

**Scottish Borders Council  
Education and Lifelong Learning**

**Quality Improvement Framework**

**MELROSE  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



**School Improvement Report  
Session 2015/16**

## The School in Context

Melrose Primary School's vision statement 'To be the best we can be' guides and informs the work of the school. Melrose Primary School is a non-denominational school situated in the Scottish Borders serving the town of Melrose, surrounding villages and rural areas. It is part of the Earlston Cluster schools within the Earlston High School catchment area. There are eight primary schools and one secondary school within the cluster. Almost all children from Melrose Primary School transfer to Earlston High School for secondary education.

The school consists of two main buildings. The head teacher's office, a deputy head teacher's office, the school office, the Early Learning and Childcare provision, gym hall/dining area, support for learning room, the library, one large general purpose room (AV room) and the P1 – 3 and P7 classrooms are located in the main building (the new school building). The P4 - 6 classrooms, a deputy head teacher's office, computer suite and a general purpose space, the 'Big Space', are located in the Annexe building.

The school roll in June 2016 was 343 P1-7 pupils and 56 in the nursery.

The projected roll for August 2016 is 330 from P1-7 and 60 in the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC).

There were thirteen classes in the school, organised as follows:

| P1 | P1 | P2 | P2 | P3 | P3 | P4 | P4/5 | P5 | P5/6 | P6 | P7 | P7 |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|------|----|------|----|----|----|
| 22 | 24 | 25 | 23 | 29 | 29 | 31 | 24   | 28 | 24   | 28 | 28 | 28 |

The teaching staff allocation for the year 2015/2016 was:

| Basic Complement | Support for Learning [SfL] | Visiting Specialist(s) |
|------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 15.70 FTE*       | 0.7 FTE                    | 1.43 FTE               |

\*Full time equivalent

### Staffing

The head teacher was supported by two deputy head teachers (DHT), and one principal teacher (PT). There were 13 class teachers (CT). The ELC was led by an Early Years Officer. In August 2015 two newly qualified teachers (NQT) took up post, a curriculum specialist teacher visited school throughout the week to teach Physical Education (P.E.) and one teacher to cover the Reduction in Class Contact Time (RICCT) for class teachers.

There were a number of staff changes through the year: a DHT was appointed on a seconded basis; one class teacher returned, on a full time basis, from long term sick leave in August 2015; one teacher returned from maternity leave in September 2015, on a part time basis, the other part of the class teaching was covered by a part time teacher who left in January 2016 and subsequently the teaching of this class was covered by supply teachers and management. In December 2015 one class teacher left - a newly appointed class teacher took over this teaching commitment in February 2016.

Additional staff were employed in school, both full and part time, as Additional Needs Assistants (ANA) and Administrative Assistants. One full time ANA returned from long term sick leave in April 2016 on a phased return basis. There were four Nursery Nurses (NN); two worked full time and the other two worked part time. One of the part time NN covered the nursery teacher's non-contact time. One full time NN returned from maternity leave in January 2016 working reduced hours. There was a full time janitor for the school who was off work for a number of months and subsequently retired in March 2016. A janitor was employed on a temporary seconded basis in May 2016. A part time janitor/cleaner, for the Annexe, was also the School Crossing Patrol. There were staff to cover playground supervision, one cook, two school kitchen assistants and two school cleaners.

There was an active Parent Council, which met regularly and supported the life and work of the school.

### Additional funding was secured by the school from:

- The Parent Council to support educational visits, school events and the library
- Melrose in Bloom to improve the planters in the playground
- Historic Scotland to support educational visits
- Priorwood Court for community singing
- Melrose Rugby club for using the school playground for car parking
- Scholastic book fairs
- Active Schools to support transport to sporting events
- Two parents who rebuilt the decking area in the school garden
- Railway fund for fencing outside Primary 1 teaching area
- Scottish Borders Council Grant Scheme to celebrate HM Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday
- Education Scotland for gymnastics equipment

## **Summary of consultations with parents and children and young people about our strengths and areas for improvement.**

- Staff: views on progress in the key Quality Indicators (QI), leadership & management, learning provision and successes and achievements.
- Pupils: Pupil Council – extra-curricular activities, School Estates, Friday Fix/Wider Achievements, School Meals – menu/choices, Garden/outdoor area – play and equipment, reading books/library
- Parents: leadership and management, learning provision

## **EVALUATION OF PROGRESS**

### **Question 1: HOW WELL DO CHILDREN LEARN AND ACHIEVE?**

#### **QI 1.1 Improvements in Performance**

**Overall we have evaluated ourselves as good.**

**SIP Actions from Session 2015/16 including impact and evidence.**

The system for tracking and monitoring progress was improved and reorganised so that year group progress was clearly identified. This system enabled more effective tracking of attainment over time.

Through our self-evaluation process improvements were made to short term planning. Staff committed to the changes; consequently learning-led planning was used to inform teaching and learning resulting in pupil needs being met more effectively. Learners were involved and engaged in their learning from the planning stages and were encouraged and supported to take increasing responsibility for their own learning and progress. Learners regularly engaged with others to evaluate their learning and progress.

Activities increasingly meet learners' needs evidenced by their improved confidence, enjoyment of learning and school. Learners in classes evaluate their own progress based on targets set. Formative assessment approaches, including a wide range of evidence across the curriculum, was used to inform judgements about pupil progress and identify next steps in learning.

Teaching and learning of critical literacy skills is embedded in practice in all classes, supported by the Eildon East Critical Reading Toolkit and resources. Pupils were regularly engaged in activities to develop higher order critical literacy skills using a wide range of texts. Teachers are beginning to develop planning to enable opportunities for learners to develop and apply critical literacy skills across the curriculum within a wider range of contexts. Teachers are becoming increasingly confident in making judgements about the progress of learners in critical literacy based upon a valid and reliable range of evidence.

Teachers engaged in development work to develop a greater understanding of National Standards in core subjects of the curriculum. Through the use of national guidance papers and professional discussion teachers knowledge, understanding and confidence about standards was increased.

With their increased understanding teachers used their professional judgement, supported by evidence, to report on where within a level learners were working for reading, writing, listening and talking and mathematics.

Teachers have an increased understanding of how to identify and plan for wider personal achievements. Learners are also increasingly able to use the language associated with the attributes identified within the four capacities. They are beginning to be able to link these with their achievements. Wider achievement groups continued this session, giving all learners the chance to experience a new and unfamiliar experience. Parental understanding of wider personal achievement was further developed through wider achievement updates and information available through the school website.

#### **Next steps:**

- Refine and improve the current monitoring and tracking system so that attainment over time is tracked
- Audit pupil views about teaching and learning (Children in Scotland audit)
- Further develop practice in applying and transferring critical literacy skills across the curriculum
- Ensure all learners are supported so they are able to set clear targets in learning to ensure an appropriate level of challenge
- Wider achievement

- Improve communication of wider personal achievements between all relevant stakeholders
- Teachers to incorporate learner feedback into wider achievement group planning
- Further develop opportunities for the celebration of wider personal achievement, ensuring systems are in place to encourage engagement of 'non-participants'
- Embed links with attributes and skills

## **QI 2.1 Learner's Experiences**

**Overall we have evaluated ourselves as good.**

**SIP Actions from Session 2015/16 including impact and evidence.**

Teachers' use of GLOW to support and enhance learning has been further developed through Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) opportunities. GLOW has been used to support staff professional learning through specific GLOW support sites such as the SBC Languages 1+ 2 site. Other resources are used to directly support and enhance learning; these include Tig-Tag for sciences and the SBC ICT Development site to support delivery of progressive ICT skills teaching. GLOW mail is used to teach learners about electronic communication skills. CLPL sessions were delivered to familiarise staff with:

- key functionality of the Clicker 6 software
- Controlling and Programming applications
- further opportunities for interactive use of SMART board

Success criteria are used to support teaching and learning across all curricular areas. Learners understand success criteria and know when they have been successful in their learning. This enabled them to evaluate their own work and the work of others. Quality feedback was used regularly within classes to move learning forward. Learners understood what they need to do to improve.

The Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) provides children, within an environment of free flow play, active learning experiences which engage and challenge their thinking using real life and imaginary opportunities. Rich literacy and numeracy environments are evident through the entire playroom. Children are independent learners involved in real-life and imaginary problem solving and decision making skills achieved through responsive planning.

The transition between ELC and Primary 1 (P1) has been improved as a result of the focussed development work within the Early level. Transformation of the provision of teaching and learning in P1 has been facilitated through strategic leadership and development time.

The pedagogical practices that have been developed and embedded within P1 better meet the developmental and learning needs of the learners by providing continuity and progression of learning. The practice now embodies the key features of excellent teaching and learning in the Early Years, as defined within key national guidance and documentation. Learners are more engaged in their learning and are developing greater independence and ownership over their learning. This teaching and learning approach has been recognised as good practice by Education Scotland and is to be exemplified on the National Learning Hub.

### **Next steps:**

- Further increase awareness about features of GLOW to support and enhance learning e.g. Tig Tag
- ICT training for ANAs to familiarise them with the key functions of applications to support and enhance learning
- Ensure consistent opportunities for learners to give effective feedback to their peers
- Improve teaching and learning provision within Primary 2, and continuity and progression of learning – create a more learner-centred and developmentally appropriate learning environment

## **Question 2: HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL SUPPORT CHILDREN TO DEVELOP AND LEARN?**

### **QI 5.1 The Curriculum**

**Overall we have evaluated ourselves as good.**

**SIP Actions from Session 2015/16 including impact and evidence.**

The curriculum was reviewed and refreshed in line with Curriculum for Excellence and in light of our increased understanding of purpose and design. Within this there is a clear focus on the development of

skills in a progressive way which provides a variety of opportunities for breadth, challenge and application. The promotion of learner's wellbeing, across all aspects of the ethos and life of the school, address equity and discrimination. Teachers understand what the school is trying to achieve through its curriculum. The Melrose Primary School learning and teaching guidance document was reviewed, updated and shared with teachers to reflect our current planning, teaching, learning and assessment approaches. This document forms part of our school curriculum.

Throughout the year staff development work on moderation and benchmarking increased teachers understanding and confidence of the process of moderation in relation to National Standards. Through collaborative working within the Earlston Cluster schools, there is a greater understanding of the range of valid and reliable evidence which is suitable for the purpose moderation. Teachers have developed confidence and understanding about the range of evidence required alongside their professional judgement, which has enabled them to make better informed decisions about progress, attainment and next steps in learning.

Teachers developed an increased knowledge and understanding of skills within listening and talking which was reflected in the planning and assessment process. Specific teaching of listening and talking skills and opportunities for application across learning was evident in classes.

Science progression pathways were used to support the planning and teaching of skills. Resources to support teaching and learning were reorganised and refreshed. The Better Eating, Better Learning audit was completed, next steps were identified. Staff development of Physical Education (PE) raised awareness of the teaching of physical competencies, personal and interpersonal skills and attributes. Teachers now take account of the competencies at the planning stages which are reflected in the teaching and learning. This was a significant change as PE was traditionally taught within a narrow context which had a focus on learning specific sports skills rather than the wider competencies within Curriculum for Excellence. This is an ongoing development.

All teachers undertook the planned Big Maths CLPL. The implementation of strategies has positively impacted on pupils understanding of core numeracy skills. Learners' engagement, enjoyment and awareness of their own progress was evident in all classes.

French was delivered progressively as part of the ongoing teaching and learning across all stages, supported by planning frameworks, progression pathways and resources including ICT. Spanish was introduced to learners from Primary 5 (P5) upwards. Learners across all stages are motivated and confidently engage in a range of experiences and activities.

Our programme of transition between stages including ELC was reviewed and changes implemented. This ensured information about learning and achievement was used effectively resulting in continuity in learning and wellbeing.

#### **Next steps:**

Ongoing development of moderation of assessment evidence in reading, writing, listening and talking and mathematics.

Further develop practice and teacher confidence in relation to moderation of valid and reliable assessment evidence in relation to reading, writing, listening and talking and mathematics. Develop a shared understanding of achievement of a level in relation to National standards.

Plan collaboratively within stages and levels to ensure progression of teaching of skills across curricular areas.

- Begin to take account of cross cutting themes (equality, enterprise, creativity and sustainable development and international engagement)
- Begin to develop creative and innovative approaches (teach differently)
- Begin to develop understanding of sustainability and the link with current Eco work (this should be planned for and embedded across the curriculum)
- Outdoor learning to be a regular curriculum led experience for all
- Within PE
  - further develop planning to focus on skills and competencies (not the discipline specific skills)
  - Ensure the reporting of progress within PE focuses on pupil progress in relation to skills and competencies.

Review and revise Melrose Primary School's curriculum rationale

- Create a clear long term plan for the ongoing development of the curriculum
- Develop parents/carers and community understanding of our school curriculum

Modern languages 1+2

- Further embed the teaching and learning of French across all classes and Spanish from Primary 5 upwards
- Evaluate teacher audit: plan, implement and deliver CLPL and support
- Further develop wider use of resources including ICT
- Audit:
  - Learners, parent/carer and teachers
  - Plan further developments/support/next steps to ensure sustainability

Listening and talking – develop a whole school approach to listening and talking:

- Skills progression framework
- Continuity and progression of teaching skills and resources
- Assessment and moderation

Technologies

- Ensure that computer science and computational thinking is given more precedent within the curriculum and totality of the experiences

Mathematics

- Further embed the teaching and learning of mathematics through continued use of our identified framework which develops learner's skills progressively
- Further develop parental understanding of teaching and learning of mathematics by sharing strategies used by the learners
- Develop a system to monitor and track progress of skills within the framework to ensure pace and challenge
- Evaluate impact through the interrogation of data

### **QI 5.3 Meeting Learning Needs**

**Overall we have evaluated ourselves as very good.**

**SIP Actions from Session 2015/16 including impact and evidence.**

All data, including standardised assessments data, formative assessment data and class teacher knowledge and professional judgement, has been used to plan for targeted intervention.

Teaching staff engaged in professional reading around Individualised Education Planning (IEP) which increased their understanding. The format for IEP was changed to increase learner ownership of the IEP document.

Parents were given opportunities to develop an understanding of teaching and learning and the curriculum through engagement in parent information evenings. The information evenings focussed on:

- critical literacy, numeracy, languages 1 + 2 and controlling and programming in ICT
- P1 and ELC teaching and learning provision
- teaching and learning of maths
- 'fly on the wall' visits to observe the P1 learning environment

Written reports were evaluated and moderated to ensure they provided clear, positive and constructive feedback about learners' learning and progress. Staff moderated reports to ensure the reports accurately reflected where the learner was in their learning against National Standards and in terms of levels.

Moderation of writing took place between stage partners and at a management level within school and at local authority level.

Learners' involvement and understanding about their progress enables them to select appropriate evidence of progress for their Personal Learning Plan (PLP).

Within ELC, information within the PLP linked specifically to health, welfare and safety. Learners who require specific strategies or support have this clearly indicated within their PLP.

All teaching staff further engaged in Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) CLPL consequently learners

awareness of the eight wellbeing indicators increased.

**Next steps:**

- Evaluate our school writing assessment criteria in line with SBC criteria and exemplars
- Evaluate PLP policy and practice paper and update in line with recent developments e.g. flexibility of approach in relation to timescales
- Further moderation and professional dialogue linked to sharing of good PLP practice across school

**Question 3: HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF ITS WORK?**

**QI 5.9 Self Evaluation**

**Overall we have evaluated ourselves as good.**

**SIP Actions from Session 2015/16 including impact and evidence.**

Pupils, partners, staff and parents have been involved in the evaluation process throughout the academic session. The results and future actions of parent and pupil consultations were displayed within the school building. The Early Years team worked collaboratively with Education Scotland to self-evaluate developing practices.

Professional dialogue, sharing and reflection are embedded within school practices and systems including in teacher development sessions, consultations, Learning Community sessions, observations, PRD and staff meetings. This further developed a collective understanding of standards, pedagogy, assessment and strategies for raising attainment. Staff are clear about the school's strengths and areas for development, based on a range of evidence. This will be used to plan for future developments.

Within all school improvement plans links are made to the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) standards for registration. Through the Professional Review and Development (PRD) process staff have access to the suite of standards from the GTCS. Staff are able to identify and use the most relevant standard to reflect on their practice and to plan future professional learning. Supply teachers had equal access to PRD and CLPL opportunities.

**Next Steps 16/17**

- Engage within school and Learning Community in effective quality improvement and moderation activities to ensure agreed standards and expectations
- Further develop systems to ensure that there is a strong ethos of sharing practice, and of peer support and challenge
- Further engage with the whole school community to ensure that they are involved in improving the life and work of the school
- Senior Management Team to further engage with National Improvement Framework (NIF) and HGIOS 4 to develop our commitment and management of self-evaluation
- Results and future actions of parent and pupil consultations shared through school website
- Pupils, parents/carers, partners and staff to review and revise Melrose Primary School's vision, aims and values
- Practitioner enquiry to form a key feature of our approach to continuous improvement, enabling teachers to review and refresh their pedagogical practice
- To clarify / streamline platforms for communicating parental views

**Any other continuing improvements which have not be commented upon in the previous sections.**

**Eildon Cluster - Transition P7/S1**

- there are clear, shared processes in place for the transfer of information about learners learning and achievements across the curriculum
- strategic plan for whole cluster residential in September 2017 and subsequent social and educational opportunities and events