

Falkirk Council: Children's Services

Education Division

Health & Wellbeing Validation Visit Report

St Bernadette's' PS

17th June 2016

Validation team: Eddie MacLennan (Team Leader) Susan McElhatton (Curriculum Support) Ann McLaughlin (NHS Forth Valley) Ann Bateman (HT) Jane Jackson (Curriculum Support)

The team's approach comprised:

- Visits to observe learning and teaching in primary and nursery classes
- Meeting with school staff focus group
- Meeting with the Acting Senior Leadership Team
- Meeting with pupil focus groups
- Meeting with parent focus group
- Meeting with partner agencies focus group
- Scrutiny of documentation

For each of the Quality Indicators the main strengths/findings, and where appropriate suggestions for improvement, are summarised below:

HGIOS 4 3.2 Raising attainment & Achievement

- The school is data rich and effectively analyses this data to impact raising attainment. A good example of this is the more able reading group.
- Tracking is effective and identifies what needs to be done and what the focus for a particular session will be.
- The whole staff team is committed to raising attainment and achievement and the continual process of self-evaluation drives this forward.
- The school has identified that whilst 'Big Maths' is a good framework, children are not transferring their numeracy skills into other areas of the curriculum and this needs to be addressed
- Whilst there are opportunities to celebrate children's wider achievements, the school has identified there is a need to track this

The team validated the school's evaluation of 'very good'

HGIOS 4 2.7 Partnerships

- Partnership working is very strong and impacts on learners effectively. Partners commented on how their input is valued and taken forward by staff.
- Partnership with parents is very strong – the parent focus group spoke about the maintenance of energy and drive from staff which they had thought would diminish after the excitement of the new school wore off.

- The school has high expectations and a real commitment to working with, and for, the whole school community. There is very enabling approach – partners commented on “no not being part of the school vocabulary”
- The planning process is two-way and the school works hard to maintain relationships with its partner agencies. They listen to all stakeholders including the children and act on it.

The school evaluated this theme as ‘very good’ the validation team evaluated it as ‘excellent’

HGIOS 4 2.2 Curriculum

- All stakeholders are involved in putting together the school’s curriculum rationale - the validation team suggested considering a more localised rationale which reflects the uniqueness of the school and its community.
- A collegiate approach is taken by the school to build capacity and develop progression pathways for all curricular areas.
- Outdoor learning is firmly embedded within the school curriculum – the parent focus group reflected on the positive impact this has on their children’s learning.
- The school has made a huge commitment to Health & Wellbeing, which is monitored and evaluated through surveys and discussions with all stakeholders including school staff.
- Through Interdisciplinary learning (IDL) children are involved in planning.
- The development of multi-stage focus groups, which are led by teachers with an interest/skill in that area, allows further opportunities for pupil led learning.
- Transitional activities are planned throughout the school year with children brought in from other nurseries. The ‘Early Level’ approach is being adopted and will help with curricular as well as pastoral transitions.
- The whole school approach to Learning for Sustainability (LfS) is evolving and developing. The culture and ethos of the school firmly reflects the LfS agenda.
- The review of homework activities is an example of good practice. The inclusion of wider skills and experiences as homework tasks has resulted in developing parents understanding of skills for life, learning and work.
- The wellbeing indicators are embedded in practice. Self-evaluation has indicated the need to look at nurturing approaches and in particular mental health and mental wellbeing which the school has taken on board

The team validated the school’s evaluation of ‘very good’

HGIOS 4 2.4 Personalised Support and 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion

- The children feel part of a community with staff presenting a caring, family feel
- The parent focus group stated they were happy for their children to come to school and described the school staff as being ‘intuitive’ to their children’s needs. The school staff are good role models who go ‘above and beyond’ the call of duty. Support for families is evident and appreciated by parents.
- The ethos of the school was described by the pupil focus group as a school with ‘kind teachers’
- Tracking of children’s needs is well established with GIRFEC paperwork pinpointing the children’s needs with the appropriate support from other partner agencies with regular

Team around the Child (TAC) meetings or indeed Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings when appropriate

- From classroom observations there was little evidence of differentiation, pace and challenge in some of the teaching and learning episodes experienced by the team

The team validated the school's evaluation 2.4 as 'very good' but 3.1 as 'excellent'

HGIOS 4 2.6 Transitions

- Transitions are a major strength within the school from nursery through to secondary
- A consistent approach has been adopted on planning folders and assessment and wellbeing data to ensure a smooth transition from one stage to another.
- There is a collegiate approach to planning, being reflective and responsive to support learners and their families
- The development of curriculum pathways from nursery to P7 ensures progressive learning for all pupils
- There is involvement with/input from a significant number of partners to ensure transition is supported in its broadest sense e.g. – managing emotions
- The St Mungo's cluster is adopting a new model of cluster working which the school has embraced. The school has also opened up transition arrangements with Larbert High School to support pupils who will transfer there

The school evaluated this theme as 'very good'; the validation team evaluated it as 'excellent'

Key strengths

- Well mannered, polite, articulate and confident children who are happy and relaxed in the school environment
- The Senior Leadership Team is self-aware, reflective, open and honest which translates into successfully moving the school forward and having a positive impact on children's learning
- The pastoral care of all stakeholders
- Partnership working in its broadest sense
- Outdoor Learning and Learning for Sustainability are embedded in the culture, ethos and curriculum.
- The use of data to analyse and drive school improvement
- Building staff capacity with a 'have a go' approach with innovative and creative ideas supported by the senior management resulting in a sense of trust amongst school staff

Level 3- 'Excelling as a Health Promoting School' has been achieved by St Bernadette's Primary School