

Standards & Quality Report

2013 / 2014



Skene School

Skene

Westhill

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COUNCIL



The School in Context

Skene School is situated in an attractive, rural location half a mile west of the village of Kirkton of Skene and just one and a half miles from Westhill. The view from the school is of the Loch of Skene with the Tower Lodges of Dunecht Estate in the background. These towers are featured in our school logo and on our school badge. The school is non-denominational and the catchment area is the village of Kirkton of Skene, Roadside of Garlogie and the surrounding area including parts of the new housing developments in Elrick and Westhill. The school's current roll is 47 in total, and is ever-increasing due to the continued house-building in our catchment area. Skene School provides education for children aged 5 –12 i.e. from P1 – P7. The 2014-2015 session sees us rising from 2 to 3 classes. The head teacher is class committed, and teaches one day per week in the P1/2 class, and one day in the P2/3/4 class. There is also a P5/6/7 class currently taught in the relocatable unit. We share an Additional Support Needs teacher with Elrick School. Westhill Schools Cluster also employs an Intervention and Prevention Teacher, and a Pupil Support worker whose services are available to Skene pupils. The school works closely with a range of other support agencies in order to provide the best possible experience for all children.

Skene School Council of parents provides invaluable support to the school, raising money for learning activities and school trips, and helping out at school events and in class lessons. School council members run the school netball and football clubs after school. Extra-curricular activities for Skene School children are also available at the Milne Hall in Kirkton of Skene, including playgroup and pre-school provision and a youth club, or in Westhill at the various community centres and sporting venues. Active Schools provide activities for all 4 primary schools at different locations in the area.

All in all we have a strong community working together to achieve our school vision, values and aims.

Vision, Values and Aims

At Skene School, our motto, which has been written by the children, is:

Working Together, Learning Together, To Be The Best We Can Be

Our Vision

- ✓ An inclusive school where everyone feels valued and able to participate in the life and work of the school.
- ✓ A safe, stimulating, fun learning environment where individuals are supported and challenged to achieve their full potential.
- ✓ A place where all children are encouraged to become confident individuals, responsible citizens, successful learners and effective contributors.
- ✓ A learning community which promotes self-evaluation at all levels, leading to continual improvement.
- ✓ An ethos which promotes mutual respect and partnership working within the school and the wider community.

Our Values

At Skene School we value:
Health and well being
Respect and tolerance
Independence and teamwork
Honesty and fairness
Effort and achievement
Positivity and enthusiasm
Responsible attitudes and behaviour
Self-evaluation leading to improvement

Our Aims

At Skene School we aim to:

- ✓ provide a broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum for all children;
- ✓ offer the best possible learning opportunities and experiences we can to meet the needs of pupils, both indoors and out;
- ✓ set and expect high standards of behaviour and effort to encourage all children to realise their potential;
- ✓ make effective use of a range of teaching and assessment strategies and resources to meet children's needs and inform next steps in learning;
- ✓ create a safe, supportive environment where each child feels valued and able to develop positive thoughts about themselves and their abilities;
- ✓ encourage in pupils, parents and staff a sense of identity and pride in the school to promote partnership and team working across a range of school activities;
- ✓ ensure continual improvement at all levels through a collegiate approach to the processes of self evaluation and planning for improvement;
- ✓ ensure that health and safety procedures and practices are followed and reviewed regularly.

IMPROVEMENT PLAN PRIORITIES FOR 2013/2014

Key Development	Progress during year/year
Assessment and Moderation	<p>Progress made in use of different assessments: HAM, TJ, year-entry maths check-up, bi-annual spelling assessment P3-P7 Aug/Feb.</p> <p>Progress made in pupil moderation – use of reflective dialogue, eprofiling etc.</p> <p>Learning Visits between teachers/classes successful and to continue.</p> <p>This area to remain on Improvement Plan 2014/2015 due to major staff changes.</p>
Rights Respecting School Award	<p>Achieved targets from 2013-2014 – very successful. UNICEF RRSA Record of Commitment awarded June 2014. Continue to develop scheme, working towards RRSA Level 1. Work on embedding sense of responsibility along with rights, particularly with regard to behaviour.</p> <p>Complete travel plan – Claire Simpson to get some time out of class to put this together after working on it throughout the year with the Pupil Council.</p> <p>Develop playground initiatives – grants applied for from Joanna Stewart, signs requested from Property.</p> <p>Pupil Council to work with Parent Council on bid for playground equipment, raising funds and application from lottery fund – suggestions from parent feedback boredom in playground could be one reason for poor behaviour levels.</p>
Active Literacy	<p>Achieved targets from 2013 – 2014 – again very successful, but remaining priority due to major staff changes. All session 2013/14 teachers trained in Active Literacy Phonics, Reading and Writing, appropriate to their stage. Phonics/spelling and reading strategies well underway throughout the school, showing improvement in attainment particularly in phonics and spelling. Also a marked improvement in children's attitudes to and confidence in spelling.</p> <p>Giglets online reading scheme piloted by P4-7 – children enjoyed it and the majority produced better results than with traditional books alone.</p> <p>Well-attended, successful Active Literacy Information evening for parents with great feedback.</p>
Planning for Learning	<p>New forward planning formats were introduced and trialled throughout the year. Plans updated and programmes of work produced for language and maths. Chosen formats to be used from August 2014.</p>

SUMMARY OF IMPROVEMENT PLAN PRIORITIES FOR 2014/2015

Assessment, Moderation and Self-Evaluation

- Training in assessment of writing using Big Writing resources
- Moderation of writing within Skene and Westhill Cluster
- eProfile system redeveloped
- Setting up of regular self-evaluation with Parent Council

Active Literacy and Writing

- Continuing to improve learning and teaching in literacy
- Raise attainment in writing
- Staff training to continue in all areas of literacy
- Moderation of standards in writing

Outdoor Learning

- Staff training
- Development of outdoor area and eco policy
- Development of child-centred outdoor learning planning
- Improvement and organisation of resources

In addition, we have prioritised Mental Maths as an area for development within the Westhill Cluster and have set up a working group with representatives from all 5 schools.



In order to self-evaluate and gain a clear picture of what is going on in Skene School, we consider the following evidence:

- Dialogue between children, staff and parents – groups and individuals
- Learners' work – samples from across the school and curriculum
- Recording and tracking of attainment
- Monitoring of classroom practice
- Assessment results from across the curriculum – including written evidence, observed and from teachers' judgements
- Parental questionnaires, both general and after specific events or activities
- ePIPS and INCAS results, and the comparison of these with other schools in our Westhill Cluster group, and across the authority
- Whole school audit using HMle Quality Indicators
- Staff self-evaluation, written and in professional dialogue
- Staff review meetings – PRD using Professional Update, and EARs for non-teaching staff
- Regular and frequent focused dialogue between class teachers, PSAs and head teacher
- Work done with Westhill cluster schools to evaluate and moderate our performance and practice

For reference, the levels awarded are as described by HMle and Education Scotland and are as follows:

<u>Level</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Description</u>
6	Excellent	Outstanding, sector leading
5	Very good	Major strengths
4	Good	Important strengths with some areas for improvement
3	Satisfactory	Strengths just outweigh weaknesses
2	Weak	Important weaknesses
1	Unsatisfactory	Major weaknesses

1. How well do our children learn and achieve?

QI 1.1 Improvements in Performance

Evaluation

Good

QI 2.1 Learners' Experiences

Good

Our key strengths in this area are

- Improvement in attainment in spelling, reading, listening and talking, and maths
- A high level of participation, enjoyment and motivation in lessons
- High standard of outdoor learning/HWB activities in the P1-3 class and science in the P4-7 class, providing excellent opportunities for Inter-Disciplinary Learning
- Co-operative learning approaches embedded and enjoyed by learners, and independent learning opportunities provided
- Teachers who know the children well and communicate with them and their families, following up quickly on any issues
- All children are involved in target and goal setting in some format, and regularly reflect and self-evaluate
- Pupil-centred, flexible planning
- Wide variety of teaching strategies used to ensure all learners fulfil their potential to achieve
- Celebration of success within class, between class and home (learning logs) and throughout school (assemblies, achievement wall, sharing of success between classes)
- Good links with community and business world, and use of these in class work.

We have identified the following as priorities for improvement in this area

- Support and training for new staff in 2014-2015 session, particularly in Active Literacy and Co-operative Learning
- Further development of science and outdoor learning activities to provide consistency throughout the school
- Moderation of assessment in writing
- Development of new eprofiling system when new Glow format up and running in Oct/Nov to make the most of good work done in P4-7 this session

2. How well does our school support children to develop and learn?

QI 5.1 The Curriculum

Evaluation

Very Good

QI 5.3 Meeting Learning Needs

Good

Our key strengths in this area are

- Clear spread of expectations and outcomes to develop the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence
- Staff developed/applied programmes of work in language and maths to ensure breadth, depth and challenge
- Wide range of IDL topics which change every year depending on learners' needs and interests, community links and current affairs
- Variety of enterprise projects, both as separate classes and as a whole school/community
- Up-to-date curricular resources to support high quality teaching, including good use of class set of iPads
- Good transition links with playgroup (local pre-school provider) and Westhill Academy
- Close working relationships between PSAs, Support for Learning, Educational Psychologist and class teachers
- Effective use of standardised assessment (ePIPS and INCAS) to track progress and identify areas of need
- Active Literacy information evenings for all parents.

We have identified the following as priorities for improvement in this area

- Training of new staff in Active Literacy and other curricular areas
- Staff training in, and development and moderation of, Big Writing
- Continue to develop programmes of work – Exp Arts and PE
- Develop Third Level maths programme and resources
- Familiarisation with ICT outcomes using new Learning Through Technology pack
- Development of Outdoor Learning sustainable to curriculum.

3. How does our school improve the quality of its work?

QI 5.9 Improvement Through Self Evaluation

Evaluation

Good

Our key strengths in this area are

- Staff self-evaluate using Quality Indicators at least weekly through professional dialogue, and termly in a written format.
- Parents are asked to evaluate after each school event, at transition points in their child's education, and in an end of year How Good Is Our School audit questionnaire
- Staff conduct termly learning visits to evaluate, moderate and support, and for their own professional development
- Annual PRD and EAR meetings between all staff and the HT enable everyone to identify areas of strength and also any training needs
- Leadership is evident throughout the school. All teaching staff take an active role in the development of school improvement priorities, and are supported in this by non-teaching staff.
- Learners are able to evaluate both their own learning, and elements of lessons/teaching strategies, activities or contexts for learning
- Self-evaluation is seen as an important and useful part of everyone's role - the school and wider school community recognise that feedback is always welcomed and acted upon wherever possible/appropriate.

We have identified the following as priorities for improvement in this area

- Greater involvement of the School Parent Council – one core QI question for discussion to be added to the agenda of each meeting
- Suggestion Box to be added at reception to encourage ideas/sharing of opinions from whole school community
- Prioritise learning visits for new staff 2014-2015 session
- Moderation of learning and teaching of mental maths between all Westhill schools
- Compilation of assessed pieces of work from Westhill primaries to aid self-evaluation in teaching of writing.

4. How do we ensure equality and inclusion and promote diversity across the school?

Our key strengths in this area are

- We have a whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour and sanctions and consequences are consistent throughout the school, having been developed and agreed on by all children at assemblies, and parents at a Parent Council meeting.
- All staff are aware of the needs of individual pupils and the current strategies being used to support them.
- Everyone in our school community is treated with fairness and respect and knows how much we value positivity and supporting working relationships.
- Early intervention is a priority and when pupils are identified who may require support, steps are taken quickly to put these in place, making use of good working relationships with other agencies involved in the GIRFEC process.
- Our Pupil Support Worker works closely with vulnerable pupils and their families, and this year ran a lunch-time club to encourage teamwork and cohesiveness amongst older pupils
- Parents are very happy with accessibility and communication within the school, making it easy for them to discuss any needs they or their child may have with teaching or non-teaching staff
- Global Citizenship has been a focus this year as we have worked towards our Rights Respecting School Record of Commitment, and therefore engaging in the promotion of diversity has been key and shown in participation in events such as the Backpack Project, Comic Relief, Children in Need etc
- Our RME curriculum celebrates cultural diversity and promotes understanding of and respect for other beliefs and customs.

We have identified the following as priorities for improvement in this area

- Further development of programme of work for RME
- Continued work on the Rights Respecting School initiative
- A refresh of the Jenny Mosely behaviour strategies for all staff, particularly new members who did not receive last session's training.

At Skene School this session...

- we gained our UNICEF Rights Respecting School Record of Commitment
- the Eco Group collected around 30 backpacks for the Mary's Meals Backpack Project
- the Netball Team trained every week and had a fantastic time competing against other schools at home and around Aberdeenshire
- P5, P6 and P7 competed against other Westhill schools in Rotary Club general knowledge, Young Speaker and Young Photographer competitions
- Skene School Swimming Teams took part in Westhill Take The Plunge!
- Kirkton of Skene community enjoyed our choir in Carols by Candlelight
- P4, P5, P6 and P7 took part in a joint Westhill choir on stage at Aberdeen Music Hall in Around the World in Music
- children in P3,4,5 and 6 took part in Chess Club and the Westhill Chess Competition
- P4/5/6/7 had a week-long "Victorian Experience"
- hosted an Easter Treasure hunt for Kirkton of Skene Playgroup
- enjoyed a spooky Halloween Disco and Pumpkin competition run by the Parent Council
- danced, recited poetry and played musical instruments at our Skene Burns Supper and Ceilidh, enjoyed by the whole community, run by the Parent Council, and raised lots of money for the school
- P1/2/3 took part in a record-breaking around-the-world live cookalong with Jamie Oliver on Food Revolution Day
- visited Techfest, Satrosphere, Aberdeen University Library, Tesco's Farm to Fork, and His Majesty's Theatre
- our one P7 joined Westhill Primary on a week-long residential activities week
- our Fairtrade Group ran a Fairtrade picnic for the whole school and the new P1s and all the families
- the Rights Respecting School group organised our UNICEF Day for Change which the whole school took part in
- the P4/5/6/7 class worked on science and technology with Wood Group, built a kit car and took part in the Green Goblin Car event day, and won Best Portfolio
- had a fantastic Sports and Fun Day run by the Parent Council, raising over £500 for the school
- P1/2/3 organised, set up and ran a Toast Party for the rest of the school, raising money for an end-of-term treat
- P4/5/6/7 planned and held a very successful Scottish Gift Shop and Café and used funds raised to pay for a class trip.

What a busy, successful year! Thanks to everyone who contributed. Please see "Newsletters" on the school website for all our photos.