



Balmuildy Primary School

Standards and Quality Report

2023/24



We are a
Reading School

Context of the School



Vision Values and Aims

Balmuirdy Primary is a non-denominational school situated in the west of Bishopbriggs. It serves an area stretching from the Glasgow boundary to Hilton Road on the west side of Kirkintilloch Road. The catchment area is large with many pupils travelling to school on transport provided by the local authority. Before coming to school, our P1 pupils attend a range of local authority and private Early Years Centres. Almost all P7 pupils transition to Bishopbriggs Academy.

The school was built in 1962 and has a traditional structure with 14 classrooms, a large hall with a stage, a children's kitchen and a nurture room. The school has good sized grounds including large grassy areas, concrete playgrounds and a Multi-Use Games Area. In September 2021 it was announced that a new Balmuirdy Primary School would be built and plans are now at an advanced stage.

The current role is 369 pupils organised into 14 classes. The teaching entitlement is 19.04fte, including a Head Teacher, two Depute Head Teachers and a Principal Teacher. The work of the school is further supported by 2 Classroom Assistants, 3.5 Support for Learning Assistants, 0.4fte Education Support Teacher allocation, 3 part-time instrumental Music Instructors, a Building Manager and a team of Cleaning and Catering staff.

Our catchment area consists mainly of owner occupied housing. Free meal entitlement within the school is currently 10.3% and data from the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation shows that 8.4% of pupils live within areas designated as having fewer opportunities for children and young people. Pupil Equity Funding is allocated to the school to support children and families and to raise attainment for all. Last session the school was awarded a total of £34 560 to develop strategies to close the poverty related attainment gap. Pupil Equity Funding was used to employ additional staff and to support our most vulnerable pupils through planned, targeted interventions focused on narrowing attainment gaps. Attendance is monitored and any issues are addressed in partnership with parents and carers. Our average attendance rate for this school year was 94.7%.

The school community is strongly committed to its shared vision and values which underpin all aspects of the life and work of the school. We are proud of the strong partnerships we have built across our community to support children and families. Our dedicated Parent Council and PTA provide a high level of support to the school. Our curriculum has been enriched by all staff participating in high quality professional learning. Our outdoor learning spaces, cooking kitchen and nurture room have continued to provide important contexts for learning and wellbeing support.

This Standards and Quality Report was created in consultation with staff, parents and pupils as part of our continuous journey of improvement.

Progress in School Improvement Plan (SIP) priorities

School priority 1: Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion	
<p>NIF Priorities</p> <p>Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre</p> <p>Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing</p> <p>Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children</p> <p>NIF Drivers School leadership Teacher professionalism Parent/carer involvement and engagement</p>	<p>HGIOS?4 QIs</p> <p>QI 3.1 Wellbeing, equality and inclusion</p> <p>QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement</p> <p>QI 3.3 Increasing creativity and employability</p>
<p>Progress and Impact:</p> <p>Very good progress was made with this priority. The Rights Respecting Schools steering group of Rights Ambassadors led the school to the Bronze Award in June 2024 and an action plan is in place for achieving the Silver Award.</p> <p>At the start of the session, the Rights Ambassadors announced the refreshed school values, following their consultation with pupils and staff before the Summer break. They launched a competition to bring the values to life by creating characters to represent each one. They set the criteria for the characters and, at the judging stage, decided they wanted to choose non-gender specific characters and names to make our values as inclusive as possible. The impact of this was seen and heard across the school community as winners were announced and shared. Learners were engaged and motivated to talk about the characters which were drawn and modelled to be displayed at the entrance of the school. The excitement around this process helped the whole school community to ensure the values are seen as important, underpinning everything else that happens in the school.</p> <p>The Rights Ambassadors led a series of assemblies throughout the session and these were used to highlight the rights of the child and how they are upheld in some contexts but not in others. This supported learners to reflect on their own situations and have empathy and concern for others. Class activities were prepared to follow up assemblies and these were delivered to classes by the children who were Rights Ambassadors. Completed activities were displayed in the school foyer on the Rights Respecting Schools wall. Sway newsletters were used to share the work of the group with parents.</p> <p>Following a successful pilot in one class last session, Pupil Enquiry Based Learning (PEBL) was developed across all classes in P4 – P7. A few members of staff participated in training provided by the Local Authority and all teachers took part in training and sharing of practice within the school. Enquiry based learning is being developed alongside Play in the early years and a few staff participated in Play training at authority level. The Play Champion was a member of the PEBL Committee which has led the PEBL development and is made up of staff and pupils who are known as PEBL Champions.</p> <p>The PEBL Committee led a series of assemblies throughout the session to share approaches and celebrate learning. Primary 7 pupils, in their second year of PEBL, opened their classrooms and shared their learning with all pupils in Primary 3 to Primary 6. This was motivating for the P7 children and engaged the younger pupils, encouraging them to see PEBL as something to value and enjoy. Engagement and motivation are two of the most measurable impacts of PEBL to date. This has been fed back through consultation and pupil voice but is most evident through the observation of engagement and the quality of learning in classrooms.</p>	

The impact of PEBL on learners has also been measured in more tangible ways through the development of a range of skills. Learning Assets give children and adults a shared vocabulary to describe the skills that are acquired by learning in this way. Learning Assets are displayed in all classrooms and used consistently from Primary 1 to Primary 7. Learners are developing core skills like note taking, critical thinking, analysing data and drawing conclusions alongside collaboration, perseverance, communication and teamwork, which are all key skills for learning, life and work. PEBL supports children to be curious learners who can lead their own learning and discover the answers to their own questions. In pupil feedback, learners have told us that they appreciate the personalisation and choice that PEBL brings. They do not have to learn the same things or in the same way as other children and, importantly, they do not have to wait for others but can explore their thinking in their own way and in their own time.

The implications for teachers in this shift in pedagogy is significant but feedback from staff shows that they are committed to continuing to develop PEBL approaches because they recognise the impact on learners but also because it is an enjoyable and engaging way not just to learn but also to teach. It has been important to support teaching staff as they make these adaptations to learning and teaching. Led by the Principal Teacher and Primary 7 teacher, all staff have had opportunities for professional learning and for informal learning discussions throughout the year. Planning frameworks have been developed at First and Second Levels. These support the development of Central Ideas and progression across the school, as well as exemplifying inter-disciplinary approaches across curricular areas.

Pupil Equity Funding has been used to ensure dedicated development time for staff leading PEBL. It has also funded modern, accessible and age appropriate non-fiction texts to ensure they are relevant to the central ideas being explored by learners. This has been linked to our Reading development and school leaders have collaborated to ensure best value across both developments.

A very successful parent information session took place with over one hundred parents attending an introduction to PEBL in the school hall before heading to classrooms to see their child's learning in action. Parents had the opportunity to work alongside their child and take part in an enquiry. The feedback from parents was very positive and they are keen for the school to continue to develop this learning approach further.

Next Steps:

- Engage with the EDC Self-evaluation Toolkit to review progress
- Monitor and track skills acquisition and review the impact on attainment in literacy and numeracy

School priority 2: Reading

NIF Priorities

Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children

Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy

NIF Drivers Curriculum and assessment
Teacher professionalism
Parent/carer involvement and engagement

HGIOS?4 QIs

QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

QI 2.4 Personalised support

QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

Progress and Impact:

Very good progress was made with this priority. Led by the DHT, a Reading Committee of staff and pupils has led the further development of Reading through participation in the Reading Schools Programme to raise awareness and promote the benefits of reading for pleasure in developing wellbeing, critical thinking, creativity, empathy and resilience. In June 2024 the school was awarded accreditation at Core and has submitted an Action Plan to work towards gaining Silver.

Professional learning has been provided for staff in the Science of Reading, the impact on learners of reading for pleasure and the teaching of phonics. Teaching staff undertook self-evaluation using the Reading Schools toolkit to identify areas for improvement and develop the Silver Action plan. Members of staff on the reading committee developed their leadership skills by consulting staff, developing pupil and parent surveys, writing library discussion cards and collating evidence to demonstrate the school's accreditation at Core level and readiness for Silver. Pupil Equity funding was used to ensure dedicated development time for these activities.

The Reading Committee developed an assembly programme which was pupil led and ensured that Reading was a focus throughout the year. This was used to raise awareness of events, share learning and celebrate successes, including through the introduction of a Reading Award at weekly assemblies to acknowledge children who were increasing their reading time in class, around the school or at home and 'Ask what I'm Reading' badges. Dedicated time was set aside in class for reading for pleasure and members of staff modelled by taking part.

Pupil Equity funding was used to refresh class library spaces. Children worked with their teachers to design comfortable, inviting spaces for reading and a range of modern, accessible and relatable texts were purchased, tailored to the interests of the children. Blooms question cards, presented in child friendly formats, have encouraged children to engage in valuable discussions about the books they are reading. A recent pupil survey was compared to a baseline survey and, along with staff observations, this demonstrated measurable attitudinal gains in reading for pleasure, particularly for children who can find reading challenging.

Across the session, all classes have visited Bishopbriggs Library and had the opportunity to apply for a library membership. All Primary 6 pupils visited local Early Years Centres with their favourite picture books to share with the children. All Primary 5 pupils wrote a 'Monster's Feast' story which they shared with Primary 1 pupils. As part of World Book Day celebrations a book swap was organised, and Authors Live events were accessed through the Scottish Book Trust website. The impact on learners has been to create an interest and enthusiasm about reading, making it more appealing and accessible to all.

Parents of all P1, P2 and P3 children were invited into school to read with their child as part of them receiving the Book Bug and Read, Write, Count bags given to children at these stages. A monthly Sway newsletter is shared with parents giving themed recommendations about new authors and titles to try, all linked to the Scottish Book Trust website. At the beginning of the session, the DHT made a presentation to Parent Council about the Reading development and regular updates have been provided.

Next Steps:

- Family engagement and home learning developed through the introduction of Active Learn Reading for Pleasure component
- Development of Family Reading Bags at P1 – P3 and consultation with P4 – P7 parents
- Implement Action Plan for Silver award within the Reading Schools Programme

Progress in National Improvement Framework (NIF) priorities

Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy

School tracking of NIF levels at P1, P4 and P7 show high levels of attainment over time with most achieving their appropriate level in literacy and numeracy. There has been an increase in Numeracy, from P1 to P4 and an increase in attainment in P7 numeracy from previous sessions.

Tracking evidenced shows that most learners are on track in Literacy and Numeracy. This session almost all learners in P1, P4 and P7 will attain appropriate CFE levels in Numeracy and in P1 and P4 most learners will achieve their appropriate CFE levels in Literacy. In P7 almost all learners will achieve their appropriate CFE level in Literacy. Teachers are developing their use of assessment in order to make secure judgments in achievement of a level. 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 any gaps. Although the data would show that not all gaps have been closed, most learners have made good progress from their prior levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy.

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 Balmuldy 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 has allowed us to provide additional teaching input for identified learners in order to address a specific gap in their learning.

The focus this year has been on pupil attainment in reading 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. Through analysis of attainment data over time, the school has been identified by both the Local Authority and Scottish Government as having closed the poverty related attainment gap for learners. Senior leaders have met with representatives of Education Scotland and Scottish Government to describe the approaches that have been implemented to achieve this

Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing

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 the EDC wellbeing survey to gather views of our learners. This data was analysed by class teachers and any actions identified for groups of learners or individuals. Data was also analysed by SLT and main themes addressed through whole school gatherings.

Active schools have provided ongoing support with afterschool and lunchtime clubs such as football, tennis, athletics and netball. They have also fostered links with local sporting clubs and our children have experience Judo and Rugby. From this our learners have had the opportunity to become more active during and after school as well as developing new skills.

We have a robust ASN cycle with Universal and Targeted Support Plans in place for those learners who require support. Health and Wellbeing Interventions are at class and school level. These include Season for Growth and bespoke nurture programme which have been supported by additional teaching and non-teaching staff as well as the creating of specific safe spaces for all learners. The school has access the Life Link counselling service in order to support specific learners at P6 and P7.

Alongside curriculum developments, including the introduction of the Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenting programme, a range of nurturing and wellbeing supports have continued to be offered to learners to mitigate the effects of any potential barriers to attainment and achievement.

Placing the human needs and rights of every child and young person at the centre of Education

As part of this session's priorities, we consulted all stakeholders and refreshed our school values in conjunction with our Rights Respecting Schools Journey. This has ensured that as a school community, our values were important and underpinned everything that happened in our school. As part of the Rights respecting school journey, our Rights Ambassadors led a series of assemblies and class activities which has allowed us to raise awareness with our learners and provide a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities in relation to rights within our school community and beyond. We successfully achieved our bronze award and will continue to engage in this accreditation programme next session.

Attainment and Achievement Data

Curriculum for Excellence Levels at the end of June 2024				
	Reading	Writing	Talking & Listening	Numeracy & Mathematics
Early level by end of P1	most	almost all	almost all	almost all
First level by end of P4	most	most	almost all	almost all
Second level by end of P7	almost all	almost all	almost all	almost all

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

- The school has been identified by the Local Authority and Scottish Government as having closed the poverty related attainment gap for learners
- Approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of learners through the provision of professional learning for staff and nurture support continue to receive very positive feedback from all stakeholders
- The school has gained the Bronze award in the Rights Respecting Schools Accreditation Programme and has a plan in place to work towards achieving Silver
- The School has been awarded Core in the Reading Schools Programme and has a plan in place to work towards achieving Silver

Self-evaluations of How Good Is Our School? (4th edition)

Quality indicator	School self-evaluation	Inspection/ Authority evaluation
1.3 Leadership of change	Very good	not applicable
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Very good	not applicable
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion	Very good	not applicable
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	Very good	not applicable

Summary of School Improvement priorities for Session 2024/25

1. Wellbeing, equality and inclusion
2. Reading
3. Pupil Enquiry Based Learning

What is our capacity for continuous improvement?

The school is entering a period of significant change with the appointment of a new Head Teacher from August 2024 and a new build project anticipated to begin in session 2024/25. However, the strong foundation of shared values, strong relationships and high attainment mean that the school is well placed to continue to thrive and develop.