



Westray Junior High School

Standards and Quality Report 2017



Report compiled by Sarah Jones, Head Teacher

August 2017





About our school

Our school is at the heart of a vibrant island community. We have 9 children in our nursery, and two members of staff. We have three classes in our Primary: a Lower Primary for P1/2, a Middle Primary for P3/4 and an Upper Primary for P5/6/7. Our secondary serves children from Westray and the neighbouring island of Papa Westray, and usually goes up to S4. In 2017 we will for the first time introduce an S5 under Orkney Island Council's ambitious plans for the "Orkney Offer" – a move to ensure all children have equality of opportunity to educational pathways. Our school numbers are growing, our results are consistently good, and parents say their children are happy and enjoy their learning at school.

Vision, values and aims

We aim to develop successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors by:

- Sharing creative, challenging and enjoyable learning in a safe and supportive environment
- Developing self-awareness and an understanding of the needs of others
- Being responsible and treating each other fairly
- Celebrating the culture and quality of life in our island
- Actively learning and working together as a community

Our key achievements this year

Our S4 students all achieved a strong set of exam results, with the overwhelming majority meeting or exceeding their target grades in most subjects. Our PIPs results (an online assessment sat by all children in Orkney and most in Scotland) show that attainment in the primary is generally above or at the national average in both reading and mathematics.

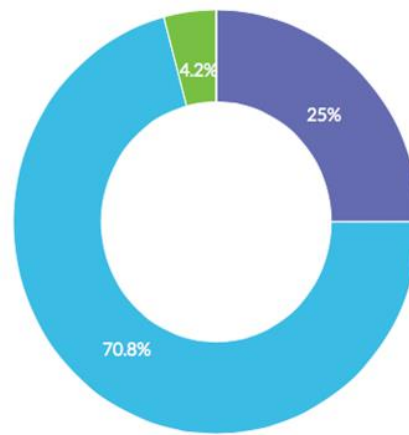
Our healthy numbers meant that we were able to introduce a third primary class in August 2016, and the establishment of a positive classroom ethos and good teaching and learning in the new Middle Primary has been one of the major successes of this year.

We participated in Orkney's celebration of the 900th anniversary of the death of Saint Magnus, with work done in all classes from the Primary to the Secondary. This exciting project culminated in a very well received performance at the Westray Heritage Centre, and also the Papay Kelp Store.



A parental survey done at the end of 2017 showed that 96% of parents feel that their children are enjoying their learning at school. Other positive headlines from this survey were that a large majority of parents said that they would recommend the school to another parent, that their child is happy at the school, making good progress, and known to staff as an individual.

“My child enjoys learning at school”



Choices	Totals
1 - Strongly agree	6
2 - Agree	17
6 - Sometimes	1
3 - Disagree	0
4 - Strongly disagree	0
5 - Don't know	0

Our identified improvement priorities for 2016-17

The 2016-17 School Improvement Plan identified the following areas for improvement:

1. To improve wellbeing in the primary department
2. To develop personal learning planning in the primary department
3. To develop the secondary curriculum
4. To raise attainment through the use of self-evaluation and the new benchmarks
5. To establish effective teaching and learning in the new middle primary class
6. To develop numeracy in the nursery

What progress have we made towards those aims?

How much progress have we made towards the planned outcomes in the 16-17 SCIP? For each planned area for improvement I have summarised the intended outcomes, and all teaching and nursery staff have been involved in evaluating the progress that we have made towards those outcomes. Staff have also considered whether this is something that they feel we would benefit from maintaining a focus on next year.

It is important to set the progress that has been made towards the planned outcomes for 16-17 in the context of the change in leadership that we experienced this year. When I started in January I prioritised the areas in the SCIP that involved evaluation and reflection, and placed less emphasis on the planned changes, feeling it was important for me to get a good sense of the school before driving forward any changes.



1. To improve Wellbeing in the Primary Department

This is clearly an area of strength. Class teachers care deeply about the children in their class, and invest considerable amounts of time building relationships with children, dealing with personal and social development, and helping children manage situations they find themselves in at school and at home.

Planned outcome	What progress have we made towards this outcome?	Is this something that will continue to be a priority?
<p>Children will have the opportunity to play in a more engaging and stimulating outdoor play environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff visited other schools to see Scrapstore Playpod in action. • Playground staff are enthusiastic about the opportunities Scrapstore Playpod would bring the pupils. • Logistical issues require further investigation, as scrap may not be readily available on Westray. 	<p>Our use of the outside play space continues to be an area for development, but the logistical questions around Scrapstore Playpod specifically have to be further explored. If it is feasible on Westray, then it would be a good way of developing our use of the space; if it is not there may be other ways of doing that.</p>
<p>Children’s mental and emotional wellbeing is improved through staff training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All primary staff and SFL teacher undertook training with Steve Bunning in Mindfulness. • Staff speak positively about the impact this has had on their teaching and their pastoral work with children. • We have not done any in depth analysis of the impact of this work. 	<p>Developing self-awareness is one of our stated school aims, and will therefore continue to be a feature of every-day life in our school.</p> <p>Staff in the primary do not feel there is a need for them to repeat this particular training this year. They did however value this training, and consequently feel that colleagues in the secondary may benefit from this training, or similar, alongside further developments in pastoral care that they have planned.</p> <p>Imogen Kerr (EP) has identified some areas from her work with individual children that she believes she could provide useful training on, and will work with JG and SJ to deliver this next academic year.</p>



2. To develop Personal Learning Planning in the Primary Department

We have had much success with the first steps of this: teachers in the primary are developing their use of assessment for learning in classrooms, and the ways they help children to be able to fully understand and reflect on their own learning. Teachers are positive about the impact this work is having, and are keen to continue. We are still considering different ways of sharing learning with parents, and will be discussing this this year with the Parent Council and other interested parents.

Planned outcome	What progress have we made towards this outcome?	Is this something that will continue to be a priority?
<p>Developing the use of assessment for learning strategies in classrooms, so that pupils know where they are, and know how to make progress.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary teachers have developed their use of success criteria, particularly in writing, to help children know what “good” looks like. 	<p>Primary teachers feel that they would benefit from more time and continued focus on these areas, to ensure their practice is fully embedded in all areas of the curriculum. This is particularly true in light of the new benchmarks, and the changes to planning and assessment that may stem from them.</p>
<p>Working with pupils to improve the extent to which they are able to meaningfully reflect on their learning, and use this reflection to make more progress.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different forms of pupil reflection on learning being used in different classrooms, and for different purposes. 	
<p>Sharing learning with parents, so that they are more able to add to that learning at home, and to engage with their children’s learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have researched different methods of sharing learning with parents, and piloted some involving new technology in the nursery. Several staff have made visits to other schools to see their systems, and brought information back to discuss The end of year parent survey asked parents about whether they receive regular information about their child’s progress: two thirds agreed that they did. 	<p>The primary staff feel that they have made good progress in the extent to which reporting enables parents to get actively involved in their children’s learning, but also that they still have work to do in this area.</p> <p>The feedback in the end of year parent survey needs to be further explored - why do a third of parents feel they do not get regular information, and what further information do they want? What information sharing would help children make more progress without creating an undue workload for teachers and school staff?</p>



3. To develop the Secondary Curriculum

Planned outcome	What progress have we made towards this outcome?	Is this something that will continue to be a priority?
<p>Identify next steps in development of BGE courses, with a focus on wider achievement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary curriculum reviewed and evaluated, with areas for development identified. • BGE extended to S3 in line with national and local policy, and to give students their full curricular entitlement. • Interdisciplinary Learning slot introduced to give breadth, and in pursuance of DWP aims. • Introduction of Highers. • Assemblies and pastoral support given time on the timetable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned changes need time and continued work to embed. • The secondary staff would like to do further work on the overall aims and rationale of the curriculum, and the extent to which our curriculum meets those aims. • With regard to wider achievement, we need to work out whether JASS and DoE will fit into the new IDL slot, and further develop how we monitor, increase and celebrate success in students' wider achievements.
<p>Draft curriculum produced and reviewed by all stakeholders, and final curriculum written.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are currently working on subject curricula for next academic year. • This work is not yet complete, so it has not been reviewed or finalised. 	<p>After subject curricula are drafted, staff will need time together to review and ensure coverage of Es and Os, to explore how students move through the benchmarks and ensure that they are being stretched and challenged at all stages, and to revisit our aims and purposes and see whether our curriculum meets those aims.</p> <p>This will then need to be reviewed on an ongoing basis, in a systematic way that involves staff reflection as well as feedback from students and parents.</p> <p>Curriculum development is a focus for OIC this year, so it may be that we can receive support from SIOs and the Head of Education in our curriculum development work.</p>



4. To raise attainment through the use of self-evaluation and the new benchmarks

Planned outcome	What progress have we made towards this outcome?	Is this something that will continue to be a priority?
Attainment increases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attainment in S4 this year is slightly better than last year. • Our CfE levels are below the OIC average, however our PIPs scores are generally slightly above average. 	<p>Attainment will of course always be a high priority for us.</p> <p>There is a need to explore the disconnect between our CfE, PIPs and examination data.</p>
Staff and other stakeholders fully involved in evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff have been involved in various self-evaluation and reflection exercises since January. • School staff have been involved in choosing and shaping the areas for development focused on in the school improvement plan. • Parent Council involved in evaluation exercise. • All parents invited to complete an anonymous survey, and follow up consultation planned. 	<p>There is a need to constantly evaluate and reflect upon what we are doing, whether it is working, and whether we could be doing even better than we are for the children and families in our community.</p> <p>Self-evaluation will be a focus for OIC this year, so it may be that we will have support from SIOs in our continued evaluation.</p>
Staff are confident using the benchmarks accurately to support pupil progress and attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff have begun to engage with the benchmarks. Some staff have begun to embed them in their planning, some are exploring how they can meaningfully be used in assessment. • Staff have attended local moderation sessions, and fed back. • Our end of year CfE levels are lower than the OIC average, however our PIPs scores are above average, and our S4 exam results are good. This has led us to question whether we are using the benchmarks in the same ways as other Orkney schools. 	<p>This is a national and local priority, and will be something that we continue to engage with alongside development work on improving assessment for learning, and planning for progression.</p> <p>In light of the disconnect between our CfE levels, external exam results and CfE levels, we cannot be confident that our understanding of "achievement of a level" matches the local and national understanding.</p> <p>We will therefore require support from OIC and the SIOs to further explore how we are using the benchmarks in comparison with other schools, and to embed their use in our daily practice.</p>



5. To establish effective teaching and learning in the new middle primary class

This has been one of our major successes this academic year. The new class in the primary reflects our healthy school roll, and the positive ethos and good teaching and learning that have been established reflect the hard work of the new middle primary teacher and the effective support of the Principal teacher and other colleagues.

Planned outcome	What progress have we made towards this outcome?	Is this something that will continue to be a priority?
Effective structures are in place to ensure an effective learning environment in the Middle Primary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class has been set up, new learning and behaviour routines are now well established, and classroom ethos is positive. 	Teaching and Learning in all classrooms will be prioritised in next year's development plan, as the most important and effective driver that we have towards improved outcomes, including attainment, engagement and wellbeing.
Collegiate time is in place for primary staff to ensure a supportive ethos has been established for staff and pupils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Middle primary teacher has been well supported by Principal teacher and other primary colleagues in collegiate time and beyond. 	

6. To develop numeracy in the nursery

The thoughtful and reflective evaluation cycle that has been established this year in the nursery is another area that we are incredibly proud of, and which has led to several improvements to the way we communicate with parents, and the way that children are stretched and supported in their play and learning.

Planned outcome	What progress have we made towards this outcome?	Is this something that will continue to be a priority?
Numeracy to be embedded in every-day classroom activities to ensure children are developing skills in early mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A numeracy audit was undertaken, and developments planned in response to that. Spaces were adapted and developed to ensure that children would be encouraged towards play that developed early numeracy skills SeeSaw app shows a good range of numeracy skills being developed 	Developing early numeracy will continue to be a priority alongside literacy and health and wellbeing. It will be developed in the context of improving staff interactions with children in play, and developing play spaces that invite numerical play.



<p>Focused self evaluation by staff to ensure positive change for children and families</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is clearly a strength of the Lead EY practitioner and the nursery team. Regular weekly meetings with the Head introduced in January have included an evaluation focus which the team consider throughout the week. This has led to several positive changes, e.g. the introduction of SeeSaw to communicate with parents and manage staff workload. 	<p>This will be the key method for improvement in the coming academic year. We will continue to embed the system we have developed for evaluation, and introduce some theory and articles/research to meetings.</p>
<p>Improved evaluation and review times with children and parents to ensure that all stakeholders views are taken into consideration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the end of session time as a time to evaluate the day and the service as a whole was not working effectively. • We have worked on making the end of session time a calmer and more relaxing experience in several ways. The focus is no longer to evaluate the day, or to engage with parents in evaluation of the service, but instead to model different ways to play and engage with children. • We have used a range of other more effective ways to involve parents in evaluation of the nursery, including an evaluation tree outside the nursery with different questions for consideration, and involvement in whole school evaluation such as the parent survey. 	<p>Developing end of session times and the way children talk about their own learning may be an area for development next year - it will depend on how this fits in with the evaluation process described above.</p> <p>Communicating with parents and seeking their views will always be a high priority for us.</p>

