

Standards and Quality Report 2014 – 2015

Context of the School

Holy Family Primary School serves the Roman Catholic Community of Kirkintilloch and Lenzie. There are 354 children on the school roll and thirteen classes. Most of the children who enter Primary one have previously attended Holy Family Nursery or local authority/private pre-five establishments.

The associated secondary is St Ninian's High school in Kirkintilloch. A transition programme is in place both for new entrants to Primary 1 and for Primary 7 children moving on to secondary school.

The staffing complement of full-time equivalent teachers includes the head teacher, two deputy heads, one principal teacher, twelve full-time teachers one of whom is chartered, and four job-share teachers. There is also an education support teacher who spends one day per week in the school. An instrumental tutor for wind instruments visits the school every Monday to work with individual children. We have the equivalent of 2.5 classroom assistants, 2.5 support for learning assistants, two full-time clerical assistants, one part-time clerical assistant and a site co-ordinator.

Through our Improvement Plan priorities, we are constantly striving to further enhance attainment and consistently improve standards and quality in all school functions. A carefully planned collegiate calendar ensures that our Professional Learning Communities (PLC) meets regularly for professional dialogue, planning and moderation activities.

The school benefits from the support of formal parent bodies that represent the whole parent forum: the Parent Council and Parent Teacher Association. Links with the wider community are fostered through on-going work across all areas of the curriculum. The school operates a devolved budget and a staff committee works with the Head Teacher to ensure that the school's priorities are financed appropriately.

How well do children learn and achieve? (1.1 Improvements in Performance/ 2.1 Learner's Experiences)

The majority of children are performing well in all curricular areas, with almost all children in Primary 7 secure at second level in literacy and numeracy. This was monitored through weekly and standardised test results; class work including wall displays, jotters, photographic and video evidence and classroom observations. Analysis of standardised tests for Primary 4-Primary 7 in spelling, reading and numeracy highlighted that almost all children had made very good progress from their prior levels of attainment. Teaching staff also completed a weekly 'Action for Specific Children' sheet which was forwarded to the senior management team. This highlighted the children who required support or further challenge along with the teacher's action points for the week ahead.

Last session as part of the collegiate working agreement, our PLC met regularly to review and refresh reading and writing courses to ensure coherence, depth and breadth in learning. An evaluation of the current reading scheme for upper stages highlighted that whilst improvements in reading skills are clearly evident, there was a need to develop cognitive engagement through a wider variety of texts for our highly able learners. As a result, novel studies were identified and purchased in order to raise attainment and provide appropriate challenge and enjoyment. All staff have been trained in the delivery of higher order thinking skills and this is now embedded in all classes across all curricular areas. Stage partners met regularly throughout the year to plan rich learning tasks using the NAR flowchart, ensuring shared standards and expectations at all stages. Discussions with children, feedback from classroom observations and tracking meetings indicated that children are developing an awareness of themselves as learners through their involvement in target setting and profiling activities. A short-term working group developed a structured progression of skills programme for grammar for all stages; the impact across learning will be evaluated next session. In line with Tackling Bureaucracy we reviewed and refreshed all literacy planners and records, as a result, children have access to a structured, coherent and progressive programme of skills throughout all stages.

We are continuing to develop strong and secure achievement in RERC, with a consistent approach to learning and teaching and assessment. The monitoring of jotter work and assessment activities indicated improved levels of attainment and achievement at all stages. Standards are consistently applied across all levels and establishments through cluster moderation. Staff attended in-service training on the new moral education programme 'God's Loving Plan'. In addition to this, upper school staff attended training at the archdiocese headquarters and further staff development for all stages is planned for the August in-service in preparation of involving parents in the programme at the start of the new school year. Next session, Primary 6 children will have the opportunity to work in partnership with our parish community to achieve the Pope Francis Award.

Most staff have now attended local authority SCLIT training in French, ensuring that almost all children have had the opportunity to learn a modern language. All staff attended a twilight training session to discuss approaches, strategies and resources, and feedback indicated that the majority have increased confidence in applying French in different contexts and have successfully integrated the language into their daily practice. During classrooms visits an increasing number of children are keen to share their ability in French and are able to discuss their progress and next steps in learning with their peers and staff. Staff will continue to receive training in French over the next school year, and as part of cluster working will also have access to training in Spanish in preparation for the introduction of language 3.



How well does the school support young people to develop and learn? (5.1 The Curriculum/ 5.3 Meeting Learners' Needs)

At Holy Family we take a holistic approach to the curriculum ensuring that all children are provided with a breadth of experiences which are active, stimulating and relevant. All staff undertook a range of professional learning which included the right blend and balance of activities agreed by each member of staff with their line manager.

The cluster schools worked together to develop a programme of learning for ICT, which takes account of the experiences and outcomes, significant aspects of learning and skills progression framework for all levels. An audit of staff skills in ICT was carried out in August, following which a series of ICT workshops were provided and attended by staff. All attendees reported that the training had impacted on their learning and teaching. A second audit carried out in May highlighted an increase in teachers' confidence and the collated results allowed us to measure impact and plan future training opportunities. The Primary 7 teachers liaised with the ICT department at St Ninian's to carry out peer visits, which ensured a common approach across the cluster schools in the teaching of Microsoft Excel. Moderation of planned second level activities highlighted that the learning experiences allowed the children to develop skills for learning and skills for life, including higher order thinking skills.

Staff are aware of the unique profiles of individuals and make very good use of the GIRFEC National Practice Model and Staged Intervention to ensure that the needs of all children are met. This involved working with the parents and children to complete SHANARRI wellbeing assessments for all individuals on stage 2/3 pupil plans. This session all staff attended attachment training to support children's mental, social and emotional wellbeing with all reporting that it had an impact on their practice. The continued use of the Bounce Back programme is proving very successful with support staff reporting that children appear more resilient when dealing with minor playground issues. Following a successful application for a 'Food For Thought' grant, a group of children had the opportunity to participate in a Master Class Cookery Club. This proved to be very successful and the equipment obtained through the funding will be used to plan further developments in food technology for all classes.



We have large grounds which are utilised for outdoor learning and our PTA and Parent Council are currently engaged in the development of these areas to further enhance learning opportunities for all children. This year, children in Primary 2B were involved in a 'Grounds for Learning' project using the outdoor space at Lenzie Moss. This gave them the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills across the curriculum in an exciting and innovative way. The impact learning visits and visitors have is evident during classroom observations and can be seen in the quality of the children's work. Next session, a selected playground committee made up of children, parents and staff will work together to assess the current provision and impact of outdoor learning and identify areas for improvement.

Children at all stages contribute very effectively to the work of the school through engagement in our Pupil Council, Fair Trade Committee, Eco Committee and Health Committee. This session their achievements included raising £2,445 for SCIAF (with match funding from the UK government bringing the total to £4890), £888 for MacMillan Cancer and being awarded our fifth Green Flag.

Scottish Opera visited the school to lead the Primary 6 and 7 children in workshops as part of their IDL topic. This helped children to develop their capacities as successful learners, confident individuals and effective contributors through the use of opera as a creative learning tool. The children worked with our music teacher to prepare the songs for the opera 'Terracotta Warriors' before members of the Scottish Opera came to lead them in a dramatised performance. Feedback from parents, school staff and children who attended the production was excellent.

This year the school was successful in its application for a 'Sense over Sectarianism' grant, which enabled the Primary 7 children to work in partnership with peers from Lenzie Moss in a series of anti-sectarian workshops. The sessions were led by a coach from the charity 'Nil by Mouth' who reported that most children participated enthusiastically and were able to identify the effects of sectarianism and prejudice in past and present society. The award also funded development time for staff to refresh the learning experiences for Divided City/ Glasgow IDL topic.

Self-evaluation using the Assessment Toolkit highlighted that our next steps will include the evaluation and revision of the current numeracy, social subjects, technology and health & wellbeing planners to include the significant aspects of learning and skills progression guidelines. We will continue to benchmark our progress using stage 2 of the toolkit to ensure continuous improvement for all our children.

How well does the school improve the quality of its work? (5.9 Improvement through Self-evaluation)

Holy Family Primary School has a very strong capacity for securing further improvement. We have a clear and well-understood cycle for improvement planning and rigorously evaluate the impact of our priorities on improving outcomes for children. There is ongoing self-evaluation with teams at stage and staff meetings and areas for improvement are noted and included in our next Improvement Plan. Parents are regularly asked their views through the use of surveys, tear-off slips on reports and newsletters, or through the Parent Council. Collegiality is well embedded and staff work together in school and across the cluster to improve teaching and learning in order to meet learners' needs more effectively.

