

Bellsquarry Primary School and Early Learning and Childcare Setting



PROGRESS REPORT FOR SESSION 2023/24

(Standards & Quality Report)

Bellsquarry Primary School
52 Calder Road
Bellsquarry
Livingston
EH54 9AD



ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

Bellsquarry Primary School and Early Learning Centre (ELC) is a non-denominational school serving the Bellsquarry and Murieston area of Livingston which is part of The James Young High School cluster. Our school roll for session 2023-24 is currently 221 learners, organised over 8 classes, as well as 35 children across the various sessions in the ELC. In addition to the class teachers, there is a Head Teacher who was appointed permanently in December 2021. There is also 1 full time Acting Principal Teacher who line manages ELC & Early Years and 1 part time Acting Principal Teacher who is our Equity and Raising Attainment Lead. We also have an Additional Support Needs teacher and our school benefits from having a teacher dedicated to the delivery of Physical Education, STEM and Health and Food Technology as well as a music specialist who carries out projects and programmes of work with identified groups and individuals. There are currently 4 Pupil Support Workers (PSWs) deployed at various stages across the school to support children with identified learning needs and to support whole school working. Our ELC staffing this year includes 1 Early Years Officer, 4 Early Years Practitioners and 2 Pupil Support Workers across the different sessions. We have an Early Learning and Childcare Area Support Manager (ELCASM) who supports the leadership and development of our ELC, working in partnership with our school senior leadership team (SLT). She also manages the ELC out with school hours and school holiday periods.

Our school benefits from a supportive and proactive Parent Teacher Action Group (PTAG) which is extremely enthusiastic and committed to improving the work and life of the school as well as organising fundraising events throughout the school year. We actively encourage parents and carers to be part of their child's learning at Bellsquarry as well as contributing to developments. We hold regular family learning events as well as class assemblies, showcases, meet the teacher sessions and formal parent consultation meetings. We regularly share our learning and information through our school Twitter page, school website and monthly newsletters as well as via Seesaw for P1-3 parents. The school and ELC have an open-door policy and welcome feedback from our parents.

At Bellsquarry Primary School and ELC we provide rich learning opportunities to enable our learners to develop holistically through our strong values programme, literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and learning across the curriculum in creative ways to provoke thought and encourage curiosity. We have a diverse school community with children and families from a range of backgrounds, cultures and heritages with various spoken languages, religions, and beliefs. Through our work on the UNCRC we celebrate diversity and work to ensure that children's rights and beliefs are valued and respected. We actively engage in our community and, now that restrictions have eased, we are able to make good use of our woodland surroundings. We work with groups such as the Woodland Trust, Scottish Book Trust and Active Schools, as well as local sports instructors to enhance our curriculum and learning experiences. We seek further opportunities to enhance our curriculum by using our unique local context and partnerships in the local community.

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 2023/24, what the impact has been and what our next steps will be to continue to address these priorities in session 2024/25.

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. Our self-evaluation gradings for 2.3 and 3.2 for both the school and ELC were validated during our Validated Self Evaluation which took place in February 2024.

PRIORITY	HOW DID WE DO?
<p>1. To raise attainment, especially in literacy and numeracy</p> <p>Our measurable outcomes for session 2023/24 were</p> <p>Children across the school will have increased opportunities to develop and apply their meta skills.</p> <p>Attainment levels in writing will increase overall across the school from prior levels of attainment.</p> <p>Learning experiences and play pedagogy will be improved in Primary 1.</p> <p>An increased number of children in Primary 1 will be developing literacy skills with appropriate, pace, challenge and support.</p> <p>NIF Driver(s):</p> <p><input checked="" 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>We have made good progress.</p> <p>What did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We developed consistent approaches to planning across the curriculum to ensure appropriate pace and progression. • We delivered training in teaching of writing using PM writing and WL Genre targets with a focus on opportunities to improve core literacy skills e.g. spelling, punctuation & grammar. • P1 staff worked with Literacy Pedagogy officer to enhance our literacy strategy in the early years including the introduction of Literacy hour. • We reviewed the use of assessments to inform next steps. POLAAR assessments were introduced to track progress with the ability to recognise sounds, blend sounds and read common words. • New numeracy assessments for identified children were introduced to measure progress at key points in the year. • Early Level staff carried out best practice visits to view early level play environments and observe play pedagogy in action. • We developed opportunities for the ELC and P1 team to work together to enhance play experiences across the Early Level. • Numeracy and literacy audit was carried out and children were consulted children on use of their learning environment. Consultative planning walls are in place to ensure learner voice is at the centre of planning at the early level. • We developed opportunities to increase pace and challenge in reading for identified children at second level. • Enhanced Quality Assurance procedures were introduced to monitor and support teachers in use of learning intentions and success criteria. <p>Evidence indicates the impact is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Most staff share learning intentions and success criteria with learners across the curriculum. ❖ Almost all learners in P1 can identify all single sounds and digraphs taught. ❖ Through learner conversations, almost all learners could discuss how they learn in writing and what their next steps are through the use of the WL core and genre targets. ❖ Almost all staff are more confident in delivering writing lessons, using PM Writing and WL targets to support them. ❖ At our recent VSE, it was highlighted that most learners are making good progress from previous levels of attainment.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum and Assessment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ In all classes, writing attainment levels have either been maintained or have increased. At 'Achievement of a Level' stages (P1, P4 and P7) most learners are achieving national expectations in writing with an average of over 16% of these pupils exceeding expectations. ❖ In reading, almost all children across the school are on track to achieve national Curriculum for Excellence expectations with almost 15% of pupils across the school exceeding expectations.
<p style="text-align: center;">ELC</p> <p>All children will receive access to an environment and planned opportunities that promote the development of vocabulary and communication with a particular focus on singing and rhyme.</p> <p>To raise attainment in numeracy for all learners with a focus on subitising.</p>	<p>We have made good progress.</p> <p>What did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word Boost was introduced to the setting, and we trained most practitioners in using this resource. This is shared widely with families. • We continued to embed varied opportunities for children to sing and explore rhyme and syllables. We introduced Rhyme of the Week to provide further opportunities to develop their knowledge of rhyme. • All staff have engaged with CLPL, as part of their distributive leadership roles to ensure their understanding and knowledge of current practices are up to date and relevant. • Numeracy Lead audited Numeracy and Maths resources and planned and provided increased opportunities for children to learn about 2D and 3D shapes. • Numeracy Lead planned and implemented opportunities to support subitising. • We have developed our approaches to planning and attended a professional learning session to further enhance our practice in this area. <p>Evidence indicates the impact is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Almost all preschool children can understand and use an increasing vocabulary. ❖ Word Boost assessments show an increase in vocabulary for almost all children. ❖ Most preschool children can listen and identify words that rhyme. ❖ Most preschool children can talk about the properties of 2D and 3D shapes in the World around them. ❖ The majority of preschool children can recognise (subitise) a small number of objects without counting. ❖ Feedback from our latest VSE shows that the planning approaches are being used well to meet children's learning needs.

<p>2. To close the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children</p> <p>Our measurable outcome for session 2023/24 was ...</p> <p>Identified learners will be supported to achieve national expectations through well planned targeted support.</p> <p>NIF Driver(s):</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School and ELC Improvement.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School and ELC Leadership</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism</p> <p><input 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"> • We strengthened tracking and monitoring of literacy and numeracy to secure improved outcomes for almost all learners. • All staff worked closely with SLT to develop and evaluate termly targeted support plans. • We introduced reading buddies to improve confidence in reading and allow for further opportunities to develop reading with prosody. • We used formative and summative assessments to inform improvements in learning and teaching of literacy. NGRT and PM Benchmark assessments were used to measure the impact of PEF interventions. • We introduced Rhythm & Rhyme sessions with our music teacher to develop phonemic awareness in the Early Years. <p>Evidence indicates that the use of Pupil Equity Funding has had the following impact on learners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ All Q1 learners are on track for numeracy and literacy. ❖ Most teachers are confident in developing strategies to support and challenge targeted individuals. ❖ All PEF reading interventions were achieved - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The two identified P3 pupils increased their PM reading levels by 2 levels ○ An identified Q1 learner in the upper school is now on track for reading and has increased their assessment age by 6 months. ❖ Almost all learners in P1 can identify rhyming words. ❖ Within the targeted group, all most all pupils self-reporting ratings have improved.
<p>ELC</p> <p>Continue to monitor and regularly evaluate children’s progression across the curriculum to improve and develop children’s achievements and learning in the ELC.</p>	<p>We have made good progress.</p> <p>What did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff have increased their understanding of how to write personal plans through moderation activities. • Excellence and equity meetings held termly to moderate and evaluate trackers and identify strengths and gaps in learning. SLT supports all staff in evaluating trackers. <p>Evidence indicates the impact is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ All support plans have SMART targets for children. ❖ Some staff have reported increased confidence in understanding and using trackers to measure data accurately.
<p>3.To improve children and young people’s health & wellbeing</p>	<p>We have made good progress.</p> <p>What did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Forest Schools framework was created, followed and sessions carried out

Our measurable outcomes for session 2023/24 were ...

Children will have more opportunities to celebrate their skills and achievements.

Our diverse learning community will be recognised and celebrated through our curriculum.

Children's rights and beliefs are valued and respected.

Children will develop confidence and feel that their achievements are valued and celebrated.

NIF Driver(s):

School and ELC Improvement.

School and ELC Leadership

Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism

Parental Engagement

Curriculum and Assessment

Performance Information

throughout the year for our P6 year group.

- We achieved our Rights Respecting Schools Rights respecting schools silver award.
- Peer mediators were trained and introduced as a result of feedback from pupils about inclusion and support. A group of P6 pupils have completed Peer Mediation training and are now offering daily mediation sessions for all pupils to access during break and lunch times.
- We have consulted our families about diversity, connections to different countries and religious beliefs. A calendar of cultural and religious festivals was created to ensure children's rights and beliefs are valued and respected.
- New planning documents were created to replace the current RME planning documents. They are based on the Experiences, Outcomes and Benchmarks across Early-Second Level to ensure a broad and balanced RME curriculum.
- We adapted Health week and created Wellbeing week which had a mental health focus.
- We built in Building Resilience themed collaboration assemblies to ensure a consistent approach across the school.
- We began tracking pupil achievements and introduced our monthly 'Latest and Greatest' skills achievement sharing opportunity. (skills & knowledge learned e.g. wider achievement, masterclasses).
- Through pupil leadership opportunities, we ensured that pupils had opportunities to share their views and know that their views have been taken seriously.

Evidence indicates the impact is:

- ❖ Within the targeted group, almost all pupils self-reporting ratings have improved.
- ❖ Peer mediators carry out restorative conversations using the language of rights.
- ❖ Children are very aware of the wide range of their rights.
- ❖ There is a strategic overview in place to ensure that children's rights are developed and embedded across the school. These are made more explicit through the vision values and aims.
- ❖ Teachers are linking their rights naturally and discretely across the curriculum.
- ❖ Parents are aware of our culture of respecting rights.
- ❖ At our recent VSE, it was highlighted that across the school almost all children listen well to staff and contribute positively during lessons. They show confidence in themselves and can work well individually, in pairs or small groups.

In the Pupil Ethos Survey (P5-7):

- Almost all children feel they have a trusted adult in school they can speak to if they are worried or upset about something.
- Most children agree that they have opportunities to learn about their rights and that these are promoted and protected at school.
- The majority of P5 & P7 pupils almost all P6 pupils report that the school helps them to feel more confident.

In the Parent Ethos Survey (P1-7):

- Almost all parents agree that that their children have opportunities to learn about their rights and that these are promoted and protected at school.
- Almost all parents agree that staff who their child as an individual and support them well.
- Almost all P1-P7 parents agree that the school helps their child to be more confident.

<p>ELC</p> <p>All children will feel better supported to reach their full potential through consistent approaches and links between home and nursery.</p> <p>All stakeholders will have an understanding of UNCRC and the Rights of the Child.</p>	<p>We have made good progress.</p> <p>What did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All practitioners demonstrate a strong commitment to children’s rights and prioritise children’s wellbeing. • We used the self-evaluation toolkit to assess our progress and identify next steps for the setting. Our UNCRC leader attended Early Years Bitesize sessions and used what they learned to further embed the UNCRC into the setting, e.g. through hosting a family UNCRC afternoon. • We continued to embed the SHANNARI Wellbeing Indicators throughout the setting, supported by Wellbeing Characters and The Colour Monster wellbeing check ins. <p>Evidence indicates the impact is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Almost all families in attendance at the UNCRC afternoon reported an increase in their understanding of the Rights of the Child. ❖ Observations by SLT show that all staff are confident in using language linked to the Wellbeing Indicators throughout interactions with children. ❖ Evidence from our latest VSE shows that environment is very positive, calm and nurturing, and warm and encouraging relationships can be observed throughout.
<p>4.To improve employability skills, and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people</p> <p>Our measurable outcome for session 2023/24 was...</p> <p>Learners will have increased opportunities for personalisation and choice in our curriculum offer.</p> <p>Children will have opportunities to develop and assess their acquisition of meta skills.</p> <p>NIF Driver(s):</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>We have made very good progress.</p> <p>What did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff carried out research about our catchment area, our community and our unique context to identify strengths and areas of our curriculum to be further developed. • Staff worked in School Improvement Plan groups matched to the four capacities to consider how our curriculum could be developed to strengthen the four capacities. • Pupils are involved in their own learning using consultative planning approaches to promote personalisation and choice at every level. • Staff took part in Project Based Learning (PBL) training across the cluster to improve learner experiences and pupil autonomy. • Based on article 13 children lead their own learning, access and share information in their own way through Project 13. • We introduced our masterclasses to improve personalisation and choice and develop meta skills and skills for learning, life and work in meaningful contexts including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ First Aid ➤ Responsible Pet Ownership ➤ Typing Skills ➤ Coding ➤ DNA & Genetics ➤ All About Languages ➤ Hair Care ➤ Origami ➤ Strategy Games ➤ Sewing and Weaving ➤ All About Reptiles ➤ Den Building ➤ Sport & Meditation ➤ Art Skills

<p>☒ Parental Engagement</p> <p>☒ Curriculum and Assessment</p> <p>☒ Performance Information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sowing and Growing ➤ Scrapbooking ➤ Dance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have developed new partnerships with parents, volunteers and local businesses E.g. The Larder, Bike Library, Nimbus Engineering, Local Veterinary surgery etc. to enhance our curriculum offer and to develop skills for learning, life and work. <p>Evidence indicates the impact is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Through observation in our recent VSE, most children were reported to have the highest levels of engagement during Masterclasses and Interdisciplinary Learning opportunities. ❖ Through learning conversations, the children feel they have more choice over what they learn since the introduction of Masterclasses and Project Based Learning. ❖ Of the pupils surveyed (P5-7), children have a good understanding of what play is and the play they have experienced in their classroom. They link this primarily to free time and without teacher led instruction. ❖ Learners at each stage can talk about their 'driving questions' and demonstrate curiosity and exploration through Project Based Learning.
<p>ELC</p> <p>All children will receive increased opportunities to access digital technologies to enhance and enrich learning experiences, as well as capture own learning.</p> <p>To continue to promote children's curiosity and enquiry through STEM activities and outdoor learning.</p> <p>In the context of ELC refer to the benefits of quality learning opportunities indoors and out.</p> <p>Dispositions to learning.</p> <p>Community links</p> <p>Skills for life/ skills for work</p> <p>Developing aspirational families and children</p> <p>Working with schools and colleges to develop employability skills in ELC workforce in line with 1140 expansion.</p>	<p>We have made good progress.</p> <p>What did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STEM Lead developed a range of QR codes linked to online games and stories. • We continued to use Seesaw as the online platform for sharing our learning and wider achievements across the ELC and home. • All children are empowered to make their own snack, learning about risk assessing, infection prevention and increasing their independence, skills for life and work. • We continued to plan and provide a range of quality learning opportunities for all children, with a particular focus in Literacy and Numeracy. • All children have been involved in various opportunities to litter pick in the local community. <p>Evidence indicates the impact is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Most practitioners use digital technology as a tool to support and extend children's learning. Most children use iPads to take photographs to add to their learning profiles, using Seesaw. ❖ Evidence from our latest VSE shows that almost all children display independence skills, particularly throughout their play. ❖ Observations of children and interactions show that the environment indoors and out supports children in developing their literacy and numeracy skills.

- Most learners have an attendance rate of over 90%
- The average attendance rate for 2023-24 was 94.17% which is an increase compared to last session.
- There were no exclusions this session.

Parental & Stakeholders Engagement

We continue to have very good links with other stakeholders such as Educational Psychologist, Inclusion and Wellbeing Service, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapy, Hearing Impairment teacher as well as a counsellor from Wellbeing Scotland to improve outcomes for our learners and families.

The refresh of our vision, values and aims allowed us to gather the views of all parents/carers and stakeholders to ensure that their views were captured and central to our key aims. Parent/Carer engagement continues to be a key strength of school improvement in Bellsquarry Primary School. There are a variety of ways parents/carers can be involved in shaping our improvements. The school works in close partnership with the Parent Teacher Action Group to discuss improvements, seek input and share progress towards achieving actions and intended outcomes. Parents have also been involved in developing our curriculum by getting involved in Bikeability sessions and by working in partnership in our Food Bank project. Our HWB Family Champion has allowed a further link between school and the parent body, ensuring consultation, sharing information and seeking views from parents.

Opinions are sought from all parents and other stakeholders throughout the academic session through Microsoft Forms as well as through discussion and Parent Focus Groups. Information and feedback is shared with parents at our PTAG meetings where teacher representatives attend to provide updates about their area of curriculum development as well as in school newsletters. Parents have commented on their appreciation that parents are being given opportunities to be involved as partners in the work of the school and its developments in a meaningful way.

Our Wider Achievements this year have been:

- We achieved our Silver Rights Respecting Schools Award
- We achieved our Cycle Friendly School award
- We achieved our Bronze level Reading Schools Accreditation
- We participated in the 'If you were an engineer...' project and a number of our children's ideas were shortlisted.
- Our new P7s have been trained up as Sports Leaders by Active Schools Coordinator to support pupils in the playground and other events.
- Children across the school benefitted from science workshops: Spacetacular universe & Plasma ball workshop.
- Children across the school benefitted from the M & M productions Cinderella around Book Week.
- P5 attended Lockerbie Manor camp
- P7 attending Kingswood camp
- Book Week activities: Book Swap, Book Lunch
- Cost of the School Day Fruit Pop Up Tuck Shop run by pupils.
- P5 took part in the Climate Smarter project.
- P6 pupils attended a West Lothian Cross Country Event – One of our pupils then went on to achieve Gold in an 80m race and Silver in the 600m.
- P6 benefitted from our Forest Schools Programme
- P6 Bikeability Sessions supported by West Lothian Bike Library
- Primary 7 and Primary 1 buddy sessions.
- Primary 7 – Burns Supper
- Sports Festivals through Xcite/Active Schools

- We celebrated Languages week with each class being allocated or choosing their own country to research and learn simple phrase.
- After school clubs:
 - Multi-sports Club
 - Young Engineers Club
 - Football Club
 - Glee
 - Drama
 - Track & Field Athletics
 - STEM
 - Homework Club
 - Astro Gymnastics
 - Film Club
- Our children attended the following school trips:
 - Primary 1 – Hopetoun House
 - Primary 2/1 – Almond Valley Heritage Centre
 - Primary 3/2 - Glasgow Science Centre – Under the Sea
 - Primary 3 – Five Sister’s Zoo
 - Primary 4 – Glasgow Science Centre
 - Primary 5 - Glasgow Science Centre
 - Primary 6 – Skiing, Edinburgh
 - Primary 7 – Risk Factory, Edinburgh, Canoeing & Team Building, Linlithgow

How good is our school? 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	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	Very Good
3.2 Securing children’s progress	Good

+Delete if not relevant

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