

Summarised inspection findings

Cunard School

West Dunbartonshire Council

SEED No: 8315248

03 October 2017

1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement

satisfactory

This indicator defines rigorous self-evaluation as a responsibility of all stakeholders. It highlights the importance of partnership approaches to self-evaluation and continuous improvement. It emphasizes the need for strong leadership and robust analysis of a range of intelligence and data as essential features of effective continuous self-improvement. A key factor in this indicator is demonstrating the impact of self-evaluation in relation to outcomes for all learners. Their active participation in self-evaluation is therefore essential.

The themes are:

- Collaborative approaches to self-evaluation
- Analysis and evaluation of intelligence and data
- Ensuring impact on learners' successes and achievements

- The headteacher has a clear understanding of the development needs of the school. She and the depute headteacher work with staff effectively to identify improvement priorities. Leadership is developed well across the school and all staff value their leadership roles in taking forward school improvements through their work on whole school working groups. Commendably learning assistants undertake leadership roles when possible.
- The school's collegiate calendar supports staff to plan self-evaluation activities. The three year cycle of review is aligned effectively with the HGIOS?4 quality indicators. All staff engage well with self-evaluation activities and this supports an emerging culture of improvement across the school. Parents and partners participate in school self-evaluation activities and have a shared understanding of the school's improvement priorities. The school should continue with their plans to gather a wider range of data to support self-evaluation including further involving children, parents and partners in reviewing the work of the school. The senior management team and teachers need to more robustly analyse data gathered to ensure self-evaluation activities lead to improvements in outcomes for children.
- Teachers and learning assistants reflect well on their practice and regularly adapt their approaches to support each individual child. They undertake a range of professional learning activities and this supports them to develop new ways of improving children's engagement in their learning. Staff also work with a range of partners to improve their practice including the local authority raising attainment teacher who has supported teachers to develop strategies for improving children's mental numeracy skills. Teachers have embraced this support and are positive at the effect it is having on children's abilities to manipulate numbers and perform mental calculations.
- Peer learning visits support teachers to reflect on their practice. Teachers are becoming more confident in working with colleagues to identify possible areas for improvement through collegiate dialogue and feedback. Teachers at Cunard School are also beginning to work more collegiately with colleagues in the shared campus primary school. Senior management learning visits have focussed on recent school developments such as reviewing the learning environment. Teachers were provided with written feedback. The headteacher should now develop further peer and senior management learning visits to link their focus more clearly to current school improvement priorities. Feedback from learning visits should provide an improved focus on how teachers could improve their practice to increase the quality of children's learning experiences.

- The school's strong focus on wellbeing is impacting positively on children's attendance at the school, and engagement in their learning. There is scope for the school to analyse more robustly the impact of individual approaches, for example the emotional literacy programme, to give a clearer picture of those approaches which are impacting most positively on outcomes for children.
- Summative and standardised assessment data is used to develop teachers' understanding of the standards of children's work and to identify gaps in children's learning. The school should continue to develop their use of summative and standardised assessment data to better measure progress in children's learning. Teachers now need to use and analyse a wider range of assessment data to make accurate professional judgements of children's attainment. The school also needs to continue to develop teachers' skills, knowledge and confidence in moderating the standards of children's work.
- The school should continue to improve their approaches to tracking and monitoring children's progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Improved approaches to tracking and monitoring children's progress should provide teachers with a better understanding of what children can do and better support them to plan learning experiences which provide appropriate levels of pace and challenge.

2.1: Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- Attainment in literacy and numeracy
- Attainment over time
- Overall quality of learners' achievement
- Equity for all learners.

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Overall children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. Generally, children perform better in numeracy as compared with literacy. The school need to continue with their focus on developing children's reading and writing. The school's data for June 2017 shows that the majority of children attain early and first level reading, writing, talking and listening and numeracy and mathematics in line with national expectations. By the end of P6 the majority of children achieved early or first level and a few are ready to start second level in P7.

Literacy and English

Reading

Across the school children are learning how to apply the tools for reading. At the early level children are learning letter names, how to blend to make three letter words, and extending their sight vocabulary well. Not all children are using the structure of sentences to predict words which they cannot sound. A few children are able to blend four letter words. The school are aware of the need to spend more time on early reading skills such as alliteration, syllable segmentation and other phonological awareness activities. Greater fluency in decoding is required at the early level. Older children at P4 to P6 are practising their reading skills by reading longer texts from different genre. Recent participation in West Dunbartonshire's reciprocal reading is helping to provide a structure for developing higher order comprehension skills. By the end of P4 a few children are able to read with confidence and expression. By P6 almost all can answer literal questions about a text, and the majority can answer simple and more complex inferential questions. The school are aware of the need to formally plan literacy across the curriculum to help children consolidate their reading skills. For example, as used in the Community of Philosophical Inquiry (C.O.P.I) lessons.

Writing

Across the school children have good opportunities to practice their handwriting and to improve their spelling. A structured writing programme is helping children to make progress in the technical aspects of writing which is improving the quality of their compositions. For example, children in P4 to P6 are beginning to use verbs, adjectives and nouns with confidence in sentences and short paragraphs. A few children at P6 are able to write more extended pieces of text using paragraphs, appropriate punctuation and rich vocabulary. They are also learning about the different purposes of writing. For example, the difference between

factual and persuasive writing. Across the school, the quality of writing is not always consistent when the focus for learning is on other curricular areas.

Listening

Across the school, children listen well and are learning to respect the views of others. Class routines such as the daily diary and discussions about how they feel based on an emotional literacy approach, are helping children to take turns and to listen when others are talking. The nurturing approach across the school is helping children, to reflect and talk about their learning and to apply their listening skills across the curriculum. For older children, the teaching of philosophy is helping children to debate, challenge effectively and arrive at mutually acceptable solutions to potential problems. Sharing, listening and taking turns is an important part of the school day and is helping children to regulate their behaviour and to attend to important information and instruction. Across the curriculum there are many opportunities which have the potential to improve children's listening and talking skills further for example when discussing what causes gravity in philosophy lessons.

Numeracy and mathematics

The school's focus on the development of children's numeracy and mathematics skills is to ensure that children can apply their learning in real life contexts. Teachers should continue to plan lessons which allow children to learn in real life contexts and to then apply this learning in other areas. The school should also continue to develop children's mental agility through number talk.

Number, Money, Measure

By the end of P4 the majority of children know the days of the week and months of the year, a few know the months of the year in Spanish. The majority of children are able to identify place value of numbers to 100 and add or subtract numbers to 20. Most can tell simple times using digital and analogue clocks. The majority of children are able to identify the value of coins, use money to purchase items and work out how much change they should receive. By the end of P6 the majority of children are able to identify place value to 1000 and can use simple times tables to perform calculations. The majority of children know simple fractions.

Shape, Position, Movement

The majority of children by the end of P4 can identify objects on a grid using simple grid references. By the end of P6 the majority of children are able to identify a range of 2D and 3D shapes and can describe some of their properties.

Information Handling

By the end of P4 the majority of children can conduct simple surveys using tally tables to capture data and can express their results in pictographs.

Attainment over time

- It is challenging to accurately measure attainment over time due to the school's lack of baseline measures. Observations of children by HM Inspectors, multi-agency assessments provided on enrolment together with children's learning journals, suggest that almost all

children have improved their attention span, are better behaved and are more resilient when presented with challenging learning and social situations.

- The school measures children's progress using a wide range of formative and summative assessments including traffic light monitoring of children's outcomes in literacy and numeracy. Staff are aware of the need to review their approaches to tracking and monitoring, the measures used to assess literacy and numeracy and of the need to develop a more effective and efficient approach to determine progress over time. The school now needs to take forward their plans to develop more rigorous and simplified tracking and monitoring processes to allow them to measure improvements in performance more robustly.
- Staff are aware of the need to develop and analyse baseline attainment data to measure children's performance in literacy, numeracy and HWB on entry to school.
- Children's attendance at the school over the last three years is in line with, or above the national average. The school report almost all children's attendance at Cunard School is better than their attendance at their previous school. The school should consider more robustly analysing this data to provide information on the effectiveness of interventions to support improvements in children's attendance.
- Exclusions from school are rare and have been generally decreasing for the last three years. The school should continue to develop their practice to ensure exclusions from school are minimised.
- The school are aware that there is potential to improve attainment, particularly in reading and writing. Recent moderation activities with mainstream stage partners and with each other will help to provide greater accuracy in teachers' assessment of a level, and encourage greater challenge.

Overall quality of children's achievements

- Overall, children are achieving sufficiently well across a wide range of curriculum areas. They enjoy learning, and are attentive and respectful of each other in class most of the time. They are proud of their accomplishments and enjoy recognition by staff and peers of their success. Assemblies and in class rewards such as certificates are used effectively to promote success and encourage children to participate and achieve in class and around the school.
- Children's work is displayed in classes and around the school. Relevant examples of their 'best work' and pictures are used to recognise their successes in school. Teachers should now link children's achievements in school with those in their local community to enrich children's understanding of themselves as active citizens.
- Children self-assess their progress against the wellbeing indicators. Almost all children feel they are making progress, in particular children say they feel safe, are achieving well and are confident.
- Staff use a range of approaches such as massage, yoga and an emotional literacy resource well to develop children's emotional literacy and resilience.

- The school should continue with their plans to track and monitor children's achievements more comprehensively. This will influence and enrich children's learning pathways and identify those children at risk of missing out. The school should seek to formally accredit children's achievements where possible. In developing children's learning pathways, the school are aware of the need to have an increased focus on skills for life and work.

Equity for all learners

- All children are treated fairly and equally. Staff treat each child as a unique individual and develop approaches to meet children's specific needs. These ensure that all children have the opportunity to learn and achieve. The school analyses data regarding children's social and economic backgrounds however the impact of this analysis is not yet measured in relation to closing the attainment gap.
- The school should continue to explore opportunities for children to experience learning in the mainstream setting of the shared campus primary school, where appropriate.

2.4 Personalised Support: theme 2 Targeted Support

- Initial placement at Cunard School is supported by an assessment of children's needs by a multi-agency team and reported in a multi-agency assessment. Planning to meet children's needs would benefit from better information being received from the mainstream school or early learning and childcare centre attended by children prior to Cunard School. The information currently received focusses heavily on children's behaviour and there needs to be an increased focus on children's literacy and numeracy skills.
- A wide range of specialist interventions are provided by the school to develop children's emotional wellbeing. For example an emotional literacy programme and yoga. There is a positive nurturing ethos across the school and this supports children well to feel supported and cared for.
- Almost all children have an educational support plan which details their health and wellbeing targets. Educational support plans could be improved by including learning targets more specific to children's literacy and numeracy needs. Children's health and wellbeing targets could be improved by being more measurable and meaningful for children. Children's educational support plans are regularly reviewed, and updated, with input from parents, children and other relevant agencies.
- The school are building on their very positive relationships with parents with the aim of creating a parent council. Parents who met with HM Inspectors spoke very highly of the school, the very positive relationship they have with all staff and how well the school works in partnership with them to support their child.
- A range of partners support children's learning such as speech and language therapists, social workers and educational psychologists. The link educational psychologist provides targeted support both directly to children and through staff development to build capacity within the school.
- Learning assistants know the children well and impact positively on their learning. They take a lead role when appropriate to support children with bereavement and loss issues. The school should review how best learning assistants are deployed to ensure the maximum positive impact on children's learning.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion: theme 2 Wellbeing

- Children's wellbeing lies at the heart of the work of the school. All staff, parents and partners at both Cunard School and the shared campus primary school worked together to develop the schools' vision, values and aims. The vision and values underpin the work of the school and all staff model the school's values well. There is a strong ethos of care and support across the school and relationships between all adults, children and their peers are positive. Children are respectful of themselves, each other and their school community.
- Children experience learning in the mainstream shared campus setting, when appropriate. This supports them well to learn alongside their mainstream peers and to develop a strong sense of belonging to the wider school campus. Children from both schools play together at break time and this helps children from Cunard School to develop wider friendship groups. The school should continue with their plans to offer more opportunities, when appropriate, for children from both schools at the campus to learn and play together.
- The school uses a range of approaches to assess and support the emotional needs of each child. Emotional literacy programmes are used effectively to develop children's abilities to understand and express their feelings. Teachers and parents report this is having a positive impact on children's behaviour. In particular a few children are more able to accept responsibility for when things have gone wrong and to discuss how they could do things differently in the future. The school is using massage, where appropriate, to reduce children's levels of anxiety. This supports children well to be more relaxed and able to engage positively in their learning.
- Staff use the wellbeing indicators effectively to assess and reflect on children progress. They know every child very well and this supports children to feel able to share and discuss any difficulties they may be experiencing. Staff should now use the language of the wellbeing indicators more fully throughout the work of the school. The school should consider how the wellbeing indicators could be better understood by children, linking these to children's rights.

Strengths of the school

- The headteacher, supported by the depute headteacher, has successfully established a culture of collaborative working with all staff taking on leadership roles. Staff work together to improve the life and work of the school and this is leading to children experiencing learning in a wider range of subjects.
- Care and support is a strong feature across the school. Relationships between staff, children and their peers are nurturing and children enjoy their learning.
- The effective partnerships with parents leading to improvements in children's social and emotional development.

Areas for improvement for the school

- Improve the school's approaches to self-evaluation including better tracking and monitoring of children's progress. All self-evaluation activities should be focussed on improving outcomes for children.
- Teachers need to develop their approaches to assessment and plan learning activities which are delivered at a brisk pace and provide sufficient challenge for all children.

What happens following the end of the inspection?

- We are satisfied that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. West Dunbartonshire Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91% – 99%
Most	75% – 90%
Majority	50% – 74%
Minority/Less than half	15 – 49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.

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