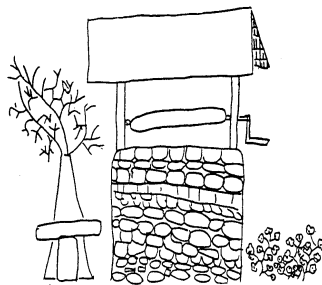




Westruther Primary School



School Improvement Report

2023-24



Review of Progress 2023-24

Context of the school

Our school has three main learning areas, two classrooms - one of which is open plan with the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) provision. There is an office at the front of the school and a staffroom at the rear. There is also a small dining hall/General Purpose room. The learners use the village hall or outdoor community field for Physical Education (PE). The outdoor space offers different play and learning environments including a Community Garden to the front of the school. At the end of the school session the school had a roll of 20, consisting of 5 learners in the ELC and 15 learners in Primary 1-7. The free meal entitlement is well below Scottish Borders Council (SBC) average.

The curriculum is enhanced with a specialist PE teacher. The rest of the staff team consists of one full time class teacher, a Learning Support Teacher (one half-day a week), two Pupil Support Assistants (PSAs), an administrator, the central Early Years Team Teacher, a part time Playground Supervisor, cook and cleaner and a peripatetic janitor. The Head Teacher (HT) and the Principal Teacher (PT) work across two schools – Westruther and Channelkirk Primary Schools. This session P7s accessed a series of French Lessons from a Languages Teacher at the cluster High School (see Appendix for Cluster evaluation of this input). Westruther staff work closely with their colleagues at their partner school, Channelkirk Primary School, enhancing opportunities for collaborative improvement work, moderation activities and learning experiences. The two schools experienced excursions and enhanced learning together – Edinburgh Zoo and the Bird Gardens (ELC). Westruther Primary hosted Channelkirk Primary for a Dance Festival (including parents) and Channelkirk Primary school hosted Westruther for Generation Science workshops. P7s from both schools enjoyed the cluster residential and other P7 experiences between the two schools - for example orienteering. Sports events were entered by teams of learners from both schools combined creating a 'Westkirk' team, allowing learners wider sporting opportunities and challenges. Children experienced other enhancements to the curriculum in the form of sessions led by staff from the Youth Music Initiative, Live Borders with Short Track Cycles and Melrose Rugby Club. The Parent Council remains committed to supporting and enabling these enhanced opportunities for pupils. Westruther Primary School is working towards a 'Gold' Reading Schools Award from the Scottish Book Trust this session reflecting the embedded Culture of Reading for Enjoyment throughout the school – led by the Principal Teacher. The school engaged in a successful Intergenerational Drama project with older members of the community this session – culminating in a small drama presentation at the Village Hall. Westruther Primary school currently holds the ECO Green Flag status having retained it over the last three years. A further Green Flag application is underway after successful whole school Learning for Sustainability focus again this session. The school also performed a very

successful Christmas Show school show including all learners from ELC to P7, again, in the Village Hall.

SBC priority 1: Develop high quality learning, teaching and assessment that leads to improved levels of attainment and achievement for all in learners.

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

Children use many **digital tools to enhance learning, teaching and assessment**. This includes the increasing use of 'accessibility tools' to support children with specific learning needs. A new handwriting app called 'Kaligo' was introduced. Using the **digital platform Showbie**, children can **record and share their learning journey** with others including their parents. This allows children and their parents to have a better understanding of their progress and next steps. P1-7 Parent survey results have shown positive engagement and enthusiasm for Showbie this session with one parent commenting the benefit of Showbie was, "*Daily updates. Knowledge as they learn new information /tasks*". Showbie continues to be an effective tool for ELC practitioners to capture key learning through observation and record plans for next steps - ensuring parents are well informed and involved in their child's learning.

Children's learning is **differentiated**. This is achieved in literacy and numeracy by planning to meet the child's needs according to their age and level of understanding – often working in small groups or as individuals. In other areas of the curriculum teachers plan according to Curriculum for Excellence Levels to ensure differentiated experiences are planned – for example in Interdisciplinary Learning or PE. In *almost all* literacy and numeracy lessons **Learning Intentions and Success Criteria** are shared with children. This helps children to understand the purpose of their learning and how to be successful. In Numeracy children's understanding of concepts is increasing because of the teacher's use of **concrete, pictorial and abstract approaches**. This has been supported by our ongoing Cluster professional learning. Classroom observations by Senior Leaders and coaching peers are based around a well-established Learning, Teaching and Assessment Toolkit. Areas of strength and development needs in classroom practice are identified, shared and support ongoing improvement.

Robust **tracking and monitoring systems** in Literacy and Numeracy are in place ensuring support and challenge for all learners remains a focus for all teaching staff. Termly attainment meetings involving the Headteacher, Class teacher and Support for Learning Teacher ensure all children's progress and learning needs are reviewed and planned for. Children facing **additional challenges** such as living with financial hardship are identified and monitored closely, with additional support allocated as appropriate. Pupil Equity Funds (PEF) enhance the Pupil Support Assistant (PSA) hours to support these pupils. This is resulting in improved outcomes for pupils and supports them to stay 'on track'. The HT sets annual 'stretch aims' in Literacy and Numeracy attainment to ensure support and challenge is provided to any additional pupils identified who may close the gap with targeted support. **Overall stretch aims for attainment in P1-7 were met** in all areas of Literacy: Listening & Talking, Reading, Writing and also in Numeracy. *Almost all learners are attaining appropriate levels* in these areas of the curriculum.

The school tracks pupil participation in Achievement Assemblies and in extracurricular activities to ensure *all* children's **wider achievements** are recognised and supported. *All children* contribute to the life of the school through ,for example, ECO schools work, Greener Gateway work and recent Reading Schools Gold accreditation activity. Some children are allocated specific leadership roles e.g. Literacy Leaders.

Attendance rates remain high across the school again this year – an average 94% at the end of session.

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

- Continue to develop **consistent approaches** to Learning Teaching and Assessment in line with the school's toolkit and embed effective use of digital approaches to enhance learning. Continue to develop teachers' knowledge and skills in effective questioning techniques.
- Develop **Play Pedagogy in P1-3** and beyond and plan progressive approaches to **Outdoor Learning** throughout the school.
- Participate in authority wide implementation of **#SBC Way (Curriculum pathways and pedagogy)** - giving consideration to interleaving and achievement of a level. Increase opportunities for moderation.

SBC priority 2: Develop inclusive practice including nurturing practice, promotion of wellbeing and universal / targeted supports for all learners.

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

The ethos and culture of our school reflects our commitment to nurturing approaches and inclusion. Staff are warm and caring towards children and create successful conditions for learning. The school values of **SMART: Successful, Motivated Ambitious, Resilient, Tolerant** are embedded and children have a sense of belonging to the school which is embodied in the school song which they co-wrote with staff. Children benefit from regular praise and the use of systems to recognise their effort and achievement. Children are becoming increasingly confident in using **The Zones of Regulation** to support their emotional regulation and a readiness to learn. Children's wellbeing is being supported by the staff's understanding of **Nurturing Approaches** (Universal and Targeted) and ongoing training in this area. *Almost all* learners can **regulate their emotions and engage in learning**. As required certain children have strategies, protocols and supports in place. This allows staff to reflect and refine approaches to promoting inclusion and making adaptations where possible. Children are becoming more aware of the ways they are the same and different to each other as a result of the focus on **diversity and equity**. Our recent pupil survey responses to the Glasgow Wellbeing Motivation Profile (GMWP) have been extremely positive - demonstrating strong affiliation, autonomy, agency and feeling healthy and safe in school.

All children selected 10/10 for the following statements:

'I like this school'

'I have friends in this school'

'Adults look out for me in school / make sure I am feeling OK'

'I feel safe in school'

'Teachers tell me what I'm good at '

'I belong to this school'

'I feel good about myself in school'

- What are you going to do now? What are your improvement priorities in this area?
- Ongoing training of new / existing staff in Nurturing Approaches and the use of the CIRCLE document to increase understanding of how to support all children's wellbeing. (Universal Approaches)
- Continue to reflect on approaches and seek support from partners to support specific children to identify ways to best support them. Consider different ways to measure improvement in wellbeing over time. (Targeted Approaches)

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	Good	Good
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment (Including digital)	Good	Good
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion	Good	Good
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement/ Securing children’s progress	Good	Good

Our capacity for continuous improvement is: Good

Appendices (see below):

1. Evaluation of Cluster French input
2. Evaluative statement regarding Cluster SEIC Play Pedagogy

1. Earlston Cluster French Impact Report, June 2024

Almost all teachers and learners enjoyed the French experiences. They reported that they enjoyed working with the French specialist.

Almost all teachers think that the visiting high school teacher had a positive impact on the learners and will enhance the transition from P7.

The French teacher reported that almost all learners were engaged with the learning activities.

Most learners responded that they enjoyed the lessons.

Most learners reported that they have made progress and have now got more confidence in French.

It is predicted that most learners will have a similar foundation of French learning as they start high school.

The majority of teachers completed the expected follow-up activities.

‘Fitting French teaching and learning into the curriculum’ is the most challenging aspect for the majority of teachers, with a few reporting that they have limited knowledge of French language skills.

All teachers would like to continue to have access to the resources provided.

Next steps:

- Ensure there are robust systems for gathering evidence of French learning, including photographs, sound recording and video.
- Ensure valid and reliable assessment is communicated with the high school to support productive transitions.
- Ensure that all the primary school practitioners are fully aware of the purpose of the programme i.e. part of CfE Literacy Benchmarks and engage with follow up and extension work as suggested.

2. Evaluative statements regarding the Cluster SEIC Play pedagogy development work.

All cluster teachers that engaged with the (SEIC Play pedagogy) project indicated that their understanding of quality play pedagogy has increased.

There was also clear evidence that changes have been made to learning environments inside and outside by mid-session as well as that by the end of the session all children had the opportunity to engage in richer play experiences