

Law Primary School and North Berwick Nursery School
Standards and Quality Report
2017-2018

Context of the school

Law Primary School and North Berwick Nursery Schools are two separate schools which operate under a shared management structure with a joint Head Teacher. They both serve the town of North Berwick and are located approximately 0.5km apart on two separate campuses. In addition the Nursery provides early learning and childcare for the children who attend Dirleton Primary School. The Nursery shares a building with North Berwick Community Centre and has a capacity of 70/70. In session 2017-2018 the school had 23 classes and a roll of circa 640 children in P1-P7. It had 3 classes per year stage, with the exception of P1 and P6 which had 4.

The school is co-educational and non-denominational. Law Primary has been extended and redeveloped over a number of years and in October 2017 the new classroom block, housing P4-7 was opened. Two further phases have been opened subsequently, including a link between the two halves of the building (Craigleith and Bass buildings). The building works have created a need for creative solutions to a number of issues over the session, including the closure of playgrounds and internal re-arrangements resulting in a loss of amenity. The new playing fields were opened in May 2017 but have since been taken out of service to allow for remedial works. The project has undergone significant delays and the new sports hall, dining room and outside areas are due to be completed by August 2018.

A consultation has taken place this session with regard to the formal closure of North Berwick Nursery School and its reopening as a nursery class of Law Primary School. This has gone through the various stages without any significant opposition as the venue remains unchanged and there has been a shared management structure since 2013.

Both schools benefit from a high degree of parental involvement and support. The Nursery has a parent committee which undertakes fundraising and social activities and acts as a communication channel between the school and parents. Law has an active Parent Council and a Parent/Teacher Association. The latter is a registered charity and raises large sums of money to benefit the school.

Law benefits from a wide range of extra-curricular activities, both within the school and the wider community. There are high levels of engagement with community organisations such as North Berwick Rotary Club, North Berwick in Bloom, the Community Council and the Scottish Seabird Centre.

How good is our leadership and approach to improvement?

1.3 Leadership of change

A major focus this session was to improve the teaching of writing across the school. Big Writing was introduced and all staff trained in the methodology. This has resulted in a progressive approach to writing across the school and improvements have been reflected in the Curriculum for Excellence attainment levels. Moderation of writing has increased staff knowledge and understanding and led to increased confidence in assessment of CFE levels. The use of quadrants has been introduced to aid assessment of children's levels of attainment and where additional support is required in order to meet their needs.

A review of the school with a focus on additional support needs was undertaken by the local authority in January 2018. This resulted in a number of recommendations to enable us to better meet the needs of all our children. These included a change to the remit of the Depute Head Teacher (Early Level) to allow a greater focus on the pupil support role, some additional temporary teacher time in Primary 4 and improvements to our support for learning and pupil support processes and procedures.

Staff continue to show strong commitment to their own personal development and professional learning. There are regular opportunities to share good practice, reading and research through 'Professional Blethers', organised by and for staff. Staff match their CLPL to national, local and school priorities. Mandatory training in child protection, data protection, first aid etc. are monitored. In-service development time is used to further our development priorities and good use is made of the services available to us. Training this session has included Restorative Approaches, GIRFEC and Autism Spectrum Disorder.

The principle of distributed leadership is clearly evident and staff take on a wide range of leadership roles throughout the school, including co-ordinator roles for curriculum areas, outdoor learning, school grounds, road safety, charity committee, Pupil Councils and sports champion.

Leadership throughout the school is encouraged and supported and children are able to undertake a range of roles including house captains, vice-captains, ambassadors, playground buddies and JRSOs. Pupil Council representatives are elected from all classes and separate Pupil Councils operate for First and Second levels.

Future developments:

- Increased involvement of parents in the process of school improvement
- Work to successfully embed the vision, values and aims in the life and work of the school
- Develop staff understanding of inclusive practices

How good is the quality of care and education we offer?

2.3 Learning teaching and assessment

Most of our children are active and eager participants in their learning journey. Teachers engage our learners in discussions to enable them to identify their next steps and targets and how they may work towards achieving them. They revisit them regularly. Most class teachers talk to children about how they can improve. Children talk positively about the learning opportunities on offer, including outdoor learning, opportunities for leadership and wider achievement.

Staff use digital technology in lessons and several classes have undertaken innovative film projects. A number of teachers use Twitter to communicate information about their learning and Digital Ninjas, recruited from P6 and P7, regularly tweet on behalf of other classes. Training has been provided in Google Classrooms and P7 have used this in the creation of their profiles.

Learners' achievements in and out of school are recognised and celebrated. 'Spotlight on Success' displays are an on-going feature of the school's work and a 'Praise Postcard' – designed by one of the children – is a new addition to the range of ways to celebrate success.

Teachers have undertaken training in the Scottish National Standardised Assessments and these have been completed at P1, 4 and 7. Other assessment data is used to inform planning, teaching

and learning. Pre and post assessment of numeracy and maths informs teaching groups. Staff have increased confidence in working with the ELC curriculum frameworks.

Outdoor learning continues to be a key feature of our practice and staff work to extend their knowledge and experience in this area at all times. There is a well developed programme of outdoor activities which makes very good use of our local environment. Juliet Robertson of Creative Star Learning provided inspirational and sector leading in-service training to staff in August 2017. We work closely with East Lothian Outdoor Learning Service and have developed a progressive programme of outdoor residential experiences from P5 to P7.

Teachers have used the newly created 'Pathway to support the identification and support of literacy difficulties' to identify needs and areas for support. Word Study was introduced to three year stages on a trial basis and, due to its success, will be used again in session 2018-2019 to supplement current spelling programmes.

1+2 language learning continues and a Chinese Language Assistant was based in the school for the third successive year. Staff continue to develop their knowledge and understanding and French is becoming more embedded in the daily life of the school. Further Erasmus funding has been secured to enable seven teachers to attend training in France during the summer holiday of 2018.

Future developments:

- Greater focus on year stage colleagues working collaboratively to ensure sharing of good practice, equity of experiences across the year stage to allow greater differentiation to meet learners' needs and provide sufficient pace and challenge
- Introduction of 3 way 'Learner Conferences' (parent, teacher, child) to replace traditional parent/teacher consultation to provide more meaningful reporting of progress and discussion of individual targets

How good are we at ensuring the best possible outcomes for all our learners?

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

Staff work hard to establish positive relationships with children. They try to include children in the life of the school through the many groups and activities available to them at lunchtimes and after school. These are mainly led by school staff who give freely of their own time.

Support is given to children across the school by a team of classroom assistants and additional support needs auxiliaries, who work with individuals and groups. Good use is made of outside agencies to support when necessary including educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, access officer and the East Lothian Therapeutic Service.

There is a wide range of health and well being activities for pupils including the daily 1K. Children are encouraged to take part in sporting activities for both competition and pleasure and we make good use of the sports development opportunities available to us. The Head Teacher sits on the authority Sport and Education Advisory group.

We make extensive and effective use of parent/carer volunteers in order to raise attainment and achievement. Volunteers assist with reading focus, codecracker spelling groups, 'Scotland Reads' and with many other activities in classes and on educational excursions. The use of volunteers

enables us to make good use of the local environment in both Law and the Nursery as children explore ways of learning in the community. Links with parents are strong and there is an active ASN parent support group which is supported by the school.

There is a clear focus on raising attainment, with a significant amount of curriculum time allocated to literacy and numeracy and health and wellbeing. Staff use collegiate time to evaluate attainment data and measure the impact of their interventions. There are twice yearly opportunities for parents to meet with staff on a formal basis, but in practice a large number of informal meetings are undertaken by staff, particularly in cases where children are requiring additional support with their learning or behaviour. There is an open door policy and parents are encouraged to contact the school at the earliest opportunity should they have a concern.

Learners continue to make good progress from their prior levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy. The percentage of children achieving the levels at Early, First and Second levels of Curriculum for Excellence has shown an improvement on the figures from the previous session at almost all stages. The additional teacher support at Primary 4 has had a significant impact on levels of attainment, particularly in writing and numeracy.

Pupil Equity funding has been used to support the introduction of a Nurture room (the Anchor Room) for some of our children. We are very aware of the effects of poverty on some of our families and seek to ensure equity for all. A hardship fund is available to ensure that no child misses out on the opportunities offered within school.

Resources are generally of good quality and the extension and refurbishment programme has addressed previous deficiencies with regard to space and storage.

We work hard to maintain and develop our links with North Berwick High School and the local playgroup and partner providers in order to support effective transitions at all stages.

The Junior Award Scheme for Schools has been introduced at P6, in partnership with North Berwick Rotary Club, in order to further the opportunities for wider achievement.

We have started our journey to become a Rights Respecting School and the Bronze award was achieved in March 2018. There is a steering group in place to take forward the action plan for Silver. The school engaged with the 'Send My Friend' Safe Schools campaign and Martin Whitfield, MP, visited the school to accept our messages of support.

P7 children benefited from undertaking the Headstrong mental health programme.

A new Additional Support Needs Parent/Carer support group has been established. Development of the Harbour Room continues and is used as a 'chill zone' at lunchtimes for children needing additional support at interval.

Future developments

- Improve planning to meet individual children's needs
- Improve systems and processes which will lead to more effective identification of barriers to learning and support strategies
- Positive behaviour support policy and practice needs to be developed, based on nurturing relationships and restorative principles

- Promote greater awareness of wellbeing indicators with staff, parents and children to provide a common language and shared understanding

What is our capacity for continuous improvement?

1.1 Self-evaluation for improvement

Self-evaluation is key to our learning community to ensure that we continue to develop and improve our practice. We use a range of tools to gather evidence and feedback on the work of the school. The process is continuous throughout the year. Good use is made of the in-service days and collegiate activity sessions to improve the work of the school. Working with the ASN consultant, David Watt, has enabled us to take a critical look at our practice and the developments identified have formed the basis of our school improvement plan for 2018-2019. This has resulted in a review of remits within the senior leadership team and a reorganisation of the support for Nursery and the Early Years.

Pupil views are sought by means of two Pupil Councils. Views of parents are sought via the Parent Council and the PTA. Individual feedback from parents is welcomed via email, telephone or by the weekly 'drop in' when the head teacher or a depute is available to meet with parents on any issue of concern.

Staff are outward and forward looking in their evaluation and improvement activities. There is a clear appetite for using research and reading to inform practice and this is shared at the regular 'professional blethers'. Teachers use a range of different assessments to measure children's progress and moderation is done at year stages and across and between levels. Colleagues from the secondary sector join with us for some of these activities.

We continue to use data from a variety of sources, e.g. SIMD, PEF, FME, SNSA, AR star tests, pre and post assessments to evaluate progress and inform next steps.

Future developments:

- Find more opportunities for parents/carers to be involved in the more formal aspects of self evaluation and the improvement process
- Seek ways to involve our partner agencies and the wider community in our self-evaluation processes
- Use 'How good is OUR school?' resource to support participation in self-evaluation and school improvement with our pupils