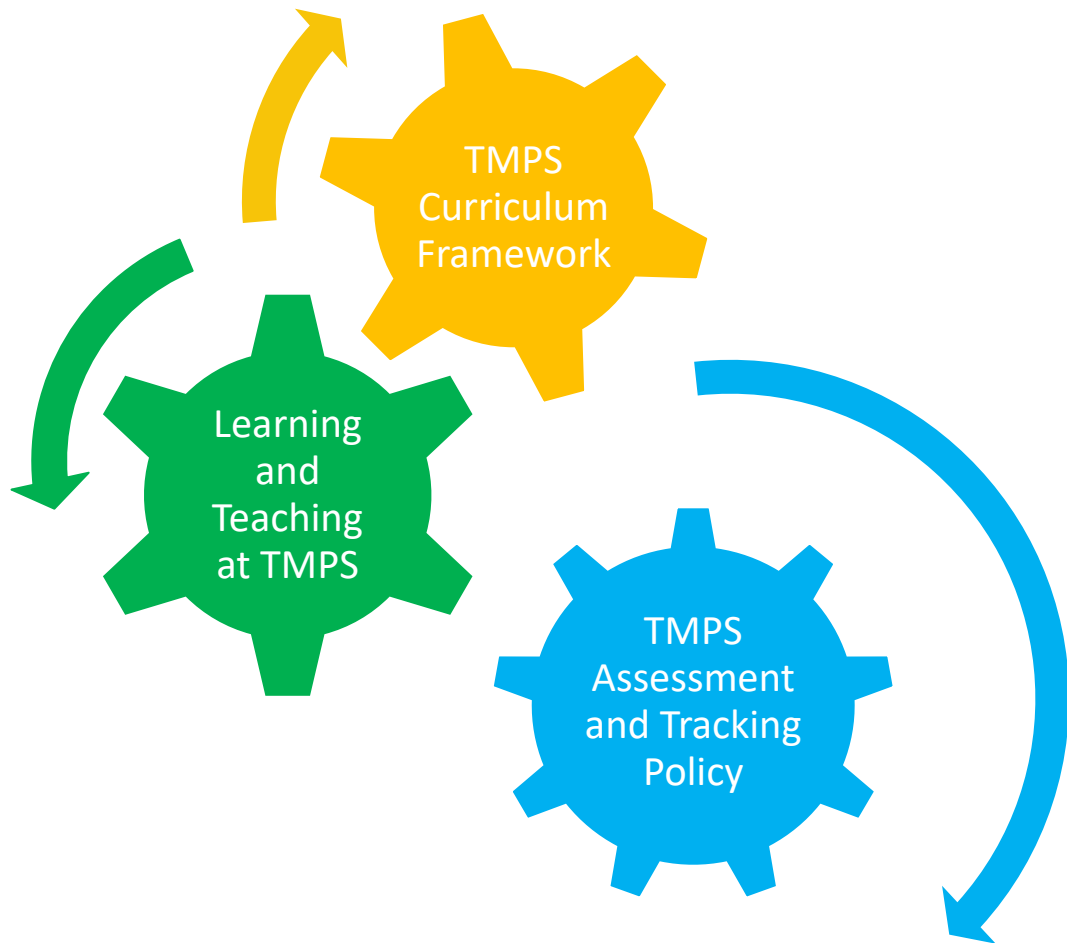




# Thomas Muir Primary School



## Curriculum Rationale

November 2019



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## Curriculum Rationale



This Curriculum Rationale will outline A Curriculum Framework for learning, teaching and assessment in Thomas Muir Primary School. It reflects the school's unique context and has been informed by East Dunbartonshire Council's National Improvement Framework, the guiding principles of A Curriculum for Excellence, self-evaluation, school improvement priorities and the views of all stakeholders. The framework includes:

- School vision, values and aims
- Curriculum definition and design
- Curriculum design principles
- Entitlements for children and young people
- Experiences and outcomes
- Curriculum areas, courses and programmes of study
- Learning, teaching and assessment
- Personalised support
- Arrangements for reporting and parent/carer engagement
- Arrangements for self-evaluation
- Professional learning
- Curriculum development plan

### **Vision, values and aims**

Our Shared Vision

***A school community where everyone feels safe, happy and included and our learners have the opportunity to achieve excellence in all pursuits.***

Our Values

Respect    Responsibility    Honesty    Fairness    kindness

Our Aims

· To provide a nurturing environment where learners develop their social skills alongside their learning so they grow into respectful and responsible citizens, ready for life and work.

· To provide all children with stimulating and engaging learning experiences so they can achieve their very best academically.

- To enable staff to meet the needs of all learners through a creative, balanced and pupil-centred curriculum.
- To engage parents and carers as partners in learning and build positive relationships with our partners and members of the wider community.

### **Curriculum definition and design**

“The curriculum is the totality of experiences which are planned for children and young people through their education, wherever they are being educated. The purpose of the curriculum is to help children and young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors (the four capacities). The framework therefore puts the learner at the centre of the curriculum.”

*Curriculum for Excellence, Building the Curriculum 3: A framework for Learning and Teaching.*

Our curriculum is unique; it reflects our school's journey of continuous improvement and of building a new school identity and community. It is shaped by our shared values and current educational thinking. Our curriculum is built on the guiding principles of Curriculum for Excellence, but takes account of our children, families and the communities they live in. Our curriculum is aspirational and aims to bring real life into the classroom, making learning relevant and helping young people apply their learning within and beyond the classroom. Our curriculum links knowledge and skills in one curricular area to another, helping children to make connections in their learning.

Our curriculum recognises the four contexts for learning:

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Ethos and wider life of the school | Curriculum areas and subjects          |
| Interdisciplinary learning         | Opportunities for personal achievement |

Our curriculum is designed to reflect the seven principles of curriculum for excellence. These are:

- |                         |                            |             |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| Challenge and enjoyment | Breadth                    | Progression |
| Depth                   | Personalisation and choice |             |
| Coherence               | Relevance                  |             |

## Entitlements for children and young people

All children and young people in Thomas Muir Primary School are entitled to experience a curriculum that provides:

Coherence from 3-18;

A broad general education, including the experiences and outcomes which are well planned across all the curricular areas, from early years through to S3;

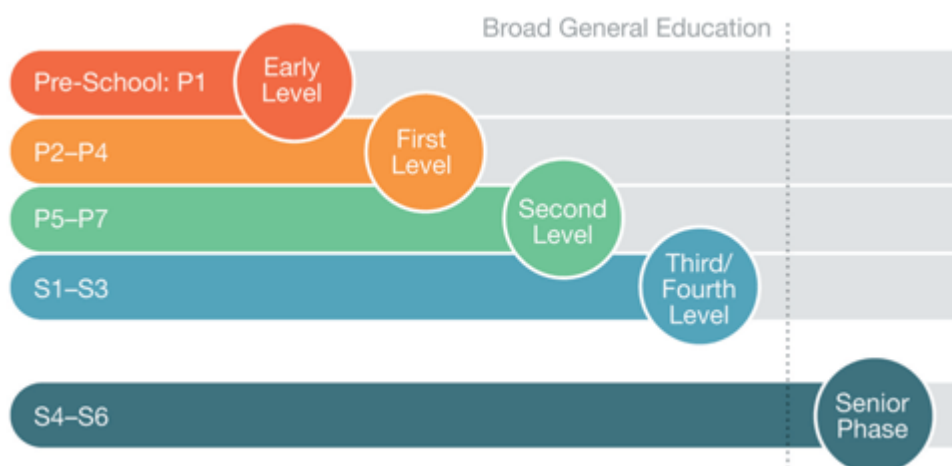
A senior phase of education after S3 which provides opportunities to obtain qualifications as well as continue to develop the four capacities;

Opportunities for developing skills for life, learning and work with a continuous focus on Literacy, Numeracy and Health & Wellbeing;

Personalised support to enable them to gain as much as possible from the opportunities which Curriculum for Excellence can provide; and

Support in moving to positive and sustained destinations beyond the school.

The diagram below illustrates progression through the broad general education. Learners are supported to progress at their own pace and the curriculum framework takes account of this.



## Experiences and outcomes

The curriculum is defined by Experiences and Outcomes.

**Experiences** - the quality of the learning experience in developing attributes and capabilities and in achieving active engagement, motivation and depth of learning.

**Outcomes** – what is to be achieved.

Taken as a whole, the experiences and outcomes embody the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities. They apply to the totality of experiences which are planned for our young learners at Thomas Muir, including the ethos and life of the school and interdisciplinary studies as well as learning within curricular areas and subjects. This means that they apply beyond curriculum subjects; they are considered in focus learning weeks and wider experiences such as RespectMe (Anti Bullying) week, Poppy Scotland week, autism awareness week, health week, Fairtrade fortnight, fundraising events, pupil leadership roles, class assemblies, performances; sporting festivals and school clubs.

### **Curriculum for Excellence: Curriculum areas, courses and programmes of study**

Health and Wellbeing	Literacy and English (Languages)
Numeracy and Mathematics	Expressive Arts
Religious and Moral Education	Sciences
Social Studies	Technologies

### **Health and Wellbeing**

Learning in Health and Wellbeing ensures that children and young people develop the knowledge, understanding, skills, capabilities and attitudes they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future. Learners are given opportunities to:

- Feel happy, safe, respected and included in our school;
- Develop self-awareness and respect for others;
- Build positive relationships, resilience and confidence;
- Make informed decisions in order to improve their mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing;
- Apply their mental, emotional, social and physical skills to pursue a healthy lifestyle, now and in the future; and
- Ensure that learning in Health and wellbeing contributes to raising attainment and achievement across the curriculum.

Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS) is used in all stages to develop social and emotional wellbeing. Sexual Health, Relationships and Parenthood (SHRP) is established. In Session 2019/20, the school will develop comprehensive programmes of study across planning for choice and changes, substance misuse, physical education and food & health. This will

be developed through staff working parties. Learners will be involved in shaping aspects of our Health & Wellbeing curriculum.

The school has established partnerships to support the delivery of the Health & Wellbeing curriculum. Active Schools offer a wide range of clubs with a focus on physical activity and sport. Active Schools also provide taster sessions and specialist coaching to enhance the PE curriculum.

The school has established a whole school scooting programme, supported by Sustrans. This extends to community scoots, giving children the opportunity to join scooting with learning about their local area.

Local supermarkets support learning and teaching in aspects of Food and Health. Our campus police officer supports the delivery of Safeguarding in the online world through assemblies and class visits.

All Primary 7 pupils are given the opportunity to participate in a residential outdoor learning experience.

Pupils who require Health & Wellbeing support through an individualised curriculum participate in weekly blocks of outdoor learning and/or Forest School experiences.

### **Primary 1 Play2Learn across learning**

Play2Learn was introduced in Primary 1 in August 2018. At Thomas Muir, this play based model for learning and teaching is built around Julie Fisher's division of the child's week into three distinct kinds of activity, child led, adult led and adult initiated. Primary 1 benefit from play based learning across the curriculum.

**Child led play:** Children are planners; the resources they select and where they chose to play with them are private to the child, play takes place indoors and outdoors, children can use the skills they have previously learned in ways that are freely chosen. Children benefit from 45 minutes of play uninterrupted if possible. Adults can sensitively 'up level' play through their observations and interactions.

**Adult led learning:** The children learn something new/specific/valuable e.g. phonics, addition, subtraction, writing for a specific purpose and audience. The teacher works with small groups and sets a follow up learning target.

**Adult initiated learning:** The teacher provides a starting point/stimulus/provocation/invitation and observes what the children do with this e.g. resources linked to new learning are left out for the children to explore. These should follow the learning from a previous adult led activity – no new learning is initiated through this approach.

## **Literacy**

Our Literacy curriculum reflects East Dunbartonshire Council's Literacy Strategy and our own policies relating to learning and teaching across Literacy.

Our ability to use Language and Literacy lies at the centre of the development and expression of our emotions, our thinking, our learning and our sense of personal identity.

Literacy is fundamental to all areas of learning, as it unlocks access to the wider curriculum.

The three organisers within the Literacy curriculum are:

Listening and talking    Reading    Writing

### **Listening and talking for learning**

Listening and talking for learning is integrated across all curricular areas. Skills in listening and talking are taught through modelling approaches and through exposure to Language and Literacy through the wider curriculum and everyday learning experiences. Learners are given opportunities to:

- Develop confidence in listening and talking;
- Develop skills for listening and talking, with increasing complexity;
- Explain their thinking to others, with increasing challenge of context, subject matter or issues;
- Respond to and ask a range of questions (literal, inferential and evaluative); and
- Participate in group and class discussions/presentations with increasing independence.

*Listening and talking are fundamental to our Number Talks approach in Numeracy and across our Religious and Moral Education curriculum.*

### **Reading for learning**

At Thomas Muir, we have developed a strategy for teaching Guided Reading. This incorporates Active Literacy approaches, banded texts for guided reading, eBooks and integrated novel studies. In addition, we have high quality resources to support learners who have barriers to learning. These include dyslexia friendly texts. This ensures that there are consistent approaches to teaching word attack skills, fluency, comprehension and

analysis. Reading for learning is included across all curricular areas. Learners are given opportunities to:

- Read for enjoyment;
- Find, select, organise, summarise and link information from a variety of sources, with increasing complexity;
- Access and analyse a wide range of texts;
- Understand the purpose of different texts;
- Apply their reading skills across the curriculum.

### **Writing for learning**

Our learners have opportunities to write across the curriculum, for a range of purposes. At the earliest stages, learners are given opportunities through play based learning, to explore writing with different materials and to understand that they can create meaning with drawings, symbols, letters, sounds and words. Children in Primary 1 use a variety of approaches, including black line drawings, have-a-go writing and over/under writing. Technical aspects of writing are explicitly taught. These include spelling, punctuation, handwriting, layout, presentation, reviewing and editing. Genre specific features of language are also explicitly taught. Learners are given opportunities to:

- Demonstrate their learning across the curriculum in writing;
- Create a variety of texts (short and extended) for different audiences and purposes with increasing complexity;
- Apply the elements which writers use to create texts with increasingly complex ideas, structures and vocabulary;
- Learn and apply genre features in their writing;
- Experience personalisation and choice in their writing.

### **Taught Writing**

The school has established weekly Taught Writing lessons in all stages. This gives learners the opportunity to apply their technical writing skills in different contexts, and integrate these with genre features to create short and extended pieces of Writing.

Taught Writing lessons are structured to ensure that teachers are modelling skills and supporting children throughout the writing process.

The school has established partners in learning to develop a culture of reading and writing for enjoyment and to support learners to access and understand a range of texts and genres. Dr Colin Drysdale inspires and supports our learners to access Non-fiction texts. Rossie Stone, founder of



Dekko Comics, works with teachers and learners to explore how to demonstrate learning and understanding using comic strips.

## Languages

French is taught in all stages, following the EDC curriculum framework for French. German will be known as “Language 3” or “L3” across the Bishopbriggs Academy cluster schools. Language 3 will be introduced across P5-P7.

## Numeracy

Our Numeracy curriculum reflects East Dunbartonshire Council's Numeracy Strategy and the school's Numeracy and Mathematics Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy.

The school has two trained Maths Recovery champions who have participated in specific professional learning on the Stages of Early Arithmetical learning (SEAL) and how to use Maths Recovery strategies to support learning, teaching and assessment. This training has been shared with Primary 1 teachers and is modelled regularly in classes throughout the school.

*Number Talks* are used across the school at the beginning of Numeracy sessions. These short talks help children to develop number sense, use numbers flexibly and talk about their thinking and strategies they have used to solve problems. Learners use hand signals in Number Talks to communicate that they are thinking, to indicate when they agree with a strategy and to share that they have thought of one or more strategies.

In all stages of the school, active learning approaches are used in Numeracy and Mathematics. This is any instructional method that engages children in the learning process through meaningful learning activities. Learners use a wide variety of resources, including ICT, concrete materials and Teejay textbooks for selected written tasks. All stages use *Count on Us Maths*. All children use *Numeracy Blueprints*, a hands on learning aid that can tie the visual-concrete-abstract learning together. This supports children to develop a conceptual understanding of number and number processes.

Numeracy and Mathematics is split into three broad areas, which themselves include specific curricular organisers:

Number, Money & Measure

Shape, Position & Movement

Information Handling

At Thomas Muir Primary we aim:

- To develop a positive attitude to learning in numeracy and mathematics as an interesting and enjoyable curricular area where all learners experience success.
- To develop mathematical skills in relevant contexts, building knowledge and a quick recall of stage-appropriate facts.
- To teach numeracy and mathematics in a systematic and progressive way, taking into account children's individual strengths, interests and areas for development, making connections both within maths and to other curricular areas.
- To involve children in their own learning through the sharing and co-creation of Learning Intentions and Success Criteria.
- To enable children to use all forms of assessment to inform their next steps in learning.
- To create a learning environment which encourages learners to solve problems collaboratively, learn from one another and value the ideas and opinions of others.
- To allow children to solve problems in different ways, teaching various strategies and to ultimately encourage children to use the strategy that works best for them.
- To develop confident learners who are not afraid to make mistakes, and understand that mistakes are simply part of the learning process.
- To enable learners to express themselves fluently, using correct mathematical language and vocabulary.
- To continue to develop a reflective staff team of teachers, leadership and support staff who collaborate, share new ideas and learn from each other in the teaching and assessment of maths.

## **Expressive Arts**

The Expressive Arts framework provides children with opportunities to be creative and imaginative, to experience inspiration and enjoyment and to present and perform across Art and Design, Dance, Drama and Music. At Thomas Muir, learning across the expressive arts is practical and experiential. Learners have opportunities to link their learning across expressive arts through class assemblies and performances. In addition, the curriculum includes opportunities for learners to participate in cultural and community events. These include the Thomas Muir Art competition, which is part of the wider Thomas Muir festival. The school choir performs in the local community.

The *Charanga* music programme is available in school. This is an on-screen resource for learning and teaching that is based on listening and appraising, creating and exploring and singing and performing.

## **Religious and Moral Education**

Our RME course and programme of study is based exploring key themes of Christianity and other world religions. Lessons are based on PowerPoint presentations that focus on listening and talking, supporting learners to reflect on their own life experiences, personal beliefs and values. Our RME programme of study teaches knowledge and understanding of the different beliefs and values of others. The school follows national guidelines in relation to religious education and observance. We have adopted the RME course and programme of study created by the Kirkintilloch High School cluster.

## **Sciences**

Our Sciences curriculum supports learners to develop their interest in and understanding of the living, material and physical world. The key organisers within the Sciences curriculum are:

Planet Earth            Forces, electricity and waves

Biological systems    Materials    Topical science

The curriculum is designed to encourage curiosity and a practical approaches. Organisers are revisited at key stages to ensure that prior learning is developed and progressed. We have adopted the Sciences course and programme of study created by the Kirkintilloch High School cluster.

## **Social Studies**

The Social Studies curriculum teaches children about other children and their values, in different times, places and circumstances. It also supports children to understand their environment. The Social Studies curriculum is structured under the following organisers:

People, past events and societies

People, place and environment

People in society, economy and business

Thomas Muir Primary has adopted the Social Studies curriculum course and programme of study developed by the Douglas Academy cluster.

## **Technologies**

Within Curriculum for Excellence, the technologies curriculum relates to developing technological skills, knowledge, understanding and skills, through creative, practical and work related activities. ICT is used to enhance learning across the curriculum.

## **Learning, teaching and assessment**

We are committed to getting the curriculum right for all of our learners. The core curriculum is designed to be differentiated to ensure that all learners make very good progress. This supports children to enjoy being engaged and involved in their learning. The curriculum is adapted to suit the needs of learners. For some children, this will mean that the environment in which they learn may be modified. In addition, curriculum content and the learning process may be adapted to ensure that learning is broken down and that specific resources are selected to enhance learning. Learners are encouraged and supported to demonstrate their learning in different ways.

Planning mechanisms are in place to ensure that, over the course of a level, children experience the totality of the curriculum.

Assessment is part of the learning and teaching process. Teachers use a variety of assessment approaches, including ongoing formative assessment, summative assessment and periodic assessments to monitor progress and achievement over time. Teachers gather evidence to inform their professional judgement about progress and achievement within and across Curriculum for Excellence levels. This evidence is provided by a suite of assessments including:

- On-going formative assessment, based on what learners say, make, write and do.
- Periodic assessment evidence in Reading, Writing, Listening & Talking and Numeracy. These assessments reflect application of Curriculum for Excellence benchmarks.
- Other summative assessment evidence data, including Scottish National Standardised Assessments and diagnostic assessments.

Teachers use Curriculum for Excellence benchmarks to ensure that assessment evidence demonstrates how well and how much learners have achieved against national expectations.

Assessment periods provide an opportunity to take a holistic approach to assessment, enabling children to demonstrate that they can apply what they have learned across experiences and outcomes and in different contexts.

Teachers review how well learners have achieved against identified benchmarks and use their professional judgement to track progress and achievement.

## **Personalised Support**

The school's arrangements for personalised support takes account of East Dunbartonshire Council's *Including Every Learner* policy and the school's ASN policy.

This ensures that provision is in place to enable all children and young people to achieve success. This policy highlights the importance of Wellbeing and involving learners in decision making and planning processes. The school works closely with the link educational psychologist to meet the needs of all learners. The school has established mechanisms to screen and review new referrals and to monitor children through the Pupil Support Group (PSG) and Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings. Our Education Support Teacher assesses and plans interventions with class teachers. In session 2019/20, the school will take a close look at processes and planning for Universal and Targeted support.

### **Arrangements for Reporting and Parent/Carer Engagement**

The National improvement Framework highlights the importance of engaging learners and parents/carers effectively in approaches to reporting. At Thomas Muir, there are formal reporting mechanisms through parent/teacher meetings and an end of session report. In addition, there are wider opportunities to engage and involve parents in their child's learning

In Session 2018/19 a staff working party was established to consult with parents/cares, children and staff about home learning. This shaped the school's approach to developing parent/carers engagement and ensured that home learning meets the needs of our school community.

Parents/Carers are invited to attend "Come Learn with Me" sessions to experience the curriculum first hand.

A number of Parents/Carers have participated in family learning projects, learning alongside their children.

Parents/Carers are invited to attend a range of events as part of the ethos and wider life of the school. These include performances, class assemblies and services.

A number of Parents/Carers work directly with pupil committees, coach clubs and give presentations to classes during learning focus weeks.

There are two parent/teacher meetings per school session. Parents/Carers are given an opportunity to view their child's work and meet with the teacher. In addition to this, there is one report per session. This includes information about what level of curriculum for excellence learners are working at in Reading, Writing, Listening & Talking and Numeracy, along with statements to give a clear picture about latest progress and next steps in learning. The end of session report does not contain information about all

curricular areas as such, but there is scope for teachers to highlight strengths across the curriculum under the Health & Wellbeing and other Curricular Areas section. In keeping with national advice, our reporting structure is designed to give a very clear understanding of how learners are progressing, without being overly bureaucratic.

In session 2018/19, learners contributed to their end of session reports. They reported on their achievements and next steps.

### **Arrangements for self-evaluation**

The school uses *How Good Is Our School (4<sup>th</sup> Edition)* as a framework to support self-evaluation. The school has developed a culture of ongoing self – evaluation to provide a picture of what is having the most and least impact on learners within each class, across stages and across the school. The school's self-evaluation calendar details arrangements for monitoring, observing and reviewing learning and teaching.

The school creates an annual self-evaluation summary detailing strengths, sources of evidence and next steps under the following quality indicators:

- 1.3 Leadership of Change
- 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment
- 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion
- 3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement

This summary informs the school's annual Standards & Quality report. This report details progress and in the school's improvement plan priorities, including the impact of pupil equity funding.

The school gathers evidence for self-evaluation in the following ways:

#### **Quantitative data**

We gather and analyse a range of quantitative data. We analyse this data to recognise strengths and/or emerging issues that might require action or a targeted intervention. We focus on the following data:

- Attainment data that tells us how much and how well children are progressing in their learning. We track attainment data from assessments in Reading, Writing, Listening & Talking and Numeracy. We use this data to reflect on teaching approaches, changes that need to be made to support and challenge learners and to look at trends over time. We also analyse data from standardised assessments.
- Attainment data for *at risk* groups is examined to identify targeted interventions for equity, if required. These groups include young carers,

children who are looked after at home or away from home, care experienced children and children under child protection.

- Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation data and Free Meal Entitlement data is considered when we analyse attainment data. This is to ensure early identification of gaps emerging and to ensure that planned interventions can be put in place to close these gaps.
- Attendance data is monitored as part of self-evaluation.

### **People's Views**

The school engages with staff, learners, parents/carers, partners and the local authority to gather their views about the school.

- Staff views are gathered in a variety of ways. These include professional dialogue and input during collegiate activities, inset days, learning, teaching and assessment meetings. Staff views are sought through electronic surveys and opportunities to participate in curriculum development and leadership roles. In addition, there is a formal staff consultative group, the staff negotiating group, which feeds into the school's collegiate agreement and professional learning for improvement priorities.
- Pupil voice is encouraged through leadership groups and committees, as well as pupil focus groups and assemblies.
- The views of parents/carers are shared through parent council meetings, focus groups and evaluations/feedback from events such as the Primary 1 induction programme and family learning sessions.

### **Direct Observation**

Learning visits are included in our school calendar for self-evaluation. Learning visits are supportive in nature and enable us to engage in professional dialogue to reflect on the following questions:

- How are we doing?
- How do we know?
- What are we going to do now?

Learning visits focus on specific themes within quality indicators in How Good Is Our School 4. Teachers and observers engage in coaching conversations to identify strengths and next steps.

### **Professional learning**

Teachers and staff engage in professional learning to challenge their thinking and to ensure that their practice is informed and current. Professional learning is a key driver for school improvement and for ensuring that learners make very good progress over time.

At Thomas Muir, all teachers participate in professional learning through the collegiate agreement. Time is protected for teachers to attend training and to learn through collaboration with others. Teachers and staff are supported to develop their leadership capacity through professional learning.

Examples of professional learning activities.

Training for teachers in approaches to improve learning, teaching and assessment. This includes school based training and opportunities in the EDC CLPL calendar.

Presentations and professional dialogue to explore issues such as Adverse Childhood Experiences.

Collegiate activities – stage planning and moderation, working parties, training and activities linked to school improvement priorities.

Learning with colleagues across EDC and the West Partnership.

Professional reading and research.

Practitioner enquiry models.

Acting promoted posts.

Engagement with GTCs professional standards.



## Curriculum Development Plan

Session	Health & Wellbeing	Literacy	Numeracy	Other Curricular Areas
<b>2017/18</b>	PATHS Curriculum  Targeted interventions – Wellbeing Base	Active Literacy in P1-P3  Taught Writing  Integrated Novel Studies  Literacy & English planners	SEAL approaches  Numeracy & Mathematics planners	RME (Kirkintilloch Cluster)  Social Studies (Douglas Cluster)
<b>2018/19</b>	SHRP  Targeted interventions – Wellbeing Base	Guided and Independent Reading/Banded Texts  Comprehension and Analysis  Bug Club	Number Talks  Count On Us/Numeracy Blueprint Boards  Holistic Assessments	Across Curriculum – Play2Learn in P1  Sciences (Kirkintilloch Cluster)  Home Learning  Review and refresh Social Studies in P1
<b>2019/20</b>	Planning for Choices and Changes  Substance Misuse  Food and Health  SHRP (Parent Council)	Process and Product through Dekko Comics	Number Talks (maintenance)  Count On Us/Numeracy Blueprint Boards (maintenance)	Across Curriculum – Play2learn in P2  Curriculum Rationale
<b>2020/21</b>	Mental Health in the curriculum	Listening and Talking across the four contexts for learning	Numeracy across learning	Across Curriculum – Play2Learn in P3

		Tools for Writing		French/Spanish
<b>2021/22</b>	Health & Wellbeing across Learning	Taught Writing		Review and refresh Sciences Technologies