

**St Mary's RC Primary School**

**And**

**Polbeth Nursery**



**#buildingforsuccess**

**PROGRESS REPORT FOR  
SESSION 2023/24**

**(Standards & Quality Report)**

**10 Polbeth Road, Polbeth,**

**West Lothian, EH55 8SR**

At St Mary's Primary School and Polbeth Nursery we aim to create an inclusive learning community where we are # Building for Success

### **Our Vision**

We aim to provide high quality education that meets the needs of all learners, based on Gospel values, enabling them to be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and able to make an effective contribution to society, now and in the future.

### **Our Values:**

Trust & Honesty, Respect, Friendship, Safety & Perseverance



#buildingforsuccess

### **Our Aims:**

#### **Successful Learners**

To provide the highest quality learning and teaching experiences which meet the needs of all learners in an inclusive, safe and nurturing environment.

#### **Confident Individuals**

To encourage success, promoting confidence, independence and creativity in our learners to build resilience and develop a growth mind-set.

#### **Effective Contributors**

To equip every pupil with skills for life by investing in them as individuals, creating a foundation to build skills for learning in Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing.

#### **Responsible Citizen**

To build and maintain effective partnerships between the school, the home, the parish, partner agencies and the wider community.

## **ABOUT OUR SCHOOL**

St Mary's RC Primary School is a denominational school which serves the communities of Polbeth and West Calder. In session 2023/2024, The school community has an unswerving drive to get it right for every child and we are relentless in our pursuit of positive outcomes. The school had a positive validation of its work by WLC in January 2024. The VSE team identified many key strengths in our teaching, learning and assessment and the positive impact of our partnership working was highly commended. The school has a roll of 174 children across 8 mainstream classes and 18 children across 3 ASD classes. Polbeth Nursery has a role of 65 children who attend either in the morning, afternoon or for the full day. We have 15 eligible 2 year olds. The school runs a very successful Breakfast Club which is well attended. We have over 32% Free School Meal uptake from pupils with almost 50% of children in receipt of a clothing grant. St Mary's has a long established and fully supportive Parent Council, who are active in school, especially in the areas of fundraising and general parental communication and liaison. We are in a period of transition and as of August 2024,

we will be moving from St. Kentigern's Cluster to St. Margaret's Academy as a result of changing catchment decisions. Relationships are proactively being built with the new cluster and plans are already in place to support a smooth transition. We have a Family Link Worker who is relentless in their pursuit to support our families. Improvements in the school and early learning centre are supported by very effective partnership working. The school has very good relationships with cluster schools, local community partners, and the local church.

The leadership of the school community ensures that all stakeholders have opportunities to develop the school improvement agenda with a clear focus on positive outcomes for learners. This has led to the school receiving the Digital school Award, Core Reading Accreditation and Silver Rights Respecting status this session. This session we have also secured the Gold Sports Award and Eco school reaccreditation.

### **The School Priorities for 2023/24 were:**

- 1. Improvement in all children and young people's wellbeing:**  
*Increase learners' self-efficacy, social and emotional wellbeing, with the UNCRC Rights at the centre.*  
*Further build a trauma informed culture to support wellbeing across the learning community.*
- 2. Raising attainment for all, particularly in literacy and numeracy:**
- 3. Tackling the attainment gap between the most and least advantaged children (targeted):**  
*Achieve equity for Quintile 1 and 2 learners through a programme of targeted and tracked interventions.*
- 4. Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people:**  
*Increase the achievements and skill development of all learners, within and beyond the classroom.*

### IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

Our improvement priorities are always based on the national priorities in the National Improvement Framework (NIF). Below we have indicated what progress we made with these priorities in Session 2019/20, what the impact has been and what our next steps will be to continue to address these priorities in session 2020/21.

We have also shown which NIF driver for improvement we used – you can find out more about the National Improvement Framework and drivers at:  
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/achieving-excellence-equity-2022-national-improvement-framework-improvement-plan/documents/>

We have also evaluated our overall provision using quality indicators (QIs) in How Good is our School 4 (HGIOS4) and How Good is Our Early learning and Childcare? (HGIOELC) which is a key aspect of the Scottish approach to self-evaluation and school improvement.

PRIORITY	HOW DID WE DO?
<p>1.</p> <p>To raise attainment, especially in literacy and numeracy</p> <p><b>Our measurable outcome for session 2023/24 was to Embed a consistent approach to learning, teaching and assessment, promoting the participation of all learners.</b></p> <p><b>NIF Driver(s):</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> School and ELC Improvement.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School and ELC Leadership</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parental Engagement</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum and Assessment</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance Information</p>	<p>We have made good progress.</p> <p>What did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core Reading Accreditation achieved. We have been building a culture of reading across the school , Participation in World Book Day, book swaps, reading clubs, the establishment of our own library and participatory budgeting being used to update class libraries. We have improved our community links with our local library and a few classes have been able to participate in live Author events in West Calder.</li> <li>• Pedagogy officer has led a range of professional learning opportunities for staff, including PM Writing, 'Bump it Up', Higher Order Thinking Skills, Reciprocal Reading and PM Oracy. This is building consistency of practice and teacher confidence throughout the school</li> <li>• Staff continued to develop their knowledge and understanding of progression in children's writing and develop more consistent approaches to assessment and moderation. We have benefitted from a weekly input from an extra teacher from WL Equity Team who has been supporting in Primary 4.</li> <li>• Learners engaged with core and genre targets and the WL Placemats to support peer and self-assessment in writing.</li> <li>• Bump it Up walls are established across all classrooms to support literacy learning progression through</li> <li>• Pupils have benefitted from Free Writing Friday opportunities being embedded across the school community to encourage pupil choice and further develop writing skills.</li> <li>• Rigorous approach to early literacy skills through the effective implementation of the Read Write Inc Programme with robust systems in place to monitor attainment and progression.</li> <li>• Parent workshops/curriculum sessions offered alongside 'Sharing Our Learning' events to encourage parental engagement and involvement.</li> <li>• The use of digital tools such as IDL, Sumdog and AI has enhanced a more agile learning approach with learners.</li> <li>• The school benefits from a key numeracy lead, a staff working party and a pupil committee to drive forward positive change.</li> <li>• In numeracy, almost all learners have completed the Shine assessment to identify gaps in learning with staff trained in the use of the PUMA intervention.</li> <li>• Concrete and pictorial resources are accessible in all classes to support the progress of learners.</li> <li>• Numeracy working walls are now used in all mainstream classes and in the Enhanced Resource Base where appropriate.</li> </ul> <p><b>Evidence indicates the impact is:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ As a result of universal, targeted and intensive interventions, 81% of learners in P1–7 mainstream classes are on track to become proficient readers.</li> <li>★ In P1–7, 82% of learners in our mainstream met the requisite levels of numeracy.</li> <li>★ The ongoing support of a literacy pedagogy officer and the West Lothian Equity Team enhanced teacher pedagogy in reading and numeracy thus have positively benefited learners. Almost all teachers stated that they were more confident in their ability to assess pupils' reading and numeracy skills.</li> <li>★ Almost all learners are able to use technology effectively to enhance, support and extend their Numeracy and Literacy skills.</li> </ul> <p><b>Our priorities for next session will be:</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To embed consistent approaches in literacy and numeracy and how they can be used to extend skills to raise attainment.</li> <li>• To explore our approaches to developing skills in listening and talking to ensure progression</li> <li>• To participate in professional learning in 'Building Thinking Classrooms' and introduce and evaluate suggested pedagogical approaches.</li> <li>• To promote enjoyment, enthusiasm and a love for Maths and Numeracy to support pupil progression and confidence.</li> </ul>
<p>ELC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High-quality engagement with parents/carers and local partners facilitates a partnership approach to care, play and learning experiences</li> <li>• Focus on Literacy-rich environment</li> <li>• Group story and rhyme opportunities</li> <li>• Tracking and regular data dialogue sessions with staff team</li> <li>• Staff training on observations</li> <li>• Improved consultative planning to streamline and focus on achieving outcomes.</li> </ul> <p>All learners have had exposure to good quality literacy and numeracy learning experiences with practice and planning evaluated and monitored using ELC quality assurance approaches.</p>
<p>2.</p> <p>To close the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children</p> <p><b>Our measurable outcome for session 2023/24 was to ...</b></p> <p><b>Achieve equity for Quintile 1 and 2 learners through a programme of targeted and tracked interventions.</b></p> <p><b>NIF Driver(s):</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> School and ELC Improvement.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School and ELC Leadership</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parental Engagement</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum and Assessment</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance Information</p>	<p><b>We have made good progress.</b></p> <p><b>What did we do?</b></p> <p>The school was awarded £107,800 of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). The new PEF planning tool was used effectively to identify gaps for learners impacted by poverty, to plan and design interventions to support them and to gather evidence of the impact on their learning. 20 priorities were planned with all making progress (over 70% making good or better progress, around 25% made moderate progress). PEF was used effectively to recruit PEF Leads to oversee Literacy, Numeracy and Sustainability who worked in partnership with SLT and the WL Equity Team to ensure priority was given to equity across the school community. This provided high quality and relevant training for staff in literacy/numeracy approaches and interventions and to fund additional pupil support staff to help support the needs of identified learners. Our Family Link Worker was funded through PEF and their role has been vital in supporting our pupils and their families. Our Support for Learning teacher developed targeted interventions for pupils across the school to provide additional teaching support for literacy. This was supplemented with targeted inputs by PSWs across Early, First and Second level. Interventions this year have focused on increasing attendance, addressing gaps in literacy, numeracy and supporting wellbeing and resilience, whilst reducing the cost of the school day. Examples include the introduction of a walking bus, big breakfasts, lunch and after school clubs, Shine/Puma intervention in P2-7, RWI support groups, residential experiences. Individual support plans for pupils are regularly reviewed and modified with all stakeholders through a robust CPM process so that they continue to develop</p> <p>We have embedded the One Trusted Adult approaches as well as training in Trauma Informed Practice.</p> <p>Evidence indicates that the use of Pupil Equity Funding has had the following impact on learners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Identified pupils increased their reading age, knowledge of sounds and blends and the number of common words they could read and write in Primaries 1-4.</li> <li>★ Extended Leadership Team have upskilled and honed ability to set SMART targets and benefitted from a range of professional collaboration sessions with WL Equity Team. All ELT (100%) report feeling more confident and focused in their role and next steps in reducing equity gaps.</li> <li>★ Identified pupils increased their ability to demonstrate an increase of at least 3 core writing targets.</li> <li>★ Parent and carer feedback indicated the positive benefits of events such as 'Our Big Breakfast' with the majority (over 50%) of families in attendance.</li> <li>★ All teachers reported an increase in confidence and knowledge of high quality learning, teaching and assessment in literacy and in making effective use of literacy interventions to best meet the needs of learners.</li> </ul>



ELC	<p>Lending Library set-up and engagement with local Bookbug service.          CLPL to improve knowledge and effective of trackers and the interrogation of data to inform next step.          All staff involved in Quality Improvement activities to build consistency and confidence.          Staff observations on SeeSaw evidence learners' developing literacy/numeracy skills through play.          All learners have personal plans that evidence specific interventions required to target identified gaps.</p>

<p>3.</p> <p>To improve children and young people's health &amp; wellbeing</p> <p><b>Our measurable outcome for session 2023/24 was to ....</b></p> <p><b>Increase learners' self-efficacy, social and emotional wellbeing, with the UNCRC Rights at the centre. Further build a trauma informed culture to support wellbeing across the learning community.</b></p> <p><b>NIF Driver(s):</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> School and ELC Improvement.  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School and ELC Leadership  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parental Engagement  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum and Assessment  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance Information</p>	<p>We have made very good progress.          What did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Rights Respecting School silver award has been accredited. As a result, student rights now form the foundation of all our decisions and advancements.</li> <li>• The revision of our anti-bullying and equalities policies gave stakeholders a chance to review the language and techniques we had previously agreed upon. Through a focus group, we developed a child-friendly version of our anti-bullying statement which has helped students learn how to ask for help when they need it for themselves or their classmates.</li> <li>• Further professional development in Trauma Informed Practice (Levels 1 &amp; 2) was beneficial for all staff members, enabling them to continue meeting the emotional needs of students.</li> <li>• Our HWB champion made sure we were following all applicable local and national guidelines and recommendations.</li> <li>• Every employee feels more comfortable utilising wellbeing data in conjunction with professional conversations.</li> <li>• Every member of staff is becoming more comfortable utilising wellbeing data and professional conversations to pinpoint kids who face learning obstacles so that timely, effective interventions may be given. The HT and Family Link Worker are working to develop more exacting methods for tracking attendance.</li> <li>• As learners acquire confidence in their ability to effectively self-assess against the wellbeing indicators, the school team is better equipped to make decisions about the next steps in their learning and the most suitable supports.</li> <li>• Our HWB Mini champions participated in in-person meetings to discuss their accomplishments and offer input on West Lothian goals for wellness.</li> <li>• Our HWB family champ organised a termly parental drop-in session so that parents may assist parents with any difficulties they may have and shared with the larger group the effective strategies implemented inside our school.</li> <li>• Through pupil leadership groups (committees) that are directly related to school improvement priorities, students have benefited from a wide range of opportunities to express their opinions on how and what they learn as well as how to enhance their learning environment and school community.</li> <li>• Displays in the classroom and hallways emphasising the one-trusted adult approach. It is now embedded to use QR codes to request conversations with a trusted adult.</li> <li>• In order to support our pupils' ongoing sharing of their learning journeys, the school has offered termly opportunities this session for sharing our learning experiences with parents/caregivers.</li> <li>• Almost all pupils have had the chance to prepare and sample healthy food, and our after-school cooking club has helped them to better grasp the significance of a balanced diet for overall welfare.</li> <li>• The usage of a staff noticeboard and Teams page as a platform for information sharing and staff wellbeing assistance was established by our HWB champion.</li> </ul>
---	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Termly Team Around the School meetings with partners have enabled a reduction in barriers to learning by identifying solutions and win-win scenarios.</li> </ul> <p>Evidence indicates the impact is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ 98.7% of learners in Primaries 5-7 reported that they had a trusted adult they could talk to if upset or worried.</li> <li>◆ 97.53% of learners reported that they felt safe in school.</li> <li>◆ 83.13% of parents reported that the school deals well with bullying, (this is above the WL average of 74.62%).</li> </ul>
ELC	<p>Began to introduce UNCRC  All children participated in Health Week related experiences.  Trauma training for staff  On-going push on wellbeing check-in's and characters.  Consistent work on GIRFEC children's voice  Improvement of content in personal plans  All learners are supported to be emotionally resilient with trackers showing the majority tracking as green across health and wellbeing components.  Most learners can express an understanding of their rights.</p>
<p>4.</p> <p>To improve employability skills, and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people</p> <p><b>Our measurable outcome for session 2023/24 was to ...</b></p> <p><b>Increase the achievements and skill development of all learners, within and beyond the classroom.</b></p> <p><b>NIF Driver(s):</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> School and ELC Improvement.  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School and ELC Leadership  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parental Engagement  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum and Assessment  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance Information</p>	<p>We have made good progress.  What did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most pupils use the platforms Seesaw with confidence in primaries 1-3 and TEAMS in primaries 5-7 to access learning both at home and in school, share their successes, and foster flexible learning environments.</li> <li>• Our staff, parents, and families have positively engaged in a successful trial of a digital format for profiling, which will continue in the upcoming session, improving home/school communication and sharing of learning.</li> <li>• Most classes at the school showed connections to learning, life, and work skills during quality assurance class visits thus increasing their knowledge the purpose of learning experiences.</li> <li>• In order to examine a wide range of aspirational vocations, almost all pupils actively participated in a careers fair. Many parents contributed to this by talking about their work and the abilities needed to succeed in it.</li> <li>• We regained Eco accreditation in June 2024.</li> <li>• Our school garden is fully utilised and all classes contribute to growing vegetables, fruit, herb and flowers whilst learning about sustainability.</li> <li>• Almost all pupils have participated in weekly outdoor learning lessons with Primaries 4-7 achieving the John Muir Award in May 2024.</li> <li>• Virtual Nature School is used to facilitate outdoor learning experiences for those with additional support needs and promoting inclusive practices.</li> <li>• Young STEM leaders and our pupil STEM committee were central to the promotion of fun experiences for the whole school community and pupils from the committee led the learning across all classes.</li> <li>• Tigtag was purchased as part of participatory budgeting to allow digital media to support meaningful and relevant learning opportunities.</li> </ul> <p>Evidence indicates the impact is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ 100% of learners have access to digital technology both in school and at home (loaned by school if no device at home).</li> <li>★ Over 90% learners are in a pupil leadership committee thus contributing to school improvement creativity and decision making.</li> <li>★ 86.42% of learners in P5-7 reported that they learn about their rights and they are promoted and protected at school.</li> </ul>
ELC	<p>All children and families have access to SeeSaw which they can contribute to.  SLT quality assurance approaches will track coverage of statements on SeeSaw.  Parental feedback shows ncreased engagement in SeeSaw and positive impact of this.  Pupil voice captured in floorbooks to evidence views about STEM, outdoor learning, UNCRC.  Evidence of community links in consultative planning wall.  Positive feedback from outside agencies regarding partnership working.  The majority of preschool learners are recorded as on track in learning.</p>

## **Attendance and Exclusion**

Attendance across the school has continued to be above 90% for the past two sessions, building on a prior post-pandemic dip. There were no school exclusions during session 2023-2024. The Head Teacher and Family Link Worker monitor late-coming and attendance monthly and works closely with families to overcome any barriers to regular school attendance. A school walking bus is used to support individual circumstances when required. Regular communication promoting attendance is sent out e.g. via Newsletters/Posters. At times, in person meetings are held to support those experiencing barriers to attendance.

95% of parents report that the school promotes the importance of attendance.

### ***Developing in Faith Theme: Developing as a Community of Faith***

- Each class leads the monthly Masses that we host. They also act as altar servers and give the readings, psalm, gospel acclamation, prayers of the faithful, and offertory. In order to spread our religion and build community, parents and parishioners are welcome to attend Masses.
- When individuals are being presented to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Communion, and Confirmation, we collaborate with their parents or guardians and our parish priest.
- Our Primary 6 and 7 pupils are invited to participate in the Pope Francis Faith Award in order to support their understanding of and adherence to the Gospel Values and to lead learning.
- Our P4–7 classrooms do a Service Around the Crib to ensure that we end our Christmas holidays with God at the forefront, while our infant department presents a Nativity play to promote the true significance of the Liturgical Seasons.
- Every school has regular assemblies that are scheduled according to the liturgical seasons. Our pupils are placed in one of four houses, each named after a particular saint, to foster a deeper sense of belonging outside the classroom and to help them understand our role in God's community.

### ***Parental Engagement***

94% of parents report that the school keeps them informed about its work and about planned events.

How we do this:

- An active and supportive Parent Council who contribute financially, as a result of community fundraising events, ensuring that aspirational experiences are available to all.
- Annual Meet the Teacher event
- Termly sharing our learning events are attended by the majority of parents.
- Family learning opportunities have been developed throughout the year – Christmas budgeting, cooking, art, numeracy and board games, offering protected time for fun activities as a family.
- Drop in sessions for parents with our Family Link Worker linked to individual circumstances and needs.
- The majority of parents attended both our Big Breakfast Events
- Almost all our parents and carers have engaged with meetings regarding pupil progress, I.E.P. and C.P.M.s (School and ELC)
- Celebrating success and sharing events and Information with parents on the school app/blog/newsletters/digital profiles
- Parents invited to:



- Monthly Class Masses and Class Assemblies which have now extended to sharing the learning within the classroom
- School Nativity performed by pupils from P1 – P3 & Carol Service – celebrated by pupils from P4-7
- Primary 7 Leavers Mass / Assembly
- Sports Day
- Termly Team Around the School Meetings with Partners
- Consultation evenings/afternoons

**Our Wider Achievements this year have been:**

- Working closely with the Equity Team to improve learning and learner experiences
- Leadership roles created and embedded across the learning community to support improvement
- John Muir Award successfully gained in Primaries 4-7
- A robust and varied after-school and lunchtime extra-curricular programme on offer at no cost to families
- School netball team competed successfully in competitions throughout the session.
- Increase class trips
- Residential trip for P5 & P7s
- Whole school trip to Blair Drummond Safari Park
- School participation in Dance, Athletics, Football, Handball, Swimming and Cross-Country events
- Participation in Health Week, World Book Day, Scots Week, P6&7 Burn's Day and Numeracy Week.
- P6 participated in the WL Euro Quiz
- Robust transition from ELC to P1
- Links to new cluster, St Margaret's have been initiated and future plans made.
- Weekly Brass lessons for P5-7
- Specialist music input for P1-7 fortnightly.

How good is our school? The quality indicators\* evidence that:

1.3 Leadership of Change	Very Good
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Very Good
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Very Good
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	Good

How good is our Early Learning and Childcare? The quality indicators\* evidence that:

1.3 Leadership of change	Good
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Good
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Good
3.2 Securing children's progress	Good

+Delete if not relevant

\*(Indicators used in How good is our School? 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, Education Scotland 2015 and How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare? 2016)