



sustainable thriving achieving

**East Dunbartonshire Council**

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# Gartconner Primary Standards and Quality Report 2023/24



'Learning, Leadership and Achievement for All'

'Respect, Inclusion, Friendship and Fairness'



## Context of the School

Gartconner Primary School is a non-denominational school serving the communities of Kirkintilloch and Waterside Village. The school is a single storey, semi-open plan building with grounds which include a Multi-use Games Area (MUGA), Poly Tunnel for food growing activities and grassy, recreational areas.

*The* school roll in session 23/24 was 263 with pupils organised in 11 classes. The staffing complement for the school was 14.6 fulltime equivalent posts including the Head Teacher, Depute Head Teacher and Principal Teacher. There were 7 support staff including two clerical staff. The Instrumental Music Services provided violin and drumming lessons for individual children. Active Schools organised a variety of sports taster sessions for pupils and supported our Health Week.

The majority of our pupils live in areas described as highly affluent using data from the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (Quintile 5). The school's free meal entitlement was 12% of pupils. A number of pupils live in areas prioritised for funding from the Pupil Equity Fund and last session the school was awarded £46,550. Average attendance remains above the national average at 96% with no exclusions recorded for session 23/24.

We have an active parent council and PTA who work in close partnership with the school to ensure that we achieve Gartconner's vision, values and aims. Pupils benefit from a wide range of leadership opportunities including committees, delivering lunchtime clubs and leadership activities.

Pupils, parents, staff and community partners have worked together to evaluate the school, and this has informed this report.



## Progress in School Improvement Plan (SIP) priorities

School priority 1: Making Maths Memorable – Spiral Approach	
<b>NIF Priority</b> Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.	<b>HGIOS4 QIs</b>  QI 1.3 Leadership of Change  QI 3.3 Increasing creativity and employability  QI 1.4 Leadership and management of staff
<b>NIF Driver</b> teacher professionalism performance information curriculum and assessment	
<b>Progress and Impact:</b> The school has made very good progress with this priority and is well placed to continue to develop Spiral Maths.  During Session 23/24, collaborative professionalism supported the development of Spiral Maths across all classes within Gartconner Primary. Spiral Maths is a pedagogical approach which supports pupils understanding and retention of key mathematical skills to raise attainment for all.  A comprehensive programme of Professional Learning was developed based on self-evaluation and quality assurance processes to support staff to implement Spiral Maths in their practice. The Maths Leadership group led professional learning sessions on a range of identified staff needs including play provocations, Numicon, word problems, hundred boards, walking the wall and class environment. Professional Learning videos of good practice were created and shared to ensure sustainability of approaches. Analysis of staff evaluations evidenced that all staff were more confident in delivering mathematical approaches through Spiral Maths by the end of the school session.  Quality assurance processes, including class observations, peer observations of staff and learning conversations with children has supported the develop of Spiral Maths and ensured consistency of approaches. Learning walks afforded staff the opportunity to participate in meaningful reflection and moderation of practice. Honest and direct feedback from children through learning conversations supported staff to make adaptations to their own practice.  Staff as part of school Data Informed Dialogue and Professional Planning discussions with Senior Leaders identified improvements in pupils' confidence and attainment in oral and mental maths, problem solving and targeted areas of learning in maths in each class.  An introduction to Spiral Maths for parents was delivered by class teachers and information has been shared throughout the school session.  <b>Next Steps:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Embed spiral learning pedagogy in professional development creating a bespoke package of Professional Learning based on self-evaluation</li><li>2. Continue to develop moderation of practice to ensure a rich learning experiences within maths across all classes</li><li>3. Continue to raise attainment for all in maths.</li></ol>	



**School priority 2: Health and Wellbeing (Sustainability, UNCRC & Staff Wellbeing)****NIF Priority**

Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing  
Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre

**NIF Driver**

school leadership  
school improvement  
teacher professionalism

**HGIOS4 QIs**

QI 1.3 Leadership of Change

QI 3.1 Wellbeing, equality & inclusion

**Progress and Impact:**

Very good progress was made with this priority.

Class charters were created linking to the UNCRC articles, the OPAL charter and woven into our curriculum overview and relevant policies. Explicit links were made between the initiatives and to all the leadership roles that pupils undertook in the school. Consistency across the school through the use of wall displays, rights' assemblies, family engagement sessions, school website, SWAY updates and local projects in the community helped to embed this. There was a clear focus on improving children's rights and increasing pupil voice within the school. Whilst there were already areas of strength in the promotion of children's rights, there was a need to ensure consistency across the school. This has now been achieved with all children creating their class charter. There was a significant improvement in pupils' awareness of their rights as enshrined in the UNCRC. Almost all children are aware that they learn about their rights in school. Almost all children say that they are listened to and the majority of pupils say that they can influence decisions in Gartconner. Most parents are aware that we are a UNICEF Rights Respecting School but just less than half of parents know about the UNCRC.

In developing pupil voice across the school, almost all pupils said they have an opportunity to change things in Gartconner and most agreed that they get to give their opinion. The majority of pupils led an extracurricular club in Gartconner in the last year. The majority of staff and most parents now believe that Gartconner's grounds have become more sustainable. The poly tunnel is used as an outdoor classroom with all children responsible for growing plants. The Junior Leadership Team worked well across the year to gather pupil voice and HGIOURS data. Curriculum rationale data has been collected from all stakeholders. Staff wellbeing has improved over the year through the Supportive Six staff working party implementing a plan to support staff both formally and informally. A plan was created from the survey data, and this led to the creation of a Staff Wellbeing Policy and staff wellbeing initiatives throughout the year. Almost all staff believe that their work has a positive impact on their mental wellbeing. A majority of staff believe that they are able to speak openly about their mental wellbeing.

**Next Steps:**

1. Update the curriculum rationale and create a child friendly version.
2. Increase parental awareness of the UNCRC.
3. Embed the process of pupil self-evaluation through the use of HGIOURS to create a child friendly SIP in conjunction with the JLT and the UNCRC steering group.
4. Curriculum overview to be rewritten to promote learning for sustainability and outdoor play with a focus on progression from early to second level.



**School priority 3: Maintenance – Sustaining Improvement Over Time.****NIF Priority**

Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing  
Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

**NIF Driver**

school improvement  
teacher professionalism

**HGIOS4 QIs**

QI 1.1 Self evaluation for self improvement

**Progress and Impact:**

The school made very good progress with this priority.

To ensure sustainable improvements over time, previous improvement priorities are added to our maintenance agenda. All interventions were completed, with staff leadership of the professional learning the key to its sustainability. To ensure consistency and effectively manage changes in staffing a clear programme of CLPL. This was led by the leadership team and teachers and included Professional Learning in phonics and spelling; reading strategies; writing strategies; talking and listening strategies; writing and wider literacy moderation. These supported colleagues in maintaining the pedagogical approaches used across the school. All teachers are familiar with school policies and use these to ensure a consistent approach to pedagogy across the school.

Pupil wellbeing within the school is very high with almost all children feeling safe in school and almost all can identify an adult that they trust if they are worried or upset. A child friendly anti-bullying policy was created by the UNCRC steering group and an adult friendly version was updated with links to the UNCRC. Three key approaches were targeted in the maintenance agenda to improve wellbeing in Gartconner during Session 23/24: emotion coaching, restorative practice and zones of regulation. Pupil behaviour in Gartconner is very good and restorative approaches are used to resolve conflict fairly. Most pupils have very high levels of emotional literacy and are able to use the school's values and the language of the zones of regulation to describe how they are feeling and what they can do to improve their wellbeing. There has been a focus on building friendships and resilience during OPAL time and it has shown an impact on pupil behaviour as support staff report a reduction in conflict in the playground. Most staff agreed that a consistent approach across all classes would be beneficial linked with UNCRC.

The data literacy of almost all staff has improved greatly over the year with the introduction of Data Informed Dialogue sessions where staff and the senior leadership team meet to discuss the progress of the class using available attainment data. The balance of these sessions has changed to improve the professional judgement of teachers through working with colleagues and individually to identify trends in the data and target improvements. There is now a range of professional discussions with colleagues that are more data informed and allow comparisons across stages by teachers.

**Next Steps:**

1. To review Early to Second reading planners to ensure coverage of key skills.
2. Ensure consistency in the use of language and displays across the school for emotional literacy.
3. To develop a policy for Positive Relationships with all stakeholders.



## **Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy;**

Data shows attainment over time is good. Increasing attainment is a relentless focus for school improvement and is particularly evident over the last 3 years. A wide range of targeted interventions are in place to support pupils with identified barriers to learning. The available ACEL data shows clear improvement in attainment over the learner journey from P1 to P7. There is significant improvement in attainment in P7 from prior levels in P4.

## **Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people;**

Progress continues to be made in closing the poverty related attainment gap with pupil equity funded projects driving this change. Evidence is particularly strong across reading, writing and numeracy in P4.

## **Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing**

There has been a continued focus on the wellbeing of pupils and staff within the school and this is a high priority for Gartconner. Improved staff wellbeing has helped staff to continue to provide very high levels of support to our pupils and families. Almost all children feel safe and are treated with care and respect. The school values of respect, inclusion, fairness and friendship underpin the work of the school and these values are shared by all stakeholders in creating an ethos of mutual respect. Pupils wellbeing is tracked throughout the year and shows sustained high levels of wellbeing for most pupils. A programme of alternative curriculum options provides targeted interventions for pupils who highlight any reduction in wellbeing on the wellbeing indicators.

## **Attainment and Achievement Data**

Curriculum for Excellence Levels at the end of June 2024				
	Reading	Writing	Talking & Listening	Numeracy & Mathematics
Early level by end of P1	most	most	most	most
First level by end of P4	most	most	almost all	most
Second level by end of P7	almost all	almost all	almost all	most

Most pupils are achieving their expected attainment levels in literacy and numeracy and almost all pupils are making good progress from their prior levels of attainment. Some pupils are making very good progress and exceeding expected levels of attainment. Across early, first and second level, attainment across literacy is good and is consistently above the national average. Attainment in numeracy is good and is consistently above the national average in early, first and second level.

## **Impact of Interventions for Equity and Pupil Equity Funding (PEF)**

PEF enables the provision of a range of interventions that improve wellbeing and/or attainment across the target groups. There are a wide variety of initiatives that are provided and these are targeted to improve the PRAG. The PEF funded PTs provide most of these initiatives. Groups such as the self-esteem group improved pupils' growth mindset with all pupils able to identify their own strengths after the sessions. Class teachers observed more positive interactions with most pupils when they returned to classes following the sessions. Ferre Laevers and teacher observations showed all Lego Club participants improved social skills and problem solving skills following the sessions.

Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) Groups were set up and resources purchased to enhance the provision in the playground. The intervention had a great impact on the whole school with all children agreeing that the playground has improved and they are more able to play with friends. Almost all children said they were ready to learn when they returned to class. Support staff reported the reduction in playground incidents with almost all children playing well together.

PEF funded an increase in the number of IT devices within the school. This has had a very positive impact on PEF pupils who have ready access to otherwise shared devices. Initiatives such as IDL spelling and



accessible writing programmes have been used to raise attainment. Almost all children using IDL have improved their relative spelling age over the year.

PEF has supported reducing the cost of the school day and pupils have directly benefited from this having been able to access extra-curricular and residential experiences. The PEF funded fruit staff has enabled pupils to access a healthy snack daily in school. PEF funding also supported targeted homework clubs for PEF pupils. Pupils had self-identified targets that they all completed before finishing the sessions.

### **Self-evaluations of How Good Is Our School? (4<sup>th</sup> edition)**

Quality indicator	School self-evaluation	Inspection/ Authority evaluation
1.3 Leadership of change	Very good	Very good
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Good	Good
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion	Very good	Very good
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	Very good	Good

### **Summary of School Improvement priorities for Session 2024/25**

- 1. Collaborative Professionalism – Spiral Maths
- 2. Health and Wellbeing
- 3. Inclusion

### **What is our capacity for continuous improvement?**

The recent authority review highlighted the school's leadership of change as very good. There is a relentless focus on improving outcomes for children and this is facilitated through very effective self-evaluation and quality assurance processes. Our rigorous self-evaluation framework reviewed and implemented this session which incorporates quality assurance activities; strategic plan for additional support and wellbeing; evaluation and engagement activities calendar; and professional learning has really supported all aspects of continuous improvement.

Partnership with pupils and parents is very good and their views are sought throughout the school year. Improving our use of HGIOURS with our pupils this year has helped in this process and it will be a key element next session in helping us on our journey to excellence.

Collaborative professionalism has been a key element of our improvement plan this session and will continue to be a focus next year. Teachers have been analysing and interpreting data to plan data driven programmes. This has been done within maths and teachers are exploring other areas where this approach could be implemented next session.