

Exemplar School 1 - Self-evaluation Summary Paper

Context of the school

Exemplar School 1 is a 5-14 rural community school. Our aim is to meet the learning and development needs of all our pupils and equip them for the world of work. We have a staff of 15 teachers and 3 teaching assistants. The Senior Management Team comprises the Headteacher, Depute Headteacher and Principal Teacher. In the primary we have three composite classes, a non-English speaking class ranging from P1 to P7 and two English medium classes, P1-5 and P6-7. Fluent bilingual pupils in the secondary are also taught Geography, Home Economics and Technical Education in Gaelic. We have an active Parent Council which supports the school in a number of ways.

The school enjoys high class facilities such as a community library, games hall, swimming pool and an outdoor football park. It is well used by members of the community, especially during the winter. The future of our secondary department has been under review for a few years.

How well do children and young people learn and achieve?

All pupils are given many opportunities for achievement. We are an inclusive school where no child is left out. We celebrate achievement at assemblies, in our newsletters, and through rewards, as well praise from class teachers. The PLPs and the targets help us to identify pupils who may need extra encouragement. Being a small school, we know our pupils very well and pupils who are not achieving are quickly identified and encouraged.

Most of the children are learning very well and making good progress in the majority of their classes/subjects. Standards of attainment throughout the school are very good. We encourage pupils to set their own targets and review them periodically. In secondary this is done at PSD. We also look at attainment data and quickly identify pupils who are under achieving and act accordingly. Almost all pupils are making good progress in their class work and are well supported by their teachers. Our attainment levels over the past few years have been above local authority and national averages.

Most pupils are working at their expected CfE levels for their age and those with high CAT scores are challenged with differentiated materials. Most pupils are successful and confident learners who exercise responsibility and contribute to school activities.

The majority of pupils are highly motivated in their learning and many are independent and active learners. Their learning is well supported by key partners such as parents, members of the community and statutory agencies. The Council's Community Education Department support inter-disciplinary learning very effectively. Pupils gain much benefit from working with other adults.

Priorities for future development

- Develop and maintain a whole school attainment tracking system;
- Provide more opportunities for colleagues to discuss attainment issues and general good practice;
- Provide opportunities for outdoor learning activities to help improve pupils' physical and emotional wellbeing and to learn new skills and abilities that are not always visible in the classroom;
- Provide staff training in elements of ICT, ensuring our resources enable teachers to teach well and learners to learn effectively;
- Continue to improve the school's ICT provision.

How well does the school support children and young people to develop and learn?

The whole school ethos encompasses the GIRFEC agenda. In meeting the learning needs of all pupils, we promote good health, support pupils to develop their confidence and skills and give opportunities for physical activity. Our pupils' talents and abilities are nurtured through the care of the staff and those needing additional help are supported by our own staff and partner agencies, where necessary. We have an active pupil council whose views are listened to by staff. Usually, once per term we hold pupil forums in the secondary and issues raised are acted upon. We encourage inclusive practices with staff and pupils.

We work effectively with partner agencies to best support the needs of learners. These include Learning Support, Inclusion, Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Team, Social Work, Schools Nurse, Occupational Therapy. Review meetings are held regularly to evaluate the progress of pupils on the Children's Service Database and targets are revised and strategies improved where necessary.

During curriculum planning, we have changed our timetable to best meet the needs of our pupils. We use the feedback we get from pupils, parents and staff to inform our decisions and practices, eg Meeting Learning Needs questionnaire from last session.

We support all learners through transition points and identify pupils who may need additional support, eg extra visits to the receiving school, and a programme for enhanced transition. All teaching and non-teaching staff have received training in Child Protection this year.

Priorities for future development

- Develop staff skills in using assessment information appropriately to identify and plan future learning;
- Continue to provide opportunities for all pupils to be creative, enterprising and prepared for the world of work;

- With the support of the Learning Community staff and the Council's Inclusion Department, ensure that the best possible systems and strategies are in place for supporting pupils with additional needs;
- Ensure all teachers share appropriate learning learning targets with our learners.
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How well does the school improve the quality of its work?

Each session we evaluate our performance against one of the QIs and address issues raised. This year we have audited our self-evaluation practices against the HGIOS 3 QI indicators and we are currently addressing the action points which arose. We have also audited our progress with Curriculum for Excellence and this identified areas for professional development. These will be addressed in the School Improvement Plan for next session. Classroom observation is undertaken annually for every teacher and written and verbal feedback is given. Where necessary, CPD opportunities are identified and arranged, eg some staff have undertaken peer observations this session.

Individual teachers evaluate their plans to indicate next steps in developing work for next session. Next sessions we will be gathering the views of support agencies and partners formally to help us evaluate our practice.

Parents complete questionnaires about the work of the school every two years and we have an active Parent Council which is very supportive of the school. Pupils also complete questionnaires and evaluate rich tasks. Management regularly discuss with pupils the quality of learning and teaching in the school.

Priorities for future developments

- Work as a school community and with partner agencies to evaluate our self-evaluation arrangements in order to secure continuous improvement, including major change where this is needed;
- Provide more opportunities for peer observation;
- Involve parents more in evaluating the school and contributing to school activities.

How do you ensure equality and inclusion and promote diversity across the school?

- All children have equal opportunity within and equal access to all areas of the whole school curriculum and extra-curricular activities;
- We take account of pupils' cultural backgrounds, language needs and different learning styles;
- Learning materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid stereotypes and overt or covert discrimination;
- Teacher time, specialist support, attention and all resources are given equally to all children;
- All children are encouraged to work and play freely with each other;

- Discipline procedures – notably rewards and sanctions – are the same for all children;
- All children and staff are encouraged to value each other and build up relationships both within the school and in the community, based on mutual respect for each other;
- We promote understanding of people who are different and the importance of including everyone.

What would you suggest as possible areas for focused attention by the inspection team?

- Working with partners;
- How we promote and celebrate our cultural heritage;
- Use of ICT across the school.