



# **Westruther Primary School**

## **Improvement Plan**

### **2026-27**

# INTRODUCTION - School Improvement Planning 2026/27

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This document outlines our identified priorities for Session 2026/27, which will bring about continuous improvement of outcomes for our learners. It is based on rigorous self-evaluation of our provision, including the impact of development work carried out during 2025/26. For more information on our performance, see our School Improvement Report June 2026.



# Areas for Improvement 2026-27

Based on school, local and national priorities

|                                       | Improve / New ↓<br>Think key priority<br>Action plans needed for these                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Consolidating / Continue ↓<br>Think 'embed, expand'<br>Building on previous activity                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Explore / Understand ↓<br>Think 'questions, wicked issues'<br>May be key priorities next session                                                                   |
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| <b>Learning, teaching, assessment</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance core understanding of High-Quality Learning Teaching and Assessment to improve attainment in writing in P1</li> <li>Develop high-quality, consistent play pedagogy across P1 to P3</li> </ul>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement Earlston Cluster Learning Toolkit to support observations, data collection and self-evaluations</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can we develop high quality play pedagogy beyond P3?</li> </ul>                                                         |
| <b>Inclusive practices</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure classrooms are 'neuro-affirming ensuring inclusion, wellbeing, attainment and authentic achievement for learners with additional support needs</li> <li>Introduce Rights Based Practices within the classroom</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed use of the CIRCLE document to improve Universal inclusive practises Circle Inclusive Classroom Scale</li> <li>Embed the use of the Circle Participation Scale to support Targeted Inclusive Practices (individual children) and create Wellbeing Passports</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can our developing understanding of rights support children to become Global Citizens?</li> </ul>                       |
| <b>Curriculum</b>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed opportunities for Building Racial Literacy and Anti-Racism education into practice</li> </ul>                                                                                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to align School Practice with SBC Way Writing, Reading and Listening and Talking</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can we embed metaskills into our curriculum?</li> <li>How does our curriculum rationale reflect our setting?</li> </ul> |

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| <b>Leadership</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce Rights Based Practices within the classroom</li> </ul>                                                                       |                                                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can we develop high quality play pedagogy beyond P3?</li> </ul>                                   |
| <b>Team Around the Cluster</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance core understanding of High-Quality Learning Teaching and Assessment to improve attainment in Listening and Talking.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to expand and enhance family learning offer</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can our developing understanding of rights support children to become Global Citizens?</li> </ul> |

**Action plan 1:** *Develop high-quality, consistent play pedagogy across all P1 to P3, ensuring children experience rich, engaging, and developmentally appropriate learning through play that supports their wellbeing, curiosity, and progress across the curriculum.*

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| <p><b>Intended outcome:</b><br/> <b>By June 2027, the class teacher is confident in applying the principles of play pedagogy in their classroom.</b><br/> <b>By June 2027, 80% targeted children in P1 to P3 demonstrate increased engagement, independence, and creativity through high-quality play experiences, as evidenced by Leuven Scale Observations. (baseline 40%).</b></p> |                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                 | <p><b>NIF links:</b><br/> <i>Highly skilled teachers and school-leaders driving excellent learning, teaching and assessment for all, especially those with additional support needs.</i><br/> <i>Inclusive and relevant curriculum and assessment which gives young people the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to society, shape a sustainable future, while celebrating and supporting progression for all.</i></p> |
| Why is this a priority? What does self-evaluation data show?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | What changes will we make that will lead to improvement?                                                                                     | How will we know improvement has occurred?<br>Outcome / Process / Balance                                                                       | What progress has been made?<br>(Update at least half -termly)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>25%</b> of teachers not confident in applying the principles of play pedagogy in practice across partner schools.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All P1-3 teachers and representatives from ELC will form a Play Pedagogy Empowerment Group</li> </ul> | <p><b>Outcome Measures (impact on learners)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leuven Scales show an increase in learner</li> </ul> | <p>October:</p> <p>December:</p> <p>February:</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HMIE stated that, 'teachers should support children to take a greater role in leading their own learning more regularly.' One tool to support this is learning through play and project based learning.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empowerment Group to use SBC Core Provision Guidance for Early Level and Beyond to reflect on current practices, plan and implement next steps, and share findings with wider staff team</li> <li>• Empowerment Group to complete an audit of both indoor and outdoor spaces and resources</li> <li>• Develop staff understanding by engaging with national and regional guidance for play pedagogy and play space design</li> <li>• Develop staff understanding by engaging with literature relating to play, play pedagogy and play space design</li> <li>• Empowerment Group to develop collaboratively a clear vision for play</li> <li>• Empowerment Group to embed play based learning opportunities across the curriculum</li> <li>• SLT to collaborate with Play Scotland to support with policy, training and effective practice in play pedagogy.</li> </ul> | <p>engagement (carried out termly)</p> <p><b>Process Measures (what adults are doing)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff Questionnaires/Feedback show that staff confidence has increased in implemented principles of play pedagogy</li> <li>• Observations and Walk Thrus evidence high-quality play is used to support learning</li> </ul> <p><b>Balance Measures (unintended impact / sustainability)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff feedback indicates changes are manageable and not adding excessive workload (questionnaire June 2027)</li> <li>• Audits show high-quality learning environments that support play pedagogy (ongoing)</li> </ul> | <p>April:</p> |
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## Action plan 2: Develop Rights Based Practice within the setting and align practices to relational approaches. \*ELC Included

| <p><b>Intended outcome:</b><br/> <b>By June 2026, at least 90% of pupils will be able to identify key rights from the UNCRC, explain how these rights are promoted within school, and report that they feel respected, listened to and included in school life (baseline 0%).</b></p>                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>NIF link: Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing</b></li> </ul> |
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| Why is this a priority? What does self-evaluation data show?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | What changes will we make that will lead to improvement?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | How will we know improvement has occurred?<br>Outcome / Process / Balance                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | What progress has been made?<br>(Update at least half -termly)                                                                     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approximately <b>25.15%</b> of respondents scored an average <b>below 7</b> across the five lowest-rated wellbeing statements. This means about <b>1 in 4 pupils</b> may be facing more significant wellbeing concerns in these areas and could benefit from closer attention and support.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yearly Assembly calendar linked to UNCRC – delivering weekly assemblies with reference to relevant articles within the convention. Class sharing assembly about their growing understanding of rights.</li> <li>Create articles to display around the environment to highlight rights – for example, on wall displays, at the water fountain, etc.</li> <li>Adapt planning documentation to explicitly consider what rights relate to certain themes/topics. Make these explicit during teaching.</li> <li>Include a UNCRC article of the week/month in our newsletter to our wider school community – developing their knowledge of the articles.</li> <li>Whole school assemblies delivered by rights committee.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNCRC questionnaires to be carried out at the beginning and end of the year. These will show increased awareness and understanding of children's rights across the school community</li> <li>Silver accreditation visit will take place and feedback on Rights Journey given</li> <li>Glasgow Motivational and Wellbeing Tool, implement 3 x a year, will show a rise in pupil wellbeing.</li> <li>Feedback from Learning, Teaching and Assessment Questionnaire (Dec and May) will show that pupils feel valued, respected and listened to.</li> </ul> | <p>October:</p> <p>December:</p> <p>February:</p> <p>April:</p>                                                                    |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform parents/carers about progress and work within rights through newsletters and social media.</li> <li>• Invite parents/carers into school to develop their understanding of rights through assemblies and open afternoons within school.</li> <li>• All classes learn about their rights and develop a classroom charter each year. This is referred to regularly throughout the year.</li> <li>• Create a school UNCRC steering group with representatives from every class. Meet termly to gather views and develop UNCRC within the setting.</li> </ul> |  |  |
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## Action plan 3: New training for creating Neuro-affirming schools

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| <b>Intended outcome: By May 2027, at least 85% of staff will report increased confidence in supporting Autistic learners, evidenced through pre/post survey data, across all education settings, ensuring inclusion, wellbeing, attainment and authentic achievement for Autistic pupils.</b> |                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                 | <b>NIF link:</b> <i>Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people.</i> |
| Why is this a priority? What does self-evaluation data show?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | What changes will we make that will lead to improvement?                                                                       | How will we know improvement has occurred?<br>Outcome / Process / Balance                                                       | What progress has been made?<br>(Update at least half -termly)                                                         |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASN levels have risen from 30.9% (2020) to approximately 40.5% (2024) across the cluster.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff will engage in 'We Were Expecting You' (WWEY) NAIT training over</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By May 2027 at least 85% of staff report increased confidence in supporting</li> </ul> | October:<br><br>December:<br><br>February:                                                                             |

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| <p>At Westruther, 40% of children have an additional support need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Westruther Primary School has seen increased neurodivergence diagnoses, resulting in greater complexity of need</li> <li>• Staff require increased confidence and skill to create neuro-affirming environments</li> </ul> | <p>four sessions across the school year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Environment First:</b> At least <b>90% of classrooms</b> demonstrate sensory-aware layouts, visual supports and low-arousal organisation</li> <li>• <b>Provide Predictability:</b> <b>100% of staff</b> use visual timetables and predictable routines daily, with <b>advance warning of change</b> in place for all identified pupils</li> <li>• <b>Make Learning Meaningful:</b> All planning includes personalised adaptations for Autistic learners, and engagement improves for at least 80% of targeted pupils</li> <li>• <b>Seek to Understand Distress:</b> Staff use co-regulation and needs-based responses in at least 80% of recorded incidents</li> </ul> | <p>Autistic learners evidenced through pre/post survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By May 2027 learning walks show consistent environmental adaptations, and incident data shows a 10%+ reduction in environment-triggered incidents</li> <li>• By March 2026 Observations and tracking show reduced transition-related anxiety and increased pupil independence</li> <li>• Planning, work samples and engagement data show increased participation with task avoidance reducing 10-20%</li> <li>• Tracking and debriefs show fewer punitive responses and more reflective, needs-focused practice</li> </ul> | <p>April:</p> |
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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ensure Adjustments Are Anticipatory:</b> All identified pupils have proactive adjustments in place at the start of each term or transition</li> <li>• <b>A Neuro-Affirming Approach:</b> All staff use strengths-based, respectful language and support authentic communication and regulation</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By April 2026 Support plans monitoring shows 100% implementation and a reduction in reactive interventions</li> <li>• Ongoing professional dialogue indicates growing mastery of neuro-affirming practice</li> </ul> |  |
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## Action plan 4: Enhance core understanding of high-quality learning, teaching and assessment in listening and talking.

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| <b>Intended outcome:</b><br><b>By June 2027, almost all teachers across partner schools (90%) P1 to P7 teachers are extremely confident in their listening and talking judgements (baseline 0%).</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>NIF link:</b> <i>Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people.</i> |
| Why is this a priority? What does self-evaluation data show?                                                                                                                                         | What changes will we make that will lead to improvement?                                                                                                                                                  | How will we know improvement has occurred?<br>Outcome / Process / Balance                                                                                                        | What progress has been made?<br>(Update at least half -termly)                                                         |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attainment in listening and talking across Westruther Primary School is relatively high at 93.33%, however teacher confidence in professional</li> </ul>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with literature and core texts to develop understanding of effective features of learning, teaching and assessment, aligning with the #SBCWay.</li> </ul> | <b>Outcome Measures (impact on learners)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attainment consultations (Oct, Feb &amp; May) will show that class teachers are</li> </ul> | October:<br><br>December:<br><br>February:                                                                             |

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| <p>judgements of listening and talking 'somewhat confident'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff self-evaluation also identifies areas for improvement in the delivery of high-quality listening and talking experiences.</li> <li>• This suggests a need to improve consistency and clarity in effective approaches to listening and talking, despite strong attainment data.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage in professional dialogue and challenge questions and create visual display of key features to put into practice.</li> <li>• Update learning, teaching and assessment framework to account for new understanding of effective features of learning, teaching and assessment.</li> <li>• Engage with core materials to develop a shared understanding of effective learning, teaching and assessment in listening and talking, aligned with the #SBCWay.</li> <li>• Create learning, teaching and assessment framework to reflect this shared understanding of high-quality listening and talking.</li> <li>• Increase opportunities for planned, high-quality listening and talking activities across all stages.</li> <li>• Ensure all classes maintain an assessment folder, with clear expectations outlined in a Quality Assurance Calendar for listening and talking.</li> </ul> | <p>more confident in their professional judgements.</p> <p><b>Process Measures (what adults are doing)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom observations (Nov, Jan &amp; May) will show that teachers are implementing effective approaches to teaching, learning and assessment</li> <li>• Assessment folders/QA checks demonstrate consistent use of agreed approaches across all classes.</li> <li>• Planning shows explicit, progressive listening and talking experiences built into learning (moderation Sept, Nov &amp; Jan).</li> </ul> <p><b>Balance Measures (unintended impact / sustainability)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff feedback indicates changes are manageable and not adding excessive workload (questionnaire June 2026).</li> <li>• Monitoring shows listening and talking improvements are not negatively impacting writing attainment (attainment consultations Oct, Feb &amp; May).</li> </ul> | <p>April:</p> |
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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen moderation and verification processes to ensure consistency and shared standards.</li> <li>• Continue to involve staff, pupils and parents in ongoing self-evaluation and improvement planning.</li> </ul> |  |  |
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## Action plan 5: *Embed opportunities for Building Racial Literacy and Anti-Racist education into practice.*

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| <b>Intended outcome:</b><br><b>By June 2027, all teaching and support staff (100%) will have engaged in Education Scotland's Building Racial Literacy programme, with at least 67% demonstrating increased confidence in recognising, discussing and addressing race and racism.</b><br><b>By June 2027, 90% of pupils will score 8 or above in their GMWP questions: "I belong to this school", "I feel safe in school" and "I would complain if I felt picked on by anyone in school", with learner conversations evidencing an increased understanding of diversity, respect and inclusion.</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>NIF link:</b><br><i>Inclusive and relevant curriculum and assessment which gives young people the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to society, shape a sustainable future, while celebrating and supporting progression for all.</i> |
| Why is this a priority? What does self-evaluation data show?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | What changes will we make that will lead to improvement?                                                                                                                                                                                      | How will we know improvement has occurred?<br>Outcome / Process / Balance                                                                                                                                         | What progress has been made?<br>(Update at least half -termly)                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need to ensure our curriculum and ethos reflect diversity, equity and inclusion in a meaningful and consistent way.</li> <li>• National and local priorities emphasise the importance of developing racial literacy to</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage fully with Education Scotland's Building Racial Literacy professional learning programme.</li> <li>• Audit and review the curriculum, resources and learning environment to ensure</li> </ul> | <b>Outcome Measures (impact on learners)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learner voice shows increased sense of belonging, inclusion and respect across all groups (GMWP carried out Aug,</li> </ul> | October:<br><br>December:<br><br>February:<br><br>April:                                                                                                                                                                                            |

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| <p>improve outcomes and experiences for all learners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HMle stated that we should, 'Increase opportunities for children to learn about a range of different needs and cultures. Staff should support all children to understand and value what makes us different and develop skills to tackle discrimination and intolerance.'</li> </ul> | <p>they are diverse, inclusive and representative.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed anti-racist approaches within learning, teaching and assessment, including explicit teaching where appropriate.</li> <li>• Create safe and supportive opportunities for staff and learners to engage in discussions about race and identity.</li> <li>• Strengthen policies and procedures to ensure a clear approach to addressing discriminatory language or behaviour.</li> <li>• Engage parents and the wider community in promoting inclusion, diversity and equality.</li> </ul> | <p>Jan &amp; June; HWB focus group in Jan).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence in learners' work reflects greater awareness and understanding of diversity and equality.</li> </ul> <p><b>Process Measures (what adults are doing)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff completion of programme recorded, with post-programme evaluations showing increased confidence (March 2027).</li> <li>• Classroom observations (Nov, Jan &amp; May) and learning walks demonstrate inclusive and anti-racist approaches in practice.</li> </ul> <p><b>Balance Measures (unintended impact / sustainability)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff feedback indicates changes are manageable and not adding excessive workload (Questionnaire in June 2027)</li> <li>• Increased staff confidence is sustained over time through ongoing CLPL and collegiate working (Evidenced in PRD).</li> </ul> |  |
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## Consolidating / Continue

| Process     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Progress Tracker     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                          |
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| Improvement |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Strategic lead       | Measures of Success (Evidence)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Expected completion date |
| 1           | Implement Earlston Cluster Learning Toolkit to support observations, data collection and self-evaluations                                                                                                                                                  | Robbie Oliver-Devlin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All staff are using the toolkit consistently to support observations, data collection and self-evaluation.</li> <li>Quality assurance activities show improved consistency and accuracy in data gathering across classes/stages.</li> <li>Staff self-evaluations demonstrate increased confidence in analysing and using data to inform practice.</li> <li>Evidence from the toolkit informs targeted interventions and next steps in planning.</li> <li>Professional dialogue reflects regular use of data and evidence to support improvement discussions.</li> </ul>               | Ongoing                  |
| 2           | Embed use of the CIRCLE document to improve Universal inclusive practises Circle Inclusive Classroom Scale<br>Embed the use of the Circle Participation Scale to support Targeted Inclusive Practices (individual children) and create Wellbeing Passports | Lorna Sanderson      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classroom observations show universal inclusive practices aligned to the CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale.</li> <li>Completed CIRCLE scales demonstrate improved scores over time across learning environments.</li> <li>Staff are consistently using the CIRCLE Participation Scale to identify and support targeted learners.</li> <li>Wellbeing Passports are in place for identified children and are actively used to inform practice.</li> <li>Targeted learners show improved engagement, participation and inclusion, evidenced through observations and tracking.</li> </ul> | Ongoing                  |
| 3           | Continue to align School Practice with SBC Way Writing, Reading and Listening and Talking                                                                                                                                                                  | Ellie Spence         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classroom observations demonstrate consistent use of SBC Way approaches across all literacy areas.</li> <li>Teacher self-evaluation shows increased confidence and consistency in delivering high-quality literacy learning, teaching and assessment.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | June 2027                |

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|  |  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderation opportunities evidence a shared understanding of standards and expectations.</li> <li>• Attainment data shows sustained high performance in writing, reading, and listening and talking.</li> <li>• Planning and assessment evidence clearly reflect SBC Way principles in practice.</li> </ul> |  |
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## Explore / Understand

| Process                 |                                                                                            |                      | Progress Tracker         |                                                                                                     |
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| Question / Wicked issue |                                                                                            | Strategic lead(s)    | Expected completion date | Answer / Next steps                                                                                 |
| 1                       | How can we develop high quality play pedagogy beyond P3?                                   | Ellie Spence         | June 2028                | <i>At key points, add an update on progress here.<br/>When complete, add final answer and plan.</i> |
| 2                       | How can our developing understanding of rights support children to become Global Citizens? | Leigh Riddell        | June 2028                |                                                                                                     |
| 3                       | How can we embed metaskills into our curriculum?                                           | Louisa Scully        | Dec 2027                 |                                                                                                     |
| 4                       | How does our curriculum rationale reflect our setting?                                     | Robbie Oliver-Devlin | June 2028                |                                                                                                     |