

Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



Education and Children's Services

STANDARDS & QUALITY REPORT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

FOR

PITMEDDEN PRIMARY & NURSERY

LAST UPDATED: September 2017

Aberdeenshire Council Education and Children's Services

"Education and Children's Services works to improve the lives of children and young people, families and communities through the delivery of high quality services across Aberdeenshire"

Introduction: local and national context

This Standards and Quality Report and Improvement Plan is influenced by both Aberdeenshire and national priorities. These can be summarised as follows:

Aberdeenshire Priorities: these should be reflected in all areas of this document and the actions that emerge from it

- to develop excellence and equity;
- to embed the principles of GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child);
- to provide support in developing inclusive, vibrant and healthy communities.

National Improvement Framework Priorities:

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy;
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children;
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing; and
- Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people.

National Improvement Framework Drivers:

- School leadership
- Teacher professionalism
- Parental engagement
- Assessment of children's progress
- School improvement
- Performance information

Additionally to support self-evaluation various quality indicators from the national evaluative framework How Good Is Our School?4 are referenced. Links to these sources are:

NIF- www.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00491758.pdf

HGIOS?4 - https://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/HGIOS4August2016_tcm4-870533.pdf

1. Context of the School

Pitmedden School serves the village of Pitmedden and surrounding rural district. It is situated on the B999 Aberdeen to Tarves road some 15 miles from the City of Aberdeen and is mid-way between the towns of Ellon and Oldmeldrum. It is part of the Meldrum Community Schools School Network. The area, which is rich in history dating back to Stone Age times, is in the Formartine Ward of Aberdeenshire.

Pitmedden School currently has 7 classes with 155 pupils and a 2 session nursery with 35 pupils, which will increase to 55 pupils by April 2018. Pitmedden pupils transfer to Meldrum Academy, Oldmeldrum and is part of the Meldrum Community School Network (CSN)

The HT is non-teaching, we have 10 teachers in school, some part-time and one is in the nursery. We currently have 5 Pupil Support Assistants (PSAs) supporting pupils in class & in the playground and a 0.6 Additional Support for Learning Teacher (ASL) within in the school.

Visiting Specialists provide specialist support to all classes and includes; music, physical education, French, ICT and art.

We have an active Parent Council (FOPS) Friends of Pitmedden School, who raise funds for extras in the school and support the school in a wide variety of ways.

Pitmedden runs lunchtime clubs for Chess, recorder and after school clubs for Netball & Football. Some of these clubs are run by parents and community members.

The pupils have a strong voice through Pupil Council, Eco Stars, Fair Trade & Rights Respecting Group.

We are very fortunate to have a before & after school club which opens at 7.30 am and closes at 6 pm each week day.

School's Vision Statement

At Pitmedden, in partnership with parents in an inclusive, supportive environment we aspire to have happy, healthy, ambitious children who are developing the skills, resilience and confidence to be successful in all aspects of their lives.

Motto - "Working Together to do our Best"

Aims:

- To have healthy, motivated children who all feel valued.
- To provide high quality learning & teaching across the school.
- Continue to improve through monitoring & tracking, self-evaluation & staff professional development.
- To encourage our children to develop positive attitudes to learning and become increasingly responsible for their own progress.

- To work in partnership with parents, the community and other agencies.
- Promote lifelong learning through a relevant curriculum linking to life skills.

Values

Included	Respect	Healthy
Responsible	Honest	

Analysis of the SIMD data shows that the majority of children at Pitmedden School are in the decile 9 or 10. Although no child is classified as living in an area of deprivation, we believe all our children are entitled to the best education and support that we can provide.

The school received a small amount of PEF money from the government and this money is targeted to support pupils with ASN or are vulnerable in some way. The money is also being used across the Meldrum cluster to support Mental Health through the Bounce Back resource.

Strengths of the School:

Across the school & nursery there is a positive ethos and a nurturing environment which support positive relationships and learning.

Teamwork of staff which leads to positive relationships and well behaved, calm and respectful children.

All staff are committed to continuous improvement and taking forward new initiatives to improve learning & teaching and CPD work.

Staff have fully embraced the new tracking & monitoring system in place to ensure progress and achievement by all pupils.

Children have a strong voice and take on roles to improve aspects of the school – ie through RRS, Pupil Council, Eco etc.

Effective use of a wide range of digital learning across the school provides motivation, challenge & support for children.

Most of our children take part in cultural, sporting or social activities either in school or at home.

2. How good is our leadership and approach to improvement?

Relevant NIF priority: All

Relevant NIF driver(s): School leadership, Teacher professionalism, School improvement

Overview:

- The school engages in a rigorous self-evaluation process involving all stakeholders, encouraging pupils to take responsibility for decision making and school improvement. There is great commitment to improvement and to the school values.
- Staff have been committed to taking lead roles in school improvement initiatives such as outdoor learning, 1+2 and developing number sense, Visible Learning, Mindsets to benefit outcomes for all our young people. All staff at Pitmedden are reflective and ambitious to improve the school. They know what they need to do to improve the school because they are continuously evaluating the quality of their work and the impact of changes. Parents find staff approachable and are supportive their concerns or ideas.
- Pupil voice is a strong feature of the school's approaches to self-evaluation. Children give their views about the school as part of committees and through Report Writing, take responsibility for improving aspects.
- HGIOS4 has been introduced and relevant Quality Indicators used to inform monitoring and evaluations.
- Focused monitoring of plans, pupil jotters and classroom practice and feedback designed to have an impact on the quality of learning and teaching for learners, with clear links to quality indicators and improvement plan priorities.
- Engagement with all stakeholders through a range of evaluation methods e.g. open afternoon/ evening; comments, golden tickets, assemblies.
- Staff engage with professional learning/CPL opportunities through Aberdeenshire events. Leadership roles are encouraged and taken on by a range of staff e.g. outdoor learning, ECO, numeracy development; Rights Respecting group, Pupil Council, ICT, Emerging Literacy. Professional Review and Development (PRD) procedure is implemented as per GTC guidance and time allocated for staff to update and review professional learning.
- Children are engaged in reviewing their own learning and the work of the school through Pupil Voice Groups, PLPs, RRS, Eco & Fair Trade groups.

Key strengths:

- Clear vision and aims for the school which is shared across the school and community.
- Culture of positive behaviour developed through Restorative Practice, House Point system & Circle Time in classes.

- Teamwork across the school with all staff working to support pupils and meet their needs. Staff support each other and the children creating positive relationships in the classes.
- Staff working to improve attainment across the school with a focus on data and meeting the needs of all our pupils through targeted support or individual programmes.

Identified priorities for improvement:

- Continue to develop all areas of the curriculum using the benchmarks to ensure all children are challenged & learning to their potential.
- Continue to engage with HGIOS4 and use the challenge questions to ensure our self-evaluation continues to impact on learning.
- Ensure all staff have a leadership role to help support the work of the school and CPD is appropriate to develop the skills of all staff working across the school..

In relation to the priorities listed above the following action plans have been confirmed:

Actions/Roles/Timings	Expected Outcomes/Impact on learners	How will success be measured?
1. Extend confidence and effectiveness in use of HGIOS4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School improvement planned around selected QI's that focus on experiences for children - Staff confidence in self-evaluation enhanced - Learners, parents and other stakeholders consistently engaged in self-evaluation - Impact of improvements for learners to be better collated to show how they benefit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation will show that by April 2018 all staff are confident in the use of HGIOS4 - By June 2018 all learners, staff and parents will be engaged in aspects of school improvement-planning - All class teachers to engage learners in regular evaluation activities focusing on their own learning

<p>2. Staff will engage with the Benchmarks to ensure children are reaching expected levels.</p>	<p>- Staff confidence enhanced in using the benchmarks to confirm their professional judgement of a level.</p>	<p>-End of year levels will be checked against benchmarks, standardised assessments and class work to finalise levels achieved.</p>
<p>3. All staff will have a leadership role within the school.</p>	<p>- staff will lead in an area of the curriculum to develop the skills and learning across the school. - staff will share their knowledge & expertise with other staff at collegiate meeting and by team teaching or through professional observations.</p>	<p>-areas of leadership will have made an impact within classes other than the lead teacher. - staff will be able to ask for support from another member of staff with a lead role. -all staff will be more familiar with the areas that have been identified as lead roles in the school.</p>

Evidence of progress/comments/identified next steps:

Date:

Date:

Date:

Evaluation of QI 1.3 - Leadership Of Change:

Sources of evidence/evaluation activities undertaken:

- Self-Evaluation at school level using HGIOS 4 QI's
- Discussions with staff at PRD
- Observations of lessons by HT to ascertain embedding of revised approaches to supporting learning
- Evaluation activity on leadership at all levels
- School Improvement Plan
- PRD records
- Feedback from parent council discussions, parent meeting and questionnaires.

Overall evaluation of level of quality:

- School improvement takes place in the context of the school's values and vision
- The selection of school improvement priorities is made taking in to account the local capacity to accommodate change
- All staff are involved in regular evaluation of the school improvement plan through open dialogue and peer work. Leadership roles are taken by colleagues at all levels.
- Collegiate meetings include a review of SIP progress. This helps with continual identification of strengths and areas of development. The information generated at these sessions is used to create a clear rationale for future improvements. More focus on the HGIOS 4 challenge questions relating to leadership QI's will be encouraged next session.
- Staff have a clear focus on improving outcomes for learners and engage regularly in learning conversations with colleagues, pupils and parents. Developing a more robust understanding of assessment data would further support this work.
- Staff, pupils and parent views and ideas are sought when developing our School Improvement Plan, choosing appropriate approaches to effectively facilitate change.
- All staff are committed to CLPL and continually reflect on and develop practice to ensure best possible outcome for all learners.
- Overall , the changes pursued by the school are having a positive impact on young people

Level of quality for this QI: 4

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

Relevant NIF priority: All

Relevant NIF driver(s): Teacher professionalism, School leadership, Parental engagement, Assessment of children's progress

Overview:

- All staff show commitment to the development and wellbeing of learners as individuals.
- Children and young people are safe, treated fairly and are protected by appropriate Child Protection and Safeguarding policies.
- Staff have familiarised themselves with literature to support their understanding of the key principles underpinning effective teaching and learning and are using this knowledge to improve their practise. This passed session we have developed Visible Learning, Mindsets & The Learning Pit across the school in conjunction with Restorative Practice and Rights Respecting Schools work.
- Aberdeenshire Frameworks have been introduced and used to inform planning and identify next steps in learning, thus ensuring progression for all our young learners. This is an area we will continue to develop across the wider curriculum areas.
- Transitions across the school are good, especially from nursery to P1 and P7 to S1. All classes are supported in our "Moving Up" days to settle into their new class with children with ASN particularly well supported. Staff have specific meeting to liaise with the receiving class teacher.
- Children are becoming more responsible at making decisions regarding their learning and there are more opportunities for children be independent learners. This will continue to be developed this session.
- Positive engagement with parents encourages them to take an interest in their child's learning, through Parent meetings, open day, workshops, informal chat, notes home, newsletters etc.
- ICT is used widely across the curriculum to support teaching and learning experiences and as part of homework. Children with ASN are very well supported with ICT.
- Pitmedden's own tracking formats are in place and staff are becoming more confident in making judgements about children's progress within a level. Teachers track children's achievement carefully. They use group work and personalised tasks to give children appropriate support or challenge. Children in the upper stages of the school are working in flexible or mixed ability groups.

Key strengths:

- The use of ICT is well used across the curriculum to support learning for all children but particularly for children with ASN.
- Staff have used data well to group children and support their next steps. Staff are becoming much more confident using the data available to identify where support is required, which has become targeted for a limited time to gain most impact.

- Many children have developed a growth mind set and realise that perseverance is important in learning.
- Children are becoming more confident in relating the behaviours in school to the UNICEF rights of the child charter.
- Most classes are confident in using cooperative learning enabling children to organise and lead their own learning, whilst respecting everyone's opinions.

Identified priorities for improvement:

- We will continue to engage with the frameworks and bench marks to ensure achievement of levels.
- We will continue to develop the children making decisions about their own learning and identifying next steps.
- Staff in the upper stages will continue to develop the use of flexible and mixed ability groups to support learning and raise attainment.
- The behaviour & anti-bullying policy will be up-dated in line with Restorative Practice ideology and the Respect Me bullying website recommended for schools to use.

In relation to the priorities listed above the following action plans have been confirmed:

Actions/Roles/Timings	Expected Outcomes/Impact on learners	How will success be measured?
<p>1. Engage with the frameworks and benchmarks to ensure achievement of levels.</p>	<p>-staff will be more familiar and more confident using the frameworks for planning. -Using the frameworks will ensure the children are receiving the breadth and depth required through the curriculum.</p> <p>- staff will be more confident with the levels achieved through their professional judgement by using school data available and the benchmarks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HT will discuss with staff at forward planning meeting - Levels achieved will match standardised assessment and teacher judgement when measured against benchmarks.
<p>2. Continue to develop the children making decisions about their own learning and identifying next steps.</p>		
<p>3. Staff in the upper stages will continue to develop the use of flexible and mixed ability groups to support learning and raise attainment, developing a growth mind set.</p>	<p>-staff will continue to assess pupil attainment and progress of learning through classroom work and mini assessment to group children for effective learning and support or challenge as required. -staff will continue to engage with the research around visible Learning & Mindsets surrounding flexible & mixed ability groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attainment for all pupils will improve. - Confidence will improve for all children and will help them develop a growth mind set. - Pupils will work together in a supportive way learning from each other and appreciating each other's individual skills.

Evidence of progress/comments/identified next steps:

Date:

Date:

Date:

Evaluation of QI 2.3 - Learning, Teaching and Assessment:

Sources of evidence/evaluation activities undertaken:

- HT and class teachers monitor progress of learners collectively and individually and plan next steps in learning.
- Learning visits by HT to classes.
- Pupil sampling and learning conversations with young people /Staff, pupil and parent discussion groups.
- Collegiate professional dialogue focused on learning in literacy and numeracy.
- Evidence of outdoor learning in planning.
- Parent questionnaire feedback.
- Feedback from pupil reports.
- Cluster / peer school moderation & CLPL cluster research projects.
- Evidence from HMIE inspection.

Overall evaluation of level of quality:

- The learning environment is built on positive, nurturing and appropriately challenging relationships which lead to high-quality learning outcomes.
- Learners' achievements in and out of school are recognised regularly at our celebration assemblies and shared with pupils, parents and the wider community through our achievements wall and monthly newsletter/foyer screen and local Newspaper.
- Learners play an active role in the school & wider community & regularly take on leadership roles, including leading learning. Pupils participate in a wide variety of clubs – Eco, RRS, Fair Trade, Pupil Council & Primary 7 pupils have responsibilities: being buddies, playground pals & paired reading.
- Staff continue to share or create learning intentions and success criteria with children and will develop looking more at skills for Learning, Life & Work.
- Teachers track children's achievement carefully across all curricular areas, constantly assessing whether children are making progress and provide appropriate support and challenge. Standardised data is being used to target support and staff are becoming more confident in using this to support professional judgement.

- Forward planning continues to be updated in an attempt to tackle bureaucracy and reflect learning and benchmarks identified. This requires further review and development.
- Developing Number Sense training has been attended by 2 members of staff and they have rolled this out to all staff. The 2 members of staff will now work as Professional partners to ensure this is embedded to promote understanding and confidence in numeracy teaching.
- Developing Visible Learning has enabled staff to look at research evidence about what has the biggest impact on learning & teaching. Training has been undertaken by the Head Teacher and one classroom practitioner.

Level of quality for this QI: 4

4. How good are we at improving outcomes for all our learners?

Relevant NIF priority: All

Relevant NIF driver(s): Assessment of children's progress, School improvement, Performance information

Overview:

- Children at Pitmedden Primary School are included, happy and successful. Their learning experiences are enhanced through a commitment to meet the needs of all individuals. They benefit from the level of care and nurture provided.

- The school is applying its PEF to support equity of outcome for learners who are vulnerable, many are LAC pupils or have ASN. Additional PSA support will be bought to target support to these pupils.
- All staff are up to date and confident in GIRFEC and Child Protection procedures and show commitment to the welfare of the children.
- The school is fully committed to the fulfilment of its statutory duties; training has been undertaken on Data Procedures & Equalities.
- Children are enthusiastic and engaged learners. Active learning opportunities are used alongside other methods to motivate and challenge pupils.
- Additionally the use of digital contexts for learning and a focus on creativity allows children to develop a wide range of skills and attributes.
- Standardised data is used effectively to track progress and identify areas requiring targeted support.
- The school has adopted a dyslexia and autism friendly approach, toolkits to support this are available in all classrooms and all photocopying is carried out on buff paper.

Key strengths:

- Levels of attainment have increased across the school but particularly in the younger age groups in both Literacy & Numeracy.
- Children are becoming much more confident in expressing their views, their learning and identifying their next steps in class and through a wide range of groups: Pupil Council, RRS, Fair Trade & Eco.
- Pupil needs are identified early through assessment and careful, regular tracking and support is targeted to ensure any gaps or misunderstandings are picked up early.

Identified priorities for improvement:

- To continue to improve mental maths across the school.
- To further develop the “Emerging Literacy” project in the early stages but across the school as required.
- Continue to identify support needs through early intervention

In relation to the priorities listed above the following action plans have been confirmed:

Actions/Roles/Timings	Expected Outcomes/Impact on learners	How will success be measured?
<p>1. To improve mental maths attainment across the school.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Standardised assessment will show an increase across the school in mental maths performance. - Classroom work will show improvement & children will be able to manipulate and make more sense of number strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -ongoing analysis of data will show improvement across all measures. -children will feel more confident in using number computations and discussing strategies. - SSNA testing results at P1,4 & 7 & InCAS results at P3 & 5.
<p>2. Emerging Literacy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Pupils will have developed the foundation skills required for early reading, writing, Listening & talking. -pupils will all make expected progress in Literacy. - pupils will be supported with areas identified as causing difficulties through assessments and tracking progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Initial EL assessments completed as a baseline and on-going assessment completed during the year to track & monitor progress. -End of P1 early level achievement including SSNA data. -support in place for children across the school who may have gaps which are impacting on progress.
<p>3. Identify support needs through early interventions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - through monitoring & tracking early identification of needs will be targeted to ensure progress for all pupils. -working in close partnership with our professional colleagues to support all our pupils. -ensuring the correct support is available when required for a limited time to ensure impact and progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through monitoring & tracking and classroom data & professional judgement. - Professional dialogue with HT & other professional colleagues. - Standardised assessments results.

Evidence of progress/comments/identified next steps:

Date:

Date:

Date:

Evaluation of QI 3.1 - Ensuring Wellbeing, Equity and Inclusion:

Sources of evidence/evaluation activities undertaken:

- Positive behaviour evident in and around school/community and confirmed with analysis of referrals.
- Feedback from pupils, parents and other stakeholders gathered via formal and informal consultations.
- School working towards RRS status.
- Positive views reflected by pupils and parents on their education and desire to learn at Pitmedden School. Pupils write an annual report about their learning and the school and how it could be improved.
- Analysis of attendance , LAC , exclusion and lateness data shows appropriate levels of commitment and participation regardless of background
- Scrutiny/analysis of Child Protection procedures.
- Weekly assemblies which include all children and celebrate successes and differences.
- Annual Health Fortnight which focusses on a topic of wellbeing each year. Last session we covered Healthy Eating & Physical Fitness giving the children an opportunity to sample a wide variety of new sports & forms of exercise.
- All pupils involved in quality PE weekly and participating in the daily mile & Jump Start Johnny fitness activities.

Overall evaluation of level of quality:

- Our staff have a commitment to GIRFEC and the use of Wellbeing Indicators and the obligations of being a Rights Respecting School.
- All pupils know about child protection and wellbeing issues through awareness raising through assemblies and aspects of the curriculum.
- All staff are able to access information about how to support learners through communications from Pupil Support Staff, through MAAPM's and IEP's.
- Analysis of collated data on attendance, lateness and exclusion shows that children attend, participate and thrive in the school environment.
- At times of challenge and difficulty the school deploys other professionals to access support from other agencies.

- Each pupil is an individual with individual needs, aspirations and rights. Our pupils are given opportunities to take part in discussions around decisions that may impact on their learning and lives. This is done through pupil voice, review meetings, MAAPM's, etc
- We endeavour to comply with our statutory requirements and the associated codes of practice. Our staff take account of legislative frameworks relating to equality and inclusion.
- Through assemblies and in class lessons the children learn about diversity through Other World Religions, RRS work, HWB & Differences. They celebrate being Unique.

Level of quality for this QI: 4

Evaluation of QI 3.2 - Raising Attainment and Achievement:

Sources of evidence/evaluation activities undertaken:

- Analysis of standardised assessments to ascertain progress in literacy and numeracy
- Analysis of opportunities for wider achievements for pupils
- Feedback from QIO & HMIE regarding overall school performance
- Feedback from parents regarding progress of individual children
- Moderation work throughout the school and cluster to ensure equity of standards.
- Use of tracking within the school to ensure progress is being made.
- Feedback from pupils on the mixed ability, flexible group work in Literacy & Numeracy.
- Emerging Literacy project being introduced in the Early Years.
- Staff using research evidence to improve L&T through Visible Learning, Mindsets, Learning Pit work.
- Two members of staff trained in using "Number Talks" and taking a lead role across the school.

Overall evaluation of level of quality:

- Attainment in the school is improving especially evident through standardised assessments in the earlier stages of the school.
- A tracking system has been put in place to ensure attainment for all pupils.
- Almost all pupils are attaining appropriate levels for their age and analysis of data shows that good progress is being made in literacy but less consistently in numeracy, especially mental maths.
- Wider achievements are recognised and regularly celebrated through celebration assemblies, achievements display.
- Standardised data and professional discussions are used to target support and support staff are deployed effectively to help remove barriers to learning and ensuring equity for all.
- The outdoor environment is utilised to enhance pupils learning experiences. The school has worked hard to build a strong culture of partnerships in the local community to maximise opportunities for young people and to enhance learning outdoors especially at the earlier stages of the school & nursery.
- The school is working hard within Aberdeenshire GIRFEC structures to break down barriers to learning and a number of young people having appropriate plans in place to address these.
- Across the school pupils are encouraged to take responsibility but there is room to further extend the range of leadership opportunities.
- A 'Developing Number Sense' approach is being developed to improve children's mental calculation skills. Thus far impact is limited however more frequent opportunities are being created for children to select from their knowledge the appropriate operation to solve challenging and unfamiliar problems. Two members of staff have been trained in Number Sense approaches and this is being cascaded across the school through peer support.
- There is a need to continue to look at how life skills can be developed and applied across the curriculum and beyond the formal classroom.

Level of quality for this QI: 4

5. What is our capacity for improvement?

- **The overall capacity for improvement at Pitmedden School is very good.** This is based on the following aspects within the school:

- High levels of commitment and leadership by all staff.
- Children in the school who show a high commitment to learning.
- The positive ethos in the school underpinned by shared vision and values.
- A programme of professional learning that supports all staff and leads to improvements for learners.
- Productive partnerships with parents, other schools and services and a range of contacts in the local community.
- Positive feedback about the school from HMle, QIO, parents and learners themselves that gives confidence in what we do

- **Aspects that could impact adversely on the capacity for further improvement include:**

- supply staff availability and frequent absences of visiting specialists.
- Unreliable ICT support and connectivity issues within the school.
- the capacity to full fill all the commitments due to lack of senior management in the school and the excessive workload around LAC & vulnerable pupils.

6. Record of updating

Date	Amendment made	By who	Comment
