

Strathblane Primary School and Nursery Class Standards and Quality Report 2010-2011

The information in this standards and quality report was gathered from various sources of evidence including:

- Teacher's and ECE's plans
- Class observations by the school's Senior Management Team and The Education Authority's Quality Development Officers (Curriculum Development Officer- Early Years)
- Photographs of gardens and gardening
- The school website
- Reports on enterprise projects Bring and Buy, Pantomime and Healthy tuck shop, Christmas crafts
- House meetings - photos , products , notes
- Pupil consultation
- Parents' consultation
- Parent and pupil feedback from sharing the learning events
- Parent and pupil feedback on pupil's progress reports
- Pupil's work and jotters
- Wall displays
- Standardised tests results
- Assessment information
- Minutes of Eco Committee, Pupil council and Parent meetings
- Attendance at parents' evening and feedback
- Positive letters sent in by parents and comments in Nursery Class comments book
- Improved behaviour and ethos- physical violence and swearing in school is now rare, behaviour in classrooms is very good – noise levels have improved , quality of pupils' work has improved
- Staged Intervention notes of meetings
- School and Nursery Policies and records of developments undertaken through staff development and collegiate working

Using the Quality Indicators in "How Good is Our School?" and "Child at the Centre" - Strengths and Developments were identified, evaluations were made and standards for improvement were set.

Introduction

In August 2010 the school welcomed four new members to the teaching team; this includes a newly qualified teacher who was working on her induction year. In December 2010 another member of the teaching staff retired and was replaced by the school's additional support for Learning Teacher. This year there have been seven single stage classes; no class was full to capacity. The school has nursery class with the capacity for 20 children in the morning and 20 children in the afternoon. The nursery class benefits from the support of a nursery teacher who works alongside staff and children for planned blocks of time throughout the school year. The Headteacher has been in post since August 2009. In August 2009 the school had one interactive whiteboard in the computer suite and one digital camera for all classes. In June 2011 there are now three classrooms with interactive whiteboards and the Parent Council has raised enough funds to two interactive whiteboards into another two classrooms. This now means that 5 out of 7 primary school classrooms have an interactive whiteboard. Every class in the school has a digital camera, a digital audio recording device (easi-speak) and there are two flip digital video recorders. This means that the school has a better capacity to provide appropriate learning experiences for children using technologies. In the Nursery class, with the support of fund-raising with parents, resources for numeracy, multi-

cultural and environmental resources have been significantly updated this year, including the purchase of carpets and other textiles.

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1) How well do young people learn and achieve?

School

Children enjoy a wide range of high quality learning experiences. Generally, the children behave well and respond well to praise and rewards. Almost all pupils listen attentively to their teachers and other adults, and remain on task throughout lessons. In all classes teachers use co-operative learning strategies – the children respond very well to working in together in pairs and groups and as a result they produced high quality work that has been showcased at a book launch in December, a pantomime in January, a sharing the learning event in March, a published community cookery book in June. The pupils have enjoyed being given responsibility for aspects of their own learning. In all classes teachers share the learning intention and success criteria; in some lessons pupils help to generate the success criteria. In all classes teachers have ensured that pupils engage in their own learning by using self and peer-assessment and this has increased confidence and skills in evaluating their own work. During class observations pupils demonstrated that they could identify their own strengths within the lessons and their next steps for learning.

All children are given many opportunities to learn outdoors including the use of local community as well as the school grounds. This has included applying their learning with measurement within mathematics, environmental education, health and well-being, science and art. All children are making very good progress in English language. Most achieve appropriate national levels of attainment in reading and writing. This year standards in writing have been raised through the introduction of a whole school writing project, school approaches to the teaching of spelling. Standardised assessments show that spelling has improved at all stages in the school. In reading, literacy circles approaches in P.3 – 7 improved engagement with texts and standardised test show very good standards in reading with many pupils working at levels above that expected for their age. The school has embedded consistent approaches for the teaching of writing using the Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers and Punctuation learning activities and robust success criteria and feedback to ensure that pupils continually progress and improve their writing as result of this children across the school are writing to an increasingly high standard for a range of audiences using very good vocabulary. Since the introduction of cursive handwriting this year standards of presentation in written work are continually improving at all stages. The majority of pupils have achieved appropriate national levels of attainment in mathematics.

Pupils are given opportunities to learn the four rules of number, information handling, shape, position and movement and measurement. All pupils have provided with opportunities to apply some of their learning and many have developed some of their mathematical skills within a real and relevant context. The Primary 7 class raised enough money to pay for the bus for their outdoor education residential experience, Primary 3 raised money to buy digital cameras and primary organised and ran a healthy tuck shop making enough profit to purchase a Wii and Wii Sports for the school. At all stages pupils need to develop their mental agility with numbers and be able to demonstrate that they can apply their learning.

Pupils feel that they are consulted about their views and feel that the school helps them to become more confident. All children are treated with equality, fairness and respect with staff working within the school values of respect, honesty, responsibility, fairness and co-operation. This year all staff have started using restorative approaches to build positive relationships and behaviour. Parents, pupils and staff have all reported an improvement in

pupil behaviour and incidents of violence or aggression are now rare. Parents and pupils have reported that anti-bullying strategies are having a positive impact on pupils' confidence.

Children are actively involved and enjoy success in a wide range of out-of-classroom activities. Many of the after-school clubs are led and organised by parents and staff and are very well attended. These include sports, reading and gardening. Children have achieved success in cluster and authority school sports events and competitions, including lacrosse, cross country and local netball tournaments. Some pupils have very successfully represented the school in a general knowledge quiz, a quiz about Europe and at the Stirling heats of Chess Scotland Tournament. Children are developing skills as responsible citizens by taking on roles within the school's pupil council. The eco group has been working with parents, staff and the community carbon neutral group to develop whole school awareness about sustainability and waste minimisation. They have raised money through the "rag bag" recycling and this will be used to improve the outdoor play facilities. All children take part in a musical play at Christmas. Each class also has responsibility for organising and presenting an assembly and at the end of the school year every pupil participates in an end of term show case event that includes recitals of poems and songs, drama production and cheer-leading. All pupils have shown an increased confidence with their presentation and performance skills

Nursery

In the nursery staff listen to children and respond to their interests this has been demonstrated when SMT have carried out observations, through parent responses and during planning meetings. Staff involve children in planning their own learning through group discussions and mind mapping. These plans are shared with parents and carers through the Parent Planning Folder.

Children generally behave well and are involved in setting the nursery rules which are reinforced by the happy flower system.

Staff work closely with parents to take account of any learning and development issues. Staff observe and record children's learning and achievements. They use this information to plan next steps in learning for each child. Activities are planned to meet the learning needs of each child. Where appropriate individual plans are created for children who require extra help with learning.

Outdoor learning experiences have been improved by the introduction of boxes that were created in consultation with children, parents and staff to develop purposeful learning in the outdoor environment.

In the nursery classroom a numeracy table has been set up and this is used to develop the language and skills of early mathematics. Identified children who expressed an interest in measuring applied these skills when measuring and problem solving for the mosaic wall.

2) How well do staff work with others to support children's learning?

School

All pupils are provided with a curriculum which has appropriate breadth at all stages. This year the school has made very good progress in developing the curriculum, taking account of the principles of *Curriculum for Excellence*. There is a strong emphasis on active learning. This has been most evident in the depth of learning and high challenge at all stages when pupils worked on a "rich task" in term 3. Staff have made very good use of the school grounds and the local area for a variety of lessons. This year children have benefitted from good quality inputs from visiting specialist teachers of art, music and

physical education. In May the children participated in a singing day. All pupils get around two hours of good quality physical education each week and are given the opportunity to try other sports provided through the Active Schools programme and School Sports week. Children at all stages have benefitted from a range of trips and visiting speakers. The school is successful in raising children's awareness of Christianity and other world religions and promotes aspects of equality and diversity through class lessons and school assemblies. Parents have reported that staff know the children exceptionally well as individuals. Teachers organise groups effectively and use a wide range of tasks and approaches to meet learners' needs. Teachers and support staff, including the support for learning teacher, work well together to provide well-judged support for all children. The school has effective procedures for early identification of children with additional support needs. Parents and children are involved in any action planning to support those with identified additional support needs. Targets are set within individualised educational programmes help children to make progress in their learning. The school makes very good use of productive links with educational support agencies to support children with specific learning needs.

Nursery

Staff work well with a wide range of agencies to support children's learning; this is evident from the progress made with staged intervention.

Parents, children and staff worked together to make crafts to sell at the Christmas Fair encouraging enterprise skills. During the learning context of the Post Office the children visited the local Post Office. There are excellent regular visits to the library and from the librarian.

Through the Parent Group children, parents and staff worked together to develop the garden: tyres for children to climb on and explore outdoor mirror, chalkboard, mosaic wall and planting and growing plants. The impact of this has been that children's gross motor skills have improved and confidence and resilience with all children has improved. In addition to these improvements children are now more aware of sustainable living and healthy lifestyles.

Parents receive regular information through newsletters, the sharing the learning event, two planned parent interviews, information at the start of nursery sessions and an update at the end of sessions.

3) How well are staff and children actively involved in improving their school and nursery community?

School

The school has developed very productive partnerships with the local community. The carbon neutral group has helped support a number of curricular projects this year. The local librarian has worked closely with staff to arrange reading events at the school and visits to the local library and she participated in the school's book week. Staff consult with parents twice a year at parents evening, meet with parents at the beginning of the new school year and have endeavoured to aimed to keep parents them informed about new developments such as *Curriculum for Excellence*, *school approaches to promoting positive behaviour and internet safety*. The Parent Council is very active in organising events such as a Hallowe'en Disco, Christmas Fair and Summer fair. Parents have raised significant sums of money this to help resource the school with two interactive whiteboards, subsidise social events such the Christmas parties, they have helped pay for school outings and helped develop the school and nursery grounds. The school communicates effectively with parents through regular Newsletters and pupil reports. The school website was launched this year and this is

managed by a group of pupils known as the “web crew”. Parent responses this year show that parents feel that the school deals effectively with any parental complaints or concerns. Children are supported well very well when moving into P1 from the nursery. The transition for primary went through the whole of the year including parents visiting the classroom, working alongside their children and the children sharing their learning. Pupils moving from P7 to Balfron High School have been involved in transition work and a few pupils with additional support needs have benefitted from enhanced transition this has increased confidence.

Nursery

Staff continue to develop their skills and qualifications. Staff are open to new ideas and willing share and develop good practice through their involvement in a Professional Learning Community.

Children are encouraged to express their thoughts in the nursery. Staff listen closely to children recording their conversations and respond to their ideas and suggestions.

4) Does the school and nursery have high expectations of all young people?

All staff are keen to continuously improve their own practices and the quality of experiences for children. They operate very effectively as a team to take forward priorities in the school’s improvement plan. Teachers and ECEs evaluate their own practice. The school and nursery uses professional review effectively to identify strengths and aspects for further improvement. All staff have undertaken relevant staff development activities and have shared the benefits with others. The Headteacher and Depute Headteacher monitor planning, progress and classroom practice regularly and provide staff with verbal written feedback to improve learning and attainment. Teachers and Nursery Staff involve children in reviewing their own work and in setting targets for future learning. The school and nursery gathers the views of children and parents to help identify areas for improvement. Staff have worked collaboratively to develop school and nursery approaches to promoting positive behaviour, planning for learning, assessment and reporting.

All teachers, ECEs and support staff promote the school’s values and have high expectations of children’s learning, achievements and behaviour. The school celebrates achievements in assemblies, wall displays, the school website and the local newspapers. Children are proud of their school and nursery, most have high expectations of themselves, and almost all are willingly taking on responsibilities and challenges. Teachers use a house system to encourage children to achieve well. All staff are trained in child protection issues and are clear about their responsibilities. The school takes appropriate and immediate action if children are absent from school without explanation. Staff use appropriate policies for ensuring children’s care and welfare, including safe internet use and anti-bullying. Staff place strong emphasis on helping children to develop their understanding of healthy lifestyles and this includes a school approach to relationships and sexual health, and building children’s resilience. An elder from the local church has helped the school to provide appropriate religious observance and provides the opportunity, for those children who want to, to attend Scripture Union Club and camp.

5) Does the school and nursery have a clear sense of direction?

School

The vision for the school’s development is shared with the school community. The staff team are highly committed to continuous improvement. This year the school has aimed to make improvements visible to all by reporting on these in school newsletters and highlighting progress made with school improvement planning on a wall display. Teachers and support

staff meet regularly to reflect on their own practice and improve the work of the school. They are willing and able to make changes and take forward new initiatives. They have revised successfully their approaches to forward planning in preparation for *Curriculum for Excellence*. The school staff, with the support of the parent council and the community, is very well placed to take forward the school's plans for further improvement.

Nursery

The vision for the nursery's development is shared with the learning community. The staff team are highly committed to continuous improvement. This year the nursery has aimed to make improvements visible to all by reporting on these in school newsletters and highlighting progress in the parents' planning folder with daily updates. Staff are willing and able to make changes and take forward new initiatives. They have revised successfully their approaches to forward planning in preparation for *Curriculum for Excellence*. The nursery staff in partnership with parents and the community is well placed to take forward the nursery's plans for further improvement.

6) Areas for development

To further improve the quality of learning and teaching by implementing Curriculum for Excellence through: cross- curricular planning; planning for learning using summative and formative assessment; reviewing the continuity of learning at transitions by

- Implementing a school approach to planning for learning and assessment – moderating the standard; particularly with writing within Balfour Cluster
- Focus on improving **mental agility with numeracy, financial education**, applying the learning within Literacy and Numeracy (including Nursery)
- Reviewing homework tasks - **Maths and Numeracy** – whole school consultation on homework
- Reviewing Health and Well-being to ensure that programmes meet the experiences and outcome of Curriculum for Excellence and ensure that **Health and Well-being** is planned of all pupils across learning (including Nursery)
- Continuing with developing **assessment policy** to include the use of learning logs and more parental involvement; improve monitoring and tracking of learning particularly and transitions (including Nursery)

To improve the learning experience for all children at Strathblane Primary School by promoting a culture of values and implementing active and outdoor learning approaches by :

- Implementing whole school approaches using curriculum map – to include cross stage working and developing and monitoring of leadership skills and pupils wider achievements to reflect the four capacities of curriculum for excellence within contexts of curriculum at school.
- Continuing to further improve House system.
- Raising awareness within school of GIRFEC (Getting It Right For Every Child) – (including Nursery)

Improve school ethos and develop approaches to behaviour management - To improve health and wellbeing by continually reviewing and developing the school

House system, implementing school approaches to behaviour management, continue to implement effective management of intervention programmes to meet the needs of individuals.

- Establishing leadership groups with cross stage working and monitor children's wider achievements (including Nursery)
- Whole school approaches to building the learning community and promoting positive relationships (including Nursery)
- Continuing to promote school and nursery approaches to behaviour management
- Continuing to plan learning activities within the House System as well as in class setting