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St Nicholas' Primary School  
Standards and Quality Report  
2021/22

## **Introduction**

In session 2021/ 22 we continued on a journey of recovery from the pandemic and as expected it was another year with both challenges and opportunities. We endeavoured to continue to support the wellbeing of all stakeholders, to address any loss of learning and to ensure we were making our school the best it could be. This report will summarise the progress and impact over the last academic session and identify priorities to take forward next session.

## **Context of the School**

St Nicholas' Primary is a co-educational, denominational school which is situated in Bearsden, serving the surrounding area of Bearsden and Milngavie.

This session our teaching team consists of 18.4 full time equivalent teachers and 0.4 education support. Within this allocation, there is a Head Teacher and 2 Depute Head Teachers. The school is supported well by administrative staff, classroom assistants and support for learning assistants. The staff forms a cohesive and effective team aiming to deliver high quality education.

Currently we have 286 learners in our school and the majority of the school population live in SIMD bands 17-20, with 3.4% of the school population living in SIMD bands 1-4. 9% of the school population receive FME entitlement and 6.2% of our learners speak an additional language at home. Overall attendance in St Nicholas' is very good with the average weekly attendance being above 95%. Through rigorous self-evaluation and analysis of attainment data we endeavour to develop an intervention programme for identified pupils in order to address the poverty related attainment gap.

Our school building opened in August 2018 and consists of 17 classrooms, a variety of open areas throughout the school, a gym hall and a dining hall. Within our playground, we have a large pitch, a trim trail, seating areas, a basketball court and various grassed areas. This session we continued to operate Covid compliant systems to ensure the safety of all as well as continuing to provide the best quality learning and teaching to our learners.

Parents are highly committed to supporting the school community and the Parent Council have continued to work cooperatively with the school, meeting regularly via teams. A Parent Association has been established this session which organised some social and fundraising events for our community.

Covid has continued to have impact on our after school activities, which we hope to fully re-establish next session. Pupil participation is encouraged through the Junior Management Team, House Captains, Head Boy and Girl, and our recently established Rights Respecting School group.

Links with the local and wider community, including the local Parishes of St. Andrew's and St Joseph's are fostered through on-going curricular and community work. We have well established links with local early years establishments, Turnbull High school and its associated primary schools as well as the local secondary schools within Bearsden and Milngavie.

## Progress in School Improvement Plan (SIP) priorities

### School priority 1: Improvement in Literacy

NIF Priority  
• Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy

NIF Driver  
school leadership  
school improvement  
teacher professionalism  
assessment of children's progress

HGIOS 4 Qis

QI 1.2 Leadership of Learning

QI 1.3 Leadership of Change

QI 2.2 Curriculum

QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment

QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

### **Progress and Impact:**

This was the major priority in terms of school improvement within St Nicholas' Primary School this session. Therefore, a significant amount of time was allocated to the priority as well as this being the focus on the established quality assurance procedures. This allowed triangulation of data and allowed SMT and other colleagues to provide support where required.

### **Whole school weekly approach to learning and teaching in Literacy:**

Through professional dialogue, an implementation period and evaluation the school has now adopted a whole school approach to the weekly teaching of Literacy. This has ensured that all staff are able to implement our agreed Literacy Policy, which is to provide depth, challenge and appropriate pace across all aspects of literacy as well as ensuring we are meeting the needs of all learners. The majority of staff feel that this has helped to ensure that all aspects of literacy are being addressed regularly, although it is recognised that a few staff found this challenging due to the needs of the learners in their class. Where this was the case additional staffing was utilised to support. Most learners talked positively about this change and the majority could discuss the positive impact that this had had on different aspects of their learning in Literacy.

### **Teaching, learning and assessment of writing:**

Through in house professional learning in Writing, almost all staff now feel confident in the teaching of writing. A school overview detailing when specific genres are taught throughout the session has been implemented as well as a clear structure to the teaching blocks. This provides depth of learning as well as breadth of writing experience. Most learners can discuss the features of a specific genre before embarking on their own writing and the majority can apply this knowledge to their writing. All classes have a writing display that is used by learners to support their writing including prompts and planning formats and a few classes have writing tables to encourage independent writing. A bank of resources has been started for each genre and staff are encouraged to add to this regularly. Staff worked collaboratively to devise assessment criteria for each genre. These criteria were trialled in the final term to allow staff and pupils to become familiar with them. From pupil and parent feedback, the majority of our learners and their parents feel that this new approach has had a positive impact on their writing. Through tracking meetings, teachers have reported that the quality of writing for most learners has improved and for those learners who have found writing difficult, there has been an improvement.

### **Next Steps:**

- Continued implementation of the Literacy week, providing support for specific staff and classes if required.
- Further develop writing at Early Level.
- Further examine learning, teaching and assessment in other aspects of Literacy i.e. Reading and Listening and Talking
- Continue to implement the new writing assessment criteria and moderate this across the whole school.
- Support all staff to plan more opportunities for cross curricular and free writing within their weekly timetable.

## School priority 2: Skills for learning, life and work

### NIF Priority

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing

### NIF Driver

teacher professionalism  
school improvement  
school leadership

### HGIOS 4 QIs

QI 1.2 Leadership of Learning

QI 1.3 Leadership of Change

QI 3.1 Wellbeing, equality & inclusion

QI 3.3 Increasing creativity and employability

### **Progress and Impact:**

As part of our priorities in session 2019-2020 all stakeholders agreed a Curriculum Rationale for St Nicholas' Primary detailing the skills for learning, life and work that we would develop in our learners. Our priority this year was to encourage the discussion of these skills at class level and to provide time for staff to examine opportunities as to where these skills could be further developed in the curriculum that they were delivering. As a school we have created a skill for learning, life and work poster and displayed them in each class and around the school. Staff were encouraged to refer to this with their learners regularly to encourage discussion about the purpose of their learning and the skills they might need for their future. Recently, the Pupil Focus group stated that most of the time they were able to :

*"talk confidently about the skills they are developing and that they understand how these skills are helping them to achieve more in school, in the community and as we prepare for the world of work."*

In addition to linking our agreed skills to our existing learning, all staff undertook their own professional enquiry to examine how these skills could be further developed in their own classroom. Almost all staff reported that by undertaking a professional enquiry they positively engaged with research and were now comfortable trying a new approach with their class. Most staff reported that their enquiry had positive impact on them as a professional as well as the learners within their class. A variety of enquiries were undertaken such as growth mind-set, zones of emotional regulations, implementing personalised targets and using QR codes to enhance learners' independence. Most of the staff will continue with their new approach and review and develop as appropriate.

This session, we have developed play within Primary One. The parents of P1 learners have reported that there was a smooth transition to P1, even though most of the children had gaps in their nursery provision due to COVID. The learners can now confidently and independently manage their own learning within the established environment. Almost all learners are on track in terms of their learning in Literacy and Numeracy with a few learners being challenged above the expected level. From observations, learners can successfully manage their relationships with other learners and most try to resolve any issues independently. New planners have been devised and introduced at this stage to reflect the play pedagogy and SEESAW has been successful in capturing evidence in terms of attainment and achievement.

A few of our staff have actively taken on leadership roles both in terms of the curriculum, pedagogy, ethos and life of the school.

### **Next Steps:**

- Continue to encourage opportunities for staff to develop a leadership role by upscaling their class professional enquiries to a whole school approach, or to adopt a leadership role within the ethos, life and work of school.
- Continue to foster the culture of professional enquiry as part of Career Long Professional learning for all staff.
- Develop play pedagogy into P2 and in time develop a whole school approach to pupil enquiry based learning.
- Continue to develop opportunities for skills, learning, life and work
- Develop partnerships with or local and wider community in order to provide the highest quality education for all our learners.

### School priority 3: Developing a community of Faith and Learning

NIF Priority  
•Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing  
NIF Driver  
school leadership  
school improvement

HGIOS 4 QIs  
QI 1.3 Leadership of Change  
QI 3.1 Wellbeing, equality & inclusion

#### Progress and Impact:

##### **UN rights of the child**

We have successfully introduced the UN of rights of child to our school community. Through CLPL, all staff now have an increased knowledge of Rights based legislation. Our Rights based learning coordinators further developed their own knowledge through UNICEF training and have successfully lead this development. Initial awareness of rights based learning and knowledge about the United Nation conventions on the rights of the child was undertaken through staff development time and whole school assemblies. We have established a Rights Respecting school committee with pupil and staff representation and carried out an audit to identify our next steps in terms of developing rights based learning in our school. The subsequent action plan has now been submitted to UNICEF and we have received our Bronze Rights Respecting School award from them. Within staff development time, our coordinators encouraged and provided examples of how staff could integrate rights based learning across the curriculum within the classes. Majority of staff have developed their learners understanding in a variety of context with simple links to our existing Health and Wellbeing curriculum and focused learning on needs and wants as well as Fairtrade.

##### **Equalities**

St Nicholas' Primary School recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to the nine characteristics protected in law. In partnership with the Scottish Catholic Education Service, we have devised a policy and a programme of learning for all stages of the school in order to develop learning in this area. Our policy and programme is based on the 9 principles detailed below. The policy was devised in conjunction with the parent council and then shared with the wider parent body. The policy ensures that all stakeholders are aware of the roles and responsibilities.

- Principle 1: All people are made in the image and likeness of God, and are deserving of dignity and respect*  
*Principle 2: All learners are of equal value.*  
*Principle 3: We recognise and respect difference.*  
*Principle 4: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.*  
*Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist*  
*Principle 6: We aim to consult and involve widely*  
*Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit from our school policies*  
*Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence*  
*Principle 9: Objectives*

The programme has been devised by SCES, however through staff development time we have ensured that appropriate links are made across P1-7. This means that appropriate lessons are completed from P1-7. All staff are confident in delivering the material, although it has been recognised that some learners pose questions that may be difficult to address in a whole class situation and therefore there should be open communication with the parents regarding this. All classes will complete all lessons by the end of this academic session.

##### **Development of the spiritual formation of the school community**

Through the last few challenging years we have endeavoured to ensure the spiritual formation of the school community. As COVID mitigations were still in place for most of the year, the majority of our shared prayer and liturgy has been virtual. This has had an impact on our community and we look forward to moving on from this next session.

##### **Next Steps:**

- Staff will continue to build on rights based learning in class, seeking opportunities to link rights based learning across the curriculum as well as within the ethos and life of the school.
- Rights based learning committee will continue to meet regularly and identify next steps for the school as a whole.
- Gather feedback on the Equality Education Programme from all stakeholders.
- Support the wellbeing of all stakeholders by re-establishing parental involvement and the spiritual formation of the school community through the shared experience of prayer and liturgy.

## **Progress in National Improvement Framework (NIF) priorities**

We have made progress in each of the national priorities related to primary schools. A brief summary is included below:

### **Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy**

As a new school, attainment over time is not yet apparent, however it can be seen from the data gathered that there has been an improvement in writing in our current P4 cohort and a slight decrease in the P7 cohort. The P7 cohort pupil numbers have significantly decreased over this period of time which has had an impact on this data.

In numeracy, reading, listening and talking, there has been a slight decrease in attainment in the P4 and P7 cohorts, and again changes to the year group should be considered when looking at this data.

The data discussed above was not unexpected due to our robust tracking and monitoring procedures. Through specific interventions and additional staffing, we have tried to address this gap in attainment with these specific cohorts. Although the data would show that they have not achieved the level there has been individual progress for almost all learners.

### **Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people**

The promotion of equity is at the heart of all we endeavour to achieve here at St Nicholas' Primary. Through our robust quality assurance procedures, we identify learners who for whatever reason may be experiencing a barrier to their learning. Their learning is closely monitored to ensure appropriate support and progress is being made. Targeted support (supported by PEF funding) has allowed us to provide additional teaching input for identified learners in order to address a specific gap in their learning. We have tried to ensure collaborative working with all those involved, with this targeted support, in order to ensure that this intervention is providing additionality for the learner and at the same time reinforced as part of their daily/ weekly routine at school and at home.

The focus this year had been on pupil attainment in reading, spelling/phonics, numeracy and wellbeing. We regularly track our interventions and use data to ensure progress is being made and targets reviewed accordingly. We effectively use a range of reliable data to support those identified or affected by the poverty related gap, being vulnerable or disadvantaged.

### **Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing**

An important aspect of improving learner's health and wellbeing this session was to re- establish pupil leadership groups and therefore pupil voice. We have successfully established our Junior Management Team and our House System and Captains. The JMT have enhanced our playground by liaising with the HT to purchase equipment for our playground that will improve pupil experience at breaks but also allow learning in Literacy and Numeracy to be developed outdoors. Throughout the session the JMT have linked with SMT to ensure that pupil voice is at the heart of school decision making. The House Captains were central to reforming our house system and events as well as actively encouraging positive behaviours in our school community with an agreed award system.

The school and staff are committed to providing a safe and nurturing learning environment as well as improving the wellbeing outcomes for all our children. We use a wellbeing survey at intervals throughout the session to gather views of our learners. This data is then analysed and any actions identified for groups of learners or individuals. This session, we have successfully implemented a whole class approach with LIAM as well as 1-1 sessions. We have also completed several Season for Growth programmes with identified learners. Almost all learners are expressing that these interventions have had a positive impact on them.

## Attainment and Achievement Data

Curriculum for Excellent Levels at the end of June 2022				
	Reading	Writing	Talking & Listening	Numeracy & Mathematics
Early level by end of P1	all	almost all	all	almost all
First level by end of P4	almost all	almost all	almost all	most
Second level by end of P7	most	most	most	most

## Impact of Interventions for Equity and Pupil Equity Funding (PEF)

Pupil equity funding secured additional staffing to raise attainment for children at risk of not achieving with a particular focus on narrowing the poverty related attainment gap. This additionality provide the following:

- Targeted Maths Recovery programme for identified learners. Almost all learners have made progress in this area. A few identified learners have now achieved as appropriate.
- Targeted phonic intervention programme for identified learners. Focused assessment periods have now been implemented to ensure that learners progress is being tracked and any gaps identified and addressed before moving forward. Almost all learners have made progress in this area.
- Reading Recovery programme in place for identified learners from P3-7, the majority of these learners have improved in their fluency and confidence in their reading.
- 1-1 and small group nurture provision for identified learners, most of these learners can now demonstrate better emotional regulation in situations they previously found challenging.

All interventions are driven by data and closely monitored and tracked to ensure they are having impact. As a school we will continue to examine the data we gather to ensure we use the PEF to continue to narrow the poverty related attainment gap within our setting.

## Self-evaluations of How Good Is Our School? (4<sup>th</sup> edition)

Quality indicator	School self-evaluation	Inspection/ Authority evaluation
1.3 Leadership of change	Good	Choose an item.
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Good	Choose an item.
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion	Very good	Choose an item.
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	Good	Choose an item.

## Summary of School Improvement priorities for Session 2022/23

- Further develop a learning, teaching and assessment cycle in order to establish robust, reliable and valid assessments which will be used to enhance learning and teaching for all learners.
- Develop an approach to outdoor learning (Year 1) and further develop play pedagogy within P2.
- Support the wellbeing of all stakeholders by re-establishing parental involvement and the spiritual formation of the school community through the shared experience of prayer and liturgy.

## What is our capacity for continuous improvement?

All staff are committed to improving outcomes for all learners and work closely with parents to ensure a shared understanding regarding next steps in learning. Almost all pupils and parents comment positively on the work of the school. With a return to a pre Covid environment, we will continue to strive to involve all of our parents in the life and work of the school, ensuring we are providing the best education for all learners.

The school has a clear vision for improvement over the next 3 years and through a focus on data informed approaches to learning, teaching and assessment and rigorous self-evaluation the school is well placed to achieve this, in partnership with pupils, staff, parents, community stakeholder.