year was taking on the responsibility of representing our school as a young leader of learning. All senior pupils had the opportunity to apply using the YLL application form, our first group of YLLs were from P5&6. It was agreed with Council co-ordinator for the YLL programme that we would work as a team of five small schools rather than just being partnered up with one other school. The schools in our team are; Braehead, New Lanark, Kirkfieldbank, and Rigside. We arranged training for all our pupils in Rigside Primary rather than travelling to Hamilton, we chose to focus on relationships for our school visits. Pupils have been discussing the profile questions on relationships with peers in their own schools and this information will be used to compare against our team schools. Unfortunately, there was a delay getting the programme started so we have planned our visits for term 1 in the new school session.

Staff training

During this session staff undertook online training in pupil voice with Education Scotland, we also discussed the implications and opportunities of implementing wee HGIOURS throughout the school. Use of HGIOURS has been put on hold because we want to introduce it as part of the YLL programme. One of our teachers also delivered a CAT session on the Rights Respecting Schools award to all staff, and to our parent council, raising the importance of pupil rights in accordance with the UNCRC, which is now law in Scotland.

Commence YLL visits to schools in our team, develop action plan and use to inform school improvement planning.

Visits to be completed with children and an action plan created.