

Standards and Quality Report

2021/22



Smithton Primary and ELC

HIGHLAND COUNCIL | MURRAY ROAD, INVERNESS IV2 7PD

This report is provided to families and partners to identify our achievements this session. The next steps in our improvement journey are also outlined.

Throughout the year we continuously evaluate what we do and how it makes a difference to our learners. We want to know what is working well for our school community and what needs further improvement.

Our children and young people are actively consulted and involved in this process. We also give staff, parents/carers, and other partners the opportunity to participate in discussions and activities in order to shape our improvement journey.

When we develop our improvement projects we use key questions at planned review times throughout the session in order to know how well we are progressing towards achieving these positive outcomes and changes.

Our School

At Smithton Primary School we have approximately (the numbers are changing almost daily at the moment with new housing going up across Inverness so for as many as are leaving more are coming in!) 380 children in P1-7 and 75 children in our Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC). We have 14 classes in the school with 12 full time teachers, 2 part time teachers (0.4 FTE, 0.6 FTE) and 1 part time Additional Support Needs teachers (0.2 FTE). Our Senior Leadership Team consists of 1 Head Teacher, 1 Depute Head and 4 Principal Teachers. Children and teachers are well supported by Pupil Support Assistants. Our ELCC has 9 Early Years Practitioners and 2 Support workers as the facility is open 8.30am – 4pm daily. The Head Teacher is also 0.2 FTE working with the Local Authority within the leadership and empowerment workstream around workforce planning, GTCS and ITE. Depute Head Teacher has been covering long term absence all year due to COVID and other illnesses which has impacted on leadership and management across the school but has provided continuity for the young people and allowed DHT to monitor in classrooms this year. He was also only appointed August 2021 so being in classes has given him a real understanding of how all teachers lead in their classrooms.

The school is in the east side of Inverness and incorporates a wide and varied social catchment area. Using the SEEMiS Risk Matrix, as advocated by the Highland Council, we know that within the school and ELCC, 14% of children are classed as red (high risk), 31% amber (medium risk) and 55% green (low risk).

21% of children are in receipt of Free School Meals.

7% of children have English as an Additional Language.

We have 56 Childs Plans at Level 3 and Level 4 with a further 33 at Levels 1 and 2.

Attendance is very good P1-7 since addressing lateness and absence in P1-3 children. The aim was to have 95% of all p1-3, with no child plan or other intervention, to have very good attendance and no lateness. This was achieved 2020-21 but there has been a dip in arriving on time 2021-22 reportedly by parents due to anxieties and being out of routines trying to get up in the morning. With the arrival of 'Trixie' to the PEF team she has been collecting children to help get children here on time.

Our School Vision, Values and Aims



RELATIONSHIPS

Smithton Primary Core Values

Early, First & Second Level Expectations

Created by young people for young people at Smithton Primary

E - I ask a question to help me learn.
 F - Show confidence and determination.
 S - Being able to think of answers to overcome obstacles and try these out.

Believe! You Will Achieve

E - I use kind words.
 F - Doing a good deed.
 S - Watching how we say things.
 Being aware of the power of positive body language.
 Allowing personal space when needed.
 Taking on a new responsibility.
 I can use reflective and evaluative thinking.



E - I tidy things up. I help anyone else.
 F - Can I help or do I hinder?
 S - Showing great teamwork.
 Knowing my role and playing my part when working together.

E - Face the person talking and look at their face.
 I like listening to different sounds.
 F - I can learn from listening to others.
 I wait my turn to speak.
 I show I'm an active listener through my body language.
 Use my indoor, outdoor, partner voice.
 S - Pay attention to talker and listen for detail.
 Concentrate to reply to what's been said.

E - I like to wonder about new things.
 I have a 'Believe You Will Achieve' attitude
 F - Try again...Do your best.
 I can set myself achievable targets.
 I can practise new skills.
 I see how I have got better at something.
 S - I can wonder about new achievements.
 I can synthesize, plan and create new directions in my learning
 I have a 'I can believe' attitude.
 I'm positive about my achievements.

E - Not leaving anyone out.
 F - Talking about our opinions and accepting others views.
 S - Opportunities for teaching/coaching others
 Encouraging others to learn new ideas.
 Checking to make sure everyone has the same chances.

Smithton Primary

A place where everyone is learning together

The target (vision) is 'believe and you will achieve' but that also comes with hard work and seizing opportunities. The values closest to the vision were created by community, parents, staff and young people and revised August – October 2020. As a school we had concentrated on promoting positive relationships 2018-19 and realised that Paul Dix's 'Safe, ready, respectful' was being used from ELC to P7 and should be incorporated. We also acknowledged that our values didn't really have an academic focus anywhere so this was addressed with the Pupil Learning Council who came up with what 'safe, ready, respectful' looked like and can be seen in the two examples for each in the diagram. The Pupil Learning Council looked at what the values looked like and sounded like at early, first and second levels. These have been incorporated January – April 2022 and shared with each class. Vision and values in our school is nothing without positive relationships and working hard together to keep these positive both adults and young people alike: it forms the roots of our community and we are determined to ensure all get the best from learning either as staff or young people at Smithton Primary and ELC. As noted by HMIE in our visit May 2022 the Positive Relationships Policy is at the root of all our policies and learning in the ELC and school.

Pupil Voice: what is working well in our ELC and school?

Our children and young people identified the following strengths for our school this session: From our Learning Council which meets each Friday at 1pm and from 'sound bites' of comments gathered by SMT from ELC and the playground:

Smithton gives you opportunities to bloom

Adults have expectations and after we pass that then we get good praises

We have great teachers who are kind and helpful and are there for you

For work we get to choose how we do it so for example the Big Question – you can use google slides, docs or posters. there's lots of choice to show what you've learned

We are growing these herbs. Do you know what they are? I do. You can smell them

Digging is good because it grows your muscles so you can write

Lots of help out of class where it's quiet like for toe by toe, etc.

Well come and see this. You can cut and stick here. Or you can build with these bricks. If I need to relax I can sit here and read books. Let's put on the SMARTboard and dance. But let's get our wellies on and go outside first. It doesn't matter if it's raining.

Pupil Voice: what changes would you like to see made?

Our children and young people identified the following changes they would like to see and the difference these changes could make.

From our Learning Council which meets each Friday at 1pm and from 'sound bites' of comments gathered by SMT from ELC and the playground:

More equipment in the playground. Need a variety because we are in the playground for 7 years. Need to challenge older ones

Balance between paper and computer work

Use recycled things more. Reduce our plastic like we learned about this year

More types of materials used for supporting learning

More opportunities for science and technology

Can we see the other nursery teachers and the Cabin and Butterfly room?

More planting

The marble run needs fixed

Our Improvement Journey Headlines Session 2021/22

These projects are linked to the vision and priorities for Scottish Education based on delivering excellence and equity. Parent/Carer information is available [here](#).

Improvement Project 1: Led by Scott Hardie, PT

Primary focus: Curriculum and assessment

Year of Project: 4

Purpose: **Fostering Mental Wellbeing at Smithton Primary** **Fostering Mental Wellbeing at Smithton Primary - Review**

At Smithton Primary, we want to ensure that promoting mental wellbeing is at the very heart of what we do. We feel that the school is well placed to help develop a better understanding of mental wellbeing across our whole school community: pupils, staff, parents, neighbours and friends.

Throughout this school session we have focused on how best to achieve this.

Firstly, a model to describe the different ways in which we can promote mental wellbeing has been drawn up:



A. Continue to build on the work to create an environment where positive **RELATIONSHIPS** are developed and nurtured across the whole school community.

- B. **POSITIVE LIFE CHOICES** continue to be encouraged through many different aspects of our work, including:
- Promoting active lifestyles;
 - Encouraging healthy eating through learning about good nutrition;
 - Developing awareness of substance misuse;
 - Providing families across our school community with tailored support.

C. Encouraging staff, pupils and parents to live a **BALANCED and FULFILLING LIFE**.

D. Equipping our pupils with a variety of **EMOTIONAL SKILLS** to help them cope with the challenges and pressures of everyday life.

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The following work has been undertaken throughout 2021/22:

**1. Pupil Focus Group**

A small group of P6 pupils looked at the idea of mental wellbeing and discussed and explored the activities that made them feel good. This work has helped to inform the way forward for this project.

**2. Staff In-Service Training**

A session during staff INSET in February 2022 explored mental health and mental wellbeing and how we can best promote these ideas across the school. The definition of mental wellbeing as being the ability to *feel good* and *function well* was established.

**3. Five Ways to Wellbeing**

Class teachers have introduced this concept to all classes throughout the school. This has involved simple discussion where pupils share and explore the things they do that make them feel good. Some experiential learning has also taken place where pupils have been given the opportunity to *Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning* and *Give*.

**4. Wellbeing Challenge 2020**

To promote mental wellbeing across our school community, pupils and their families have immersed themselves in the ideas behind the 5 Ways to Wellbeing by taking part in a *Wellbeing Challenge* during the month of May 2022. This has formed part of pupils' home learning and has also been an opportunity to raise funds for the school and a local charity. Pupils and their families have engaged positively with this initiative and it has been an effective way to promote mental wellbeing to families across our school community.

**5. Emotional Skills (The Decider)**

Using the ideas outlined in The Decider, all pupils throughout the school have been learning two simple techniques to help develop their ability to regulate their emotions:

- **STOPP**
- **Right Now (5-4-3-2-1)**

These techniques are based upon Cognitive Behavioural Therapy approaches. It is proposed that these techniques will continue to be worked on in future school sessions. In addition to this, we will look to further expand pupils' repertoire of skills to help them cope with the challenges that they may face both within and outwith school.

This work will set the foundation for embedding the promotion of mental wellbeing within our school curriculum.

### Improvement Project 2: Led by Iain Grandison PT

**Primary focus:** Curriculum and assessment

**Year of Project:** 2

**Purpose:** Global Goals Linked with DYW

#### **Progress and impact:**

##### **Developing the Young Workforce**

All Primary 6 and Primary 7 classes have been able to access the My World of Work (MWOw) website this session. They all completed the three core activities (Animal Me, My Interests and Skills Story) with individuals beginning to reflect on their classroom learning and share the skills developed in their MWOw profile.

Next session pupils need to translate this learning into their own digital profiles, sharing as part of their ongoing learning, the skills they are developing through their learning experiences. To support this class teachers will begin to use the Education Scotland Social Studies Progression when planning learning experiences.

##### **Learning for Sustainability (LFS)**

Whole school progress with learning for sustainability has been difficult this session. Much of collegiate time was set aside for the recovery of learning following Covid-19. However, significant progress has been made at learner level with seven of the fourteen classes being introduced to the Sustainable Development Global Goals (SDGG) through class contact reduction (CCR) time.

Across the majority of the upper school, pupils have greater awareness of the seventeen goals and what we can do as individuals and a community to encourage sustainability. [Feedback](#) gathered from P6 and P7 pupils shows that 83% feel the SDGG are relevant to them, with 80% suggesting the SDGG should be a core part of all learning and teaching at Smithton. In addition, as part of the whole school revised cross-curricular learning policy, pupils at all stages have been introduced to the United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

To continue developing our awareness of the SDGG next session the focus will be on introducing an awareness of the 17 goals to P1-P3 pupils. Through the school's cross curricular approaches all classes will build on their prior knowledge of the UNCRC through predetermined blocks of learning. Opportunities for CLPL along with staff being made aware of the national Learning for Sustainability Hub will support the developing understanding of the role of LFS within the wider curriculum as a responsibility for all.

Very good progress was made in this area.

### Improvement Project 3: Led by Lynne MacDonald PT

**Primary focus:** Curriculum and assessment

**Year of Project:** 2

HGIOS 2.2 Curriculum

HGIOS 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment

#### **Progress and Impact**

**Big Writing Adventures:** This has been the second consecutive year that the PT has been able to team teach/model lessons across P4-6 classes using the Big Writing Adventures scheme. During these lessons the PT worked with small focus groups for both children who needed more support and those who needed more of a challenge as well as supporting the class teachers by modelling or differentiating lessons for their learners. The children responded very well to the writing sessions and there was a noticeable difference in the children's understanding of different writing genres as well as the detail included in children's writing. The Primary 4 SNSA data collected in February 2022 showed a 7% increase in children achieving Band 9 and above and only 4% of children reaching Band 4 and below compared to the 13% the previous year.



**Story Mapping with Infant Classes:** PT began trialling the Story Mapping Approach initially with Primary 3 where the PT lead story mapping sessions using familiar stories and supported the teacher in extending writing to wider areas of the curriculum. During the lessons it was observed by the class teacher and the PT that more children were engaged during the writing activities and a higher number of children were able to write more independently due to the support put in place using BSL actions and story mapping templates. Unfortunately, due to staffing the PT was unable to continue to visit the class for support. However, the P3 class teacher continued to use the story mapping structure and noted that children across all levels were able to use BSL actions and story maps to retell and rewrite their own stories with little adult support.

**Persistent Handwriting difficulties:** Using feedback from class teachers there were 30 children identified across P1-7 classes who were experiencing persistent difficulties with handwriting/ fine motor skills and therefore having an impact on extended pieces of writing. Using the Highland Literacy Pencil control screen the children were assessed and areas for development were identified for each individual child. A PSA was allocated and timetabled to work with identified children/groups to support their areas of development. Children were reassessed in June 2022 and all pupil have improved through the intervention.

**Moderation of Writing:** During the February In-set Day, all teaching staff P1-7 took part in the Moderation of Writing across Early, First and Second Level. During this session, staff worked with their stage partners to look at examples of writing and agreed on attainment of a level as well as agreed next steps for the individual pupils. Staff feedback showed that the training was helpful in gaining an agreed understanding of what achievement of a level looks like in writing for each level as well as understanding the types of support that may need to be identified for Form 1's, IEP's etc. There was a consensus across the staff that it would be beneficial to have agreed time throughout the year where staff could regularly moderate between classes.

#### **Next Steps for 22-23**

- Continue to refocus the approaches to writing using the Big Writing Adventures and training from Stephen Graham around the Pedagogy of teaching writing for P4-7.
- During the 22-23 session, the PT would focus particularly on writing in the Early/First level where staff are working towards creating an enabling learning environments using resources and materials that encourage mark making and writing through the children's interests. Promoting the message that writing is not the end product but a tool to support their learning in other areas of the curriculum.
- Time will be allocated in the collegiate calendar for staff to collaborate and further develop a shared understanding of the developmental process of writing and moderation of standards. Ensuring that stage partners are agreeing on the attainment of a level using the 70% rule and new Smithton Writing Progression.

Next steps and resources for the identified Handwriting group to be shared with new class teachers in June 2022 once classes are confirmed and continued support for these children during the 22-23 session.

#### **Improvement Project 4: Led by Kirsten MacKay PT**

**Primary focus:** School and ELC improvement

**Year of Project:** 2

HGIOS 2.2 Curriculum

HGIOS 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment

#### **Progress and Impact**

**Transition:**



- Develop relationships with EYPs and support where needed
- Develop relationships with children in nursery rooms across year
- Work with HT, EYPs, P1 teachers and Family Team to update Transition Plan for new Primary 1 children
- Promote effective and positive communication and relationships between external nurseries and school to ensure children coming from different nurseries have consistent transition experience
- Develop effective ways to communicate with parents and promote positive relationships between nursery and school

### **Evaluation – June 2022**

This year began with being based in the nursery office on my management day. While this was useful for being more available for support and getting to know EYPs it was felt that nursery staff needed this space, therefore changed. Over the year however, I feel relationships have strengthened with staff and children, which has helped the transition process. I tried to ensure that I spent time in all three rooms on my management day to get to know all the children, as well as staff. The Transition Plan was updated to include visits to the school now guidance allows, and this was very positive, especially as children from external nurseries almost all joined in, accompanied by parents or nursery staff. Only two were not able to join for these visits, and both parents have been contacted by phone. Visits to the school have been arranged for both. Visits to Greentree and Les Enfants nurseries have been scheduled to visit children – there are concerns for one child and therefore meetings have been arranged. Joining in with Resilient Kids sessions has been very useful; this was organised by mixing up the rooms which was very valuable in seeing how children from different rooms interact together. This will help when organising P1 classes for next year. Enhanced transition has been more difficult – we have visited P1 spaces as much as possible, however this could be developed more effectively if we were able to know who the P1 teachers will be. If this is known before the end of term, I will aim to use management time to release the teachers involved to allow them time in nursery getting to know individual children. Parent meetings in person have been worked well in allowing a relaxed, informal space to explore the class spaces and answer questions, however it was hoped more parents would attend. As there is still one more meeting scheduled it may be that more parents will attend.

### **Play-based learning:**

- Develop planning and evaluation to ensure high quality learning experiences using play across Early and beginning of First Levels
- Extend parent involvement using focus weeks for children and ongoing parent contact in Nursery, P1 and P2 classes
- Use observation and interactions to develop and extend learning experiences for children, follow interests and support or challenge according to individual needs
- Develop outdoor learning spaces to ensure free flow between indoor and outdoor spaces and ensuring quality learning experiences in a range of different contexts
- Develop effective ways to record relevant learning moments and celebrate progress in ways that are meaningful and important to children

### **Evaluation – June 2022**

This year we developed individual learning journeys for each child, with three focus children each week. Before the week commenced, we asked for parent information which was very useful in allowing us to focus on any worries or questions. After the focus week we invited parents in for appointments in person or by telephone. Parent feedback has shown this has led to positive communication ([see parent survey](#)) with all who replied stating this was useful. Discussion of next steps and progress was found to be most helpful, with sharing on Google Classroom also found to be very useful. Staff for the most part found this system workable and positive ([see staff feedback](#))

and therefore we will continue this in P1 and P2 next session. It may also be useful to trial this approach in other classes, such as P3 if possible.

For planning we aimed to ensure a balance of teacher-led, teacher-initiated and child-led play. We used diagnostic assessments for phonics and numeracy to group children for adult-led learning and reading was introduced from Term 3 for individuals who were assessed as ready. During free play both teachers and PSAs used this time to develop relationships, assess needs and follow interests. We aimed to extend learning “in the moment” through dialogue, support or providing resources and recording this on the child’s Wow book or learning journey if it was their focus week. We also used the Wow books to promote mark-making and develop writing in different ways and this will be followed up on next session to ensure clear understanding and consistency of how to promote writing in P1 and P2. It was felt that a policy setting out how to evidence learning would be useful and this was shared and completed this term ([see Evidencing Learning in Early Years](#)).

Outdoor learning spaces have been used well this year, with outdoor/indoor free flow available for children most of the day in P1 and P2. Staff have observed how much children value learning outdoors and spaces have been used creatively and flexibly to allow effective learning.

Relationships and teamwork have been vital in implementing this approach, and it could not be achieved without supportive and intuitive support staff, as well as class teachers.

### **Next Steps for 22-23**

Moving forward, I would like to have a programme of Stay and Play in place where families could be invited in to school on a regular basis. It will also be important to keep meeting regularly and ensuring that changes of staff will have knowledge and support to ensure effective learning and consistency across Early Years and into school. This will be built into Working Time Agreement to allow more flexibility for staff meetings and when they can take place. Another next step would be to extend play-based pedagogy into Primary 3 and ensuring the balance of teacher-led and child-led learning is effective for high-quality learning for children throughout each stage.

## **Evaluation of Progress**

We believe we have made the following progress this session **for both ELC and Primary**:

| <b>Quality Indicator</b>                                      | <b>School self-evaluation</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>1.3<br/>Leadership of Change</b>                           | Good                          |
| <b>2.3<br/>Learning, teaching and<br/>assessment</b>          | Satisfactory                  |
| <b>3.1<br/>Ensuring wellbeing, equality<br/>and inclusion</b> | Good                          |
| <b>3.2<br/>Raising attainment and<br/>achievement</b>         | Satisfactory                  |

There remains a discrepancy between teacher judgement assessments of children's levels and SNSA data, although the gap between both statistics is getting closer compared to last session. The discrepancies can also be attributed to two terms of lockdown and staff/pupil absences for most of 2021-22. If young people are not in school they cannot be taught; google classroom is great for follow up work when they cannot attend school therefore the full year's teaching of the curriculum could not be taught. The data suggests that our play pedagogy policy over the last two years is making impact in P1 and although our data is not above the national average for P4 and P7 it is on the increase year on year. The size of the year groups have an impact and the number of additional needs affects the statistics, too. If parents are concerned they should seek reassurance about their child's education and learning from the class teacher and senior management.

P4 SNSA data states we have average Scottish school figures for Numeracy and Writing. We are slightly above average for Reading.

Our teacher judgements remain uncorrelated with these findings. In numeracy P4 our teacher judgements come out at 65.4%, ( 7 % behind Scot average)

In reading we are a clear 22% behind the National average even though our SNSA potential states we should be performing above .

Writing is 35% behind the National average of 72%- again we should be registering around this figure.

We are confident that our teaching methodologies, fewer absences now restrictions are lifted banning whole classes from school, etc. will allow the potential shown in SNSA to be reached where the curriculum is taught, skills are developed and collaboration can take place.

Increased opportunities for moderation activities at ASG level and double streamed classes with stage partner for next session should help bridge our gap between teacher judgements and SNSA.

In P7 SNSA state average ability for writing , below average for Numeracy and above average for Reading. Our teacher judgements for Numeracy and Reading (within a margin of error) correlate with these findings.

It seems that targeted and focussed support to plug gaps in knowledge/understanding over a 6 month period have helped individuals to attain their potential in these areas. Use of "Covid Recovery" teacher impact evident.

In writing though, the National average is 69% with our P7 figures at 61.5%, just outwith our margin of error .

This current Cohort of P7 have registered a very low Teacher Judgement of 59% for listening and talking , compared to Nat average of 82%. This is unusual but when we consider the fewer opportunities for talking and listening face to face over the last two and a half years the data makes sense. This will be an area of focus next session across the school to ensure that all can 'catch up'.

Overall, writing standards have improved across the school as evident from teacher judgement and especially in SNSA potential. P1 did not undertake SNSA but attainment levels are favourable, backing up the play pedagogy reforms that have taken place.

### **Closing the Poverty Related Attainment Gap**

[Read the evaluation here of this year's PEF Family Team impact and also the plan and costings for next session.](#)

Our children and young people believe we have made the following progress this session:

**Theme 1** Very good  
**Our relationships**

**Theme 2** Very good  
**Our learning and teaching**

**Theme 3** Very good  
**Our school and community**

**Theme 4** Very good  
**Our health and wellbeing**

**Theme 5** Good  
**Our successes and achievements**

Our overall evaluation of our school's capacity for continuous improvement is:

**We are confident in our capacity for continuous improvement.**

### Planning Ahead

Full details of the school's 2022/23 improvement priorities and actions are detailed on the school improvement plan, [which can be accessed on our website](#) or by contacting the school office.