

# St. Mary's Primary, Larkhall

## STANDARDS & QUALITY REPORT

24  
25



SOUTH  
LANARKSHIRE  
COUNCIL





# context of the school

St Mary's Primary is a Roman Catholic School in the growing town of Larkhall in South Lanarkshire. Our total school roll is currently 89 over 4 classes. There is no early year's provision within the school. The local area is a mixture of social and privately owned housing. Access to transport and facilities is relatively good and the area has been heavily invested in over the last few years. The new school building was opened in 2014 and provides an excellent, modern environment in which our children can learn and achieve. It comprises 4 classrooms, an open plan learning area, ICT suite, library and a dual purpose dining/assembly hall. The school is part of Our Lady of Fatima Parish along with St John's Primary Blackwood and both schools work closely with Father Wyllie.

The school is part of the Holy Cross Learning Community. The Learning Community has developed very positive working relationships, recently focussing on serving the common good as part of Developing Our Faith.

Our school vision is A Place to GROW where everyone Gives their best, Respect one another, Overcomes obstacles and Works together. We aspire to become a school that delivers high quality teaching and learning underpinned by continuous self-evaluation. Our curriculum is driven by three key principles - ensuring high quality learning experiences are provided for all learners and all pupils achieve, ensuring that promoting positive wellbeing is embedded throughout our school and that parents/carers feel involved and valued in supporting our learners. Our values are hard work, honesty, faith, kindness and friendship. We firmly believe that every pupil can grow to be the best that they can be and as a school we are committed to working in partnership with all our stakeholders. Our curriculum is designed to ensure all children are supported in their learning through our attachment informed practice. We embrace a play-based learning environment in our early primary stages.

We have an active and engaged Parent Council who play an integral role in school improvement, through fundraising and also by taking forward aspects of the school improvement plan.



# highlights of 24/25

This year was another successful year in St. Mary's. Highlights include:

- Lenten Fundraising - Over £100 raised for charity.
- Participating in Active Schools Girls Dance Festival.
- Establishing our new Outdoor Learning Area.
- P6/7 Residential experience to the National Sports Training Centre in Inverclyde.
- Primary 6 pupil achieving an A in National 5 Mathematics.



## 24/25 priorities

**Priority 1: To raise attainment in Literacy and specifically in Writing by further implementing new Writings approaches.**

<b>NIF Priority (select from drop down menus)</b> Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy. <b>NIF Driver</b> Performance information Curriculum and assessment	<b>SLC Priority (select from drop down menus)</b> Provide a rich and stimulating curriculum that helps raise standards in literacy and numeracy	<b>SLC Stretch Aims</b> ACEL Primary – Literacy – P1, P4 & P7 combined	<b>HGIOS24 QIs (select from drop down menus)</b> 1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment
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Progress and Impact -

New assessment procedures have been implemented for all stages. This has ensured greater consistency in approach and ensured that most teacher's judgements are fully supported by robust evidence collated at different points throughout the school year. Almost all staff have enjoyed working together to plan Talk for Writing Units. This provided a valuable opportunity for staff to engage in professional dialogue with peers to build capacity as well as provide support, as we continue to implement this new approach. We will now look to create a more consistent streamlined approach to planning across the whole school. Inclusion in the school Assessment Calendar has ensured information is being collated at the correct time for tracking meetings, reporting and authority level data collections, providing a more accurate picture of attainment for all stakeholders. This had also allowed teachers to ensure that next steps identified for learning are data informed in most classes. Discussions based around writing assessments have also allowed all staff to identify any specific targeted interventions needed to support individual pupils, especially in the lower stages. As a result of the work across the session, June 25 data has shown an increase in Writing attainment for P1/4/7.

## Next Steps -

Although Writing attainment data has improved, through staff self-evaluation, jotter monitoring and analysis of assessments, it is evident that many pupils would benefit from discreet lessons to support specific writing tools. As a result of this our next steps will be to further improve Writing through high quality learning, teaching and assessment approaches supported by participation in IOW.

## Priority 2: Further develop application of skills through interdisciplinary and inquiry-based learning.

<b><u>NIF Priority (select from drop down menus)</u></b>	<b><u>SLC Priority (select from drop down menus)</u></b>	<b><u>SLC Stretch Aims</u></b>	<b><u>HGIOS24 QIs (select from drop down menus)</u></b>
Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people <b>NIF Driver</b> Curriculum and assessment	<b>Support children and young people to develop their skills for learning, life and work</b>  <b>Ensure inclusion, equity and equality are at the heart of what we do</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	2.2 Curriculum 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment 3.3 Increasing creativity and employability

## Progress and Impact -

All staff engaged in CLPL opportunities focused on SLC pedagogy palette. As a result, most staff have developed more of a shared understanding of effective teaching strategies outlined within our LTA Policy. Ongoing CLPL has also encouraged all teachers to reflect on and adapt their pedagogy in response to pupil needs and feedback from classroom observations. A key feature of implementing an inquiry-based approach has been the emphasis on personalisation and choice, allowing learners to shape their learning journeys based on their interests and strengths. This has not only increased motivation, observed by both staff and during observations, but also empowered pupils to lead aspects of their own learning, developing independence and a stronger sense of responsibility, evidenced in learner conversations. We have further developed the application of skills across the curriculum through learner conversations and pupil evaluations.

All staff fully engaged in relevant CLPL for 'The Inquiry Cycle' both at school and authority level and as part of the Peer School Review Program. All classes have one weekly session of Outdoor Learning, focusing on skills development. By providing opportunities for pupils to ask questions, investigate real-world contexts, and apply skills in meaningful and interdisciplinary ways, we have fostered deeper engagement and critical thinking in many classes as evidence in Peer Visits and Leuven Scale results. All staff have begun to work collaboratively to design rich, inquiry-led experiences that promote problem-solving, creativity, and communication, ensuring that learners can transfer and apply their skills in varied and relevant contexts, and this will continue to be a focus as we move forward into next session, further embedding this approach.

The majority of pupils can discuss what skills they have developed during class observations and learning conversations. Observations evidenced that some staff have also begun to explicitly discuss these when introducing Learning Intentions at the beginning of lessons which has helped to prompt discussions with pupils. All stages from P4-7 democratically selected a peer to represent their stage as part of the Pupil Leadership Team. This has helped to foster a sense of ownership, confidence, and agency helping pupils see themselves as active participants in our school. All classes have had the opportunity to showcase their learning at sharing assemblies, boosting pupil confidence when discussing learning. This has also promoted inclusivity, encouraged creativity and showcased different learning styles to both pupils and staff. Some classes are making better use of digital technologies to evidence and share learning.

Next Steps - Although staff have now engaged in CLPL for The Inquiry Cycle more time is needed to embed this practice within the classroom to allow pupils to become more familiar with the process. Next session we will continue to embed opportunities for personalisation and choice and pupil voice using The Inquiry Cycle whilst also investigating the best way to track pupil learning experiences. We will also trial the use of personal inquiry. We have begun to orally highlight SLC skills framework but now need to investigate ways to track and record this more formally across all levels using age-appropriate methods.



### Priority 3: To further promote an inclusive ethos which aims to honour the life, dignity and voice of each person, made in the image of God.

<b>NIF Priority (select from drop down menus)</b>	<b>SLC Priority (select from drop down menus)</b>	<b>SLC Stretch Aims</b>	<b>HGIOS?4 QIs (select from drop down menus)</b>
Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education <b>NIF Driver</b> School and ELC improvement	<b>Ensure inclusion, equity and equality are at the heart of what we do</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	2.7 Partnerships 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion 1.5 Management of resources to promote equity 1.3 Leadership of change

#### Progress and Impact -

All Primary 5 pupils undertook a novel study promoting equality and inclusions – Planet Omar. The majority of pupils actively participate in conversations about inclusion. Observations show that this has contributed to a classroom culture that embraces diversity and respects difference. Pupils also contributed effectively to our Diversity Week, sharing their learning. All Primary 6/7 pupils have participated in The Compassionate and Connected Classroom lessons. Observations have shown that most pupils have begun to develop a deeper awareness and consideration for others who may be facing difficulties. Learning about the UNCRC has equipped many pupils with an understanding of their rights and the rights of others. Teaching staff report that most pupils now listen, support and respond appropriately to their peers.

All Primary 6/7 pupils have participated in a series of lessons based on the theme of Anti-Racism. Teaching staff report most pupils have gained a deeper understanding of human rights, equality, and justice, empowering them to advocate for fairness and inclusivity within their classroom. Observations also evidence many pupils have developed they confidence to speak out against discrimination in respectful ways. Some pupils confidently delivered at assemblies throughout the session and during our Diversity Week.

Some pupils contributed to a Padlet shared with the other schools within the Learning Community. By sharing their insights, pupils have helped each others gain new perspectives, sparking meaningful discussions and reflection within our own school. Professional dialogue evidenced, the collaborative Padlet has helped our Learning Community work together with is geographically difficult in person, reinforcing the value of shared learning and inclusivity. Through staff development sessions, reflective dialogue, and pupil-led initiatives, we have created spaces to explore issues of racial justice, identity, and bias. Forward Plan evidence shows that we have begun to review curriculum content to ensure it better reflects diversity and promotes empathy and understanding, including purchasing a range of diversity texts for novel studies. Learner Conversations show most pupils have been empowered to engage in meaningful conversations, and staff have begun to demonstrate an increased confidence in addressing racism and promoting inclusion. All this has contributed to the creations of a Diversity and Quality Group made up of parents, pupils and staff who have worked over the course of the year to develop a school Equality and Inclusion Policy which we will further embed next session.

Next Steps -

While initial training and dialogue have had a positive impact, ongoing professional learning will deepen staff understanding of anti-racist practice, unconscious bias, and culturally responsive pedagogy.

Additionally, continued curriculum review is necessary to ensure that learning experiences meaningfully reflect the diversity of our pupils and the wider world.

Embedding an inclusive ethos across the curriculum will support all learners to see themselves represented, develop empathy, and critically engage with issues of justice and equity.



25/26 priorities

Priority 1: To raise attainment in Literacy and specifically in Writing by embedding new pedagogy using SLC's Improving Our Writing.

Priority 2: To ensure inquiry-based approaches are embedded and consistent throughout the whole school.

Priority 3: To promote Gospel values, respecting different beliefs and cultures.

