



**Balmedie School**  
**Standards & Quality Report**  
**2019 - 2020**  
**&**  
**School Improvement Planning**  
**2020 – 2021**

## Balmedie School Forward

We are pleased to present both our **Standards and Quality Report for Session 2019-2020** and our **School Improvement plan for the current session 2020-2021**. This report forms part of our quality improvement framework and provides important information regarding our schools' progress to date and identifies our next steps in school improvement.

**Self-Evaluation for Self-Improvement** is at the heart of our practice in Balmedie school.

**How are we doing?**

**How do we know?**

**What are we going to do now?**

We continue to develop our practice in making robust use of evidence as a basis for judgements regarding the impact of our work on our learners.

In doing so, we reflect on how we are doing, seek evidence to support our judgements and consider valuable, achievable next steps.

The significant relationship between effective self-evaluations and school improvement is also seen as taking an 'inwards, outwards and forwards' approach:

**Looking inwards** to analyse our work

**Looking outwards to** find out more about what is working well for others locally and nationally

**Looking forwards** to gauge what continuous improvement might look like in the longer term

At Balmedie School we continue to be committed to working closely with our community and all other stakeholders that support the education we provide. Together we are working hard to ensure all our pupils get the best possible start in life and are enabled and encouraged to maximise their potential.

We realise that within education things never stand still or stay the same. We continue to strive to meet the changes and challenges – more especially, given the COVID19 pandemic and the impact that this will have not just on school life but in everyone's lives.

Through this document we hope that you will get a sense of our developments, successes and areas for further growth.



Dougie Ford

**Head Teacher**

## The School and its context

### Vision for the school

Balmedie School is a happy, safe, inclusive and engaging environment. We aim to deliver high quality learning and teaching experiences including taking advantage of our unique outdoor environment. In partnership with pupils, parents/carers and the local community we encourage children to develop the knowledge, skills, confidence and values they will need to succeed in the modern world.

### Values that underpin our work

Balmedie School promotes a positive ethos with shared values across the school and community to aspire to be 'Incredible Balmedie'. Children are encouraged to develop their understanding of the 8 areas of Wellbeing (Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included) and are provided with opportunities/experiences to promote respect/tolerance of themselves and others in our local/wider community.

### What do we aim to achieve for our children/pupils?

Children are encouraged to contribute to the life and work of the school through pupil groups, house system and interdisciplinary learning. We celebrate a range of achievements both in the school and beyond. We encourage children to build motivation, resilience and confidence.

We aim to Get it Right for Every Child by working in partnership with staff, children, parents/carers, other agencies and our local, national and global community to deliver learning in an active, engaging and relevant way.

### Context

**Balmedie School** is a non-denominational school with a role of approximately 400 children in the main school and caters for up to 128 places in Balmedie Nursery and 24 places in Potterton Nursery annexe. The school serves Balmedie, Potterton, Belhelvie, Whitecairns and the surrounding rural area.

Pupil groups contribute significantly to school life at Balmedie School. For example, we have renewed and earned our Eco Flag, continues to raise money and awareness for various charities and organisations and have enabled progress to be made as part of school improvement priority targets. As we begin session 2020-21 there will be a focus on pupils driving change through the House Captains, Friendshippers/Buddies groups, Eco group, Health & Wellbeing group, Citizenship group and Charities group supporting our school development (and wider projects).

Effective partnership working is considered a key strength at Balmedie School. We have an elected Parent Group (Friends of Balmedie - FOBs) who have worked in partnership with the school range of school developments and fundraising projects.

The school has well established partnerships with Child Smile (Nursery), local minister Paul McKeown, The Sand Bothy (outdoor learning links), local business (the Co-op), local library

service (community and eco links), Reading Dogs (resilience support), Intervention and Prevention Teacher, Aberlour and Rainbow Rogues (pupil and family support through local resource partnership within our Ellon Cluster and Aberdeenshire area).

These partnerships have enriched curricular experiences and support class teachers to deliver learner entitlements within the Scottish Governments programme to meet the needs of learners and develop skills for life, learning and work.

Each year data outlining Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACL) for Primary 1, Primary 4 and Primary 7 are submitted to the Scottish Government. As of March 2020 most children were on track (P1, P4 and P7) to achieve CfE levels in Listening and Talking, Reading, Writing and Numeracy as expected.

### **The Overall Strengths of Our School**

- Balmedie School is a nurturing school – all pupils are looked at as individuals and programmes of support are put in place to ensure the best possible learning opportunities are provided.
- Our school has positive and expanding means of communication with our parent community. More regular opportunities are being developed through our school blog to ensure parents/carers to have their say on the development of the school and all views and opinions are listened to. #wearebalmedie
- Our Early Years Educations offers a play-based curriculum. The planned approach used by our Early Years Staff is robust and allows for children to use their imagination and play related skills to develop their learning journey.
- The Senior Leadership Team is pro-active in their approach and supports all staff with the implementation of new initiatives to move the school forward in a positive direction. Planning formats continue to be developed through shared staff agreements. Staff are encouraged to lead individual projects throughout the school to improve their leadership skills.
- The Senior Leadership Team use data progress tracking and monitoring/teacher judgement to inform next steps as well as identify trends/patterns across the school.
- Pupil support is based on the ongoing need of the pupils/families and is reviewed termly during attainment meetings (and GIRFEC/partnership review meetings). Continuing development of support plans and growth of support partnerships ensures that support is identified and accessible - both on an individual and on a universal support basis.
- Pupil groups have been consistent and continue to contribute towards the positive ethos of our school. There is a growing pupil voice for improving our school and an emerging approach to developing young leaders of learning via pupil representation groups, collaboration opportunities and leadership roles.

### **Pupil Equity Funding (PEF)**

Our PEF allocation for session 2019-2020 was approximately £20,000. This was used to target supporting the gap to improve levels of pupil support, increase levels of quality participation and engagement in learning. Part of this funding was also used to support poverty proofing and respond to implications of the COVID pandemic.

## Impact of our school developments

In this section we will outline the Targets we set last session and identify the progress we have made during session 2019-2020.

These areas indicate where a suspension and postponement of developments were made due to COVID.

Key priority 2019-2020	Key actions undertaken	Impact (achieved throughout 2019-2020)
Continue to embed benchmarks into approaches to curricular planning, learning, teaching and assessment (stage approaches)	<p>Stage and collegiate staff sessions to provide improved approaches to planning and progression planning across each stage level.</p> <p>Curriculum review/development time, moderation and stage agreement development activities.</p> <p>CLPL opportunities and INSET opportunities to further develop Learning and Teaching methodology.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More consistent planning for coverage of E's &amp; O's across each stage</li> <li>• Improved planning for learning</li> <li>• Pupil are experiencing a broader range of activities that meet the requirements of CfE</li> </ul>
<p>Use Benchmarks as basis for monitoring and tracking attainment and achievement</p> <p><i>(include SNSA snapshots, tracking and monitoring meetings and professional judgement)</i></p>	<p>Increased use of data to ensure accuracy of attainment predictions. Additional collegiate and stage development sessions to support this work.</p> <p><b>Termly tracking and monitoring meetings to monitor progress, supports and next steps (2 terms completed then COVID impacted but development continued where practical).</b></p> <p>Ongoing stage summaries provided by SLT to teaching staff to highlight trends over time and support next steps planning. Ongoing feedback of pupil engagement throughout the online learning period and further identification of support needs (use of data to inform school recovery, planning and funding).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring system is robust and informs planning of next steps in learning and further considerations of support needs</li> <li>• Tracking of progress and achievement is more robust</li> <li>• Teachers and SLT have an improved understanding of pupil progress throughout the school year and can identify common areas of learning which requires further support or reinforcement (and address in volunteered working groups)</li> <li>• <b>Increasing opportunities for sharing &amp; celebrating achievement (needs revisited COVID)</b></li> </ul>
<p>Re-focus current self-evaluation processes</p> <p><i>(school taking part in self-evaluating schools trio pilot)</i></p>	<p>Whole School Development of QA and Self-Evaluation through involvement in the HT trio programme (2.3. Learning and Teaching focus on 4 key development areas);</p> <p>Term 1 - Learning &amp; Engagement (completed)</p> <p>Term 2 - Quality of Teaching (completed)</p> <p><b>Term 3 - Assessment and Moderation (COVID impacted)</b></p> <p><b>Term 4 - Planning, Tracking and Attainment (COVID impacted)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality of learners' experiences is improved through more common self-reflection at staff level</li> <li>• Levels of participation and engagement in learning has increased</li> <li>• Staff working collaboratively with well-established working and stage teams, evidence of distribute leadership within in these teams/roles.</li> <li>• <b>Ready to work with self-evaluating schools trio for wider collaboration on teaching and learning/moderation however this could not be completed due to impacts of COVID (suspended for the moment).</b></li> </ul>

## **How good is our leadership and approach to improvement?**

### **QI 1.3 Leadership of change**

Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community  
Strategic planning for continuous improvement  
Implementing improvement and change

**Relevant NIF priority: All**

**Relevant NIF driver(s): School leadership, Teacher professionalism, School improvement**

**Level of quality for core QI: Good**

**How well are you doing?**

**What's working well for your learners?**

- There is a very positive ethos within Balmedie school. Staff and pupils can articulate the eight wellbeing values which are embedded in our current 'Incredible Balmedie' approach.
- The school strives to engage with the local community to seek their views in a variety of ways to ensure they have opportunities to contribute to school life an improvement.
- Pupil voice used to identify areas of strength and development across the school.
- Continued focus on emerging literacy in the Early Years, developing learner environments and collaborative practice at stage level.
- Staff at Balmedie School know their children and continue to strive to ensure they are supportive and understanding of all families.
- We have developed staff/stage collaborative working groups and partnerships to focus on identified areas within our curriculum – providing opportunities for better learning progression and experiences.
- Tracking and attainment meetings give teaching staff an opportunity to discuss improvements/next steps.
- Using teacher judgements on pupil progress, as well as SNSA results/ACEL reports and assessments we have been able to focus on patterns/trends in order to better support individual learners/groups of children. There are effective mechanisms in place to ensure that all families/carers are consulted in the life and work of the school.
- Staff are effectively involved in contributing to school improvement sessions. Staff are involved in self-evaluation activities and draw on a range of evidence when identifying strengths and next steps.
- Collegiate activities are based upon working towards the school's improvement plan and provide a focus for reflection and discussion on progress made. CPD opportunities are provided for all staff to access and linked to school improvement. A range of approaches are used to gather views and ideas to further improve the school. (Computer based questionnaires, team meetings, individual meetings).
- There are many opportunities for staff to take on distributive leadership roles within Balmedie School (both in curriculum, community and life of the school). Many staff have established roles based upon areas of strength and interest.
- Balmedie school has become involved in a self-improving school partnership (trio) with 2 other schools in Aberdeenshire outwith our local Ellon School Cluster Group. There is a focussed attention on monitoring and evaluating learning and teaching. There have been planned cross school visits to observe practise and provide increasing peer observation opportunities (impacted progress due to COVID).
- Ellon Cluster HTs engage in cluster capacity building activities to support leadership, extend partnerships and drive improvement.

## How do you know?

### What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners?

- Continued identification of children requiring targeted support and interventions in place, measured and evaluated.
- Analysis of attainment and achievement data to inform next steps.
- Looking at what is working well across our curriculum/across stage lead agreements and thread this through future developments.
- SLT are flexible to adapt and support specific areas within the curriculum identified through QA/collegiate activities, SNSA summary data trends over time (identifies areas of literacy/numeracy that require improvement within the P1, P4, P7 stages) and collating from a variety of pupil/parent/staff feedback.
- Increased engagement with professional judgement and stage moderation opportunities have a positive impact on staff planning/self-evaluation process which in turn will allow for improved learning experiences.
- During session 2018-2019 a full review of the vision and values took place. All stakeholders were involved in this. A new motto was developed, and a competition was held with pupils creating a graphic to illustrate our vision and values. The vision and values are referred to in everyday classroom practice.
- Social media and school blog is used effectively to share the learning, keep parents updated and to seek opinion. Newsletters also provide regular opportunities for parents to be informed and involved in the life of the school.
- QA evidence informs next steps. Follow up sessions from tracking and monitoring are conducted with a view to following up developments via building on stage and collegiate activities. There has been a clear focus on approaches to improving approaches to learning and teaching.
- Balmedie has a House Captains group that feeds back ideas on school improvement. They have started early engagement with How good is OUR school (pupil version).
- Teaching staff have a range of leadership opportunities such as outdoor learning, charities, citizenship, eco, health and house captain support amongst many others.
- CPD opportunities are linked to PRD, collegiate activities and overall contribution to impact of SQUIP.
- With two other schools' opportunities have been provided for colleagues to engage in self-evaluation opportunities to share practice as well as engage in VSE activities within each school.

## What are you going to do now?

### What are your improvement priorities in this area?

- Continue to develop meaningful pupil participation/engagement in learning and teaching experiences as well as in the life and work of the school.
- School recovery model will be implemented with a focus on Health and Wellbeing, Literacy and Numeracy.
- Renewed focus and revision on Balmedie's Vision and Aims, linking (where appropriate) to school improvement priorities (and as part of the school recovery plan).
- All staff to be committed to change, resulting in improved outcomes for learners (as part of the school recovery plan).
- All staff to build on school strengths and development areas in line with session 2020-2021 school improvement priorities.
- School will continue to engage with the validated self-evaluation 'school improvement trio partnership' (providing COVID restrictions allow for re-engagement).
- Further development pupil involvement in self-evaluation through the use of 'How Good is OUR School'. Promoting 'learners as leaders' will help develop this ambition through our House Captain forum.

- Focused engagement on 1+2, DYW (skills for learning, life and work through our curriculum delivery) and Learning Technologies/Digital Skills.
- Revisiting our 'Incredible Balmedie' values and revised aims through further COVID recovery consultation for all stakeholders e.g. love, like, can do better (Postponed due to COVID)
- Development of LMG model at cluster level and working towards a shared understanding of levels of support demands and how our co-ordinated resources may better impact on all learners.

## How good is the quality of care and education we offer?

### **QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment**

Learning and engagement

Quality of teaching

Effective use of assessment

Planning, tracking and monitoring

**Relevant NIF priority: All**

**Relevant NIF driver(s): Teacher professionalism, School leadership, Parental engagement, Assessment of children's progress**

**Level of quality for core QI: GOOD**

**How well are you doing?**

**What's working well for your learners?**

- The ethos of Balmedie School is welcoming, positive, nurturing and promotes mutually respectful relationships. Almost all pupils engage well with learning activities and children are eager to learn, motivated and involved. There is a high level of participating & engagement/continuing emphasis towards appropriate pace and challenge across all classes.
- Pupils have some opportunities to lead learning and share their ideas, contribute opinions on what they would like to learn or find out about and a variety of ways to take forward their learning (e.g. variety of approach, presentation or resource).
- Most pupils can articulate what they are learning and why and know what they need to do in order to become successful.
- Most pupils are becoming increasingly independent in their learning.
- There is consistent practice in place within some classes/stage groups linking to AIFL and feedback. Differentiation approaches are identified across all classes.
- Pupils are involved in self/peer assessment opportunities but this could be more consistent across stages/school.
- Learning intentions and success criteria is evident in each class to support pupils in their learning. This practice is consistent across the school. In some classes pupils are involved in the co-construction of success criteria but in most classes this is teacher driven.
- Staff make effective use of questioning during learning and teaching experiences /extending learning as appropriate however there is capacity to develop this further (through stage agreements to make this more consistent across our school).
- Almost all pupils have regular opportunities to work individually, in pairs and in groups. Most classes have opportunities to work with or share learning with other classes.
- Learning experiences are planned to match pupils needs/abilities but there is capacity to further develop our school approaches and how we can utilise learning technology and support staffing more effectively.
- All staff know their pupils well and identify potential barriers or needs quickly. These are discussed with SLT, ASL and PSA staff to ensure timely action is taken to reduce and support these barriers. Ongoing consultation of interventions is sought in order to review effectiveness and identify next steps.
- Most staff have confidence in using a wide range of assessment data including standardised assessment results (SLT supported through summary of trends and built into collegiate session).
- Termly tracking and monitoring meetings further supports pupils progress in learning.
- Digital technology is used to support learning across all classes, however an enforced change in the use of a digital platform from Seesaw to Google classroom (due to GDPR)

has resulted in a loss of momentum towards pupil profiling of learning (it is hoped in time on the Google platform we can build a similar approach however further review is needed in terms of suitability of P1-3 and other platforms may be considered in future.

- All classes use a wider range of learning environments including the outdoors, the local 'magic woods', the beach (Sand Bothy partnership).
- There are emerging opportunities to develop skills for learning, life and work but there is capacity to develop this further (DYW focus with P5-7 as part of our Bridge of Don ASG schools partnership).

### **How do you know?**

#### **What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners?**

- QA processes taking place throughout the school year based upon classroom visits and learning/learner observation and feedback.
- Pupils have regular opportunities to engage and lead assessment through self and peer assessment approaches in some classes – further development through self-evaluating schools is planned to make this more consistent across the school.
- Pupils' are developing their understanding of knowledge and skills as well as their identification of strengths/next steps – further skills progressions and support materials for staff and stage groups are introduced via collegiate sessions (writing, spelling, numeracy).
- Increased engagement with Aberdeenshire frameworks and national benchmarks are used to inform planning and identify appropriate next steps thus ensuring progression in learning across the school. Staff plan collegiately to support moderation of practice (focus on writing is most effective) and ensure a shared understanding of expected standards.
- National benchmarks and local frameworks are used to support professional judgements made and make informed decisions on where pupils are in their learning.
- PEF is used to support staff to plan interventions to overcome any barriers faced e.g. targeted intervention support and resources.
- Professional dialogue ongoing throughout the session (facilitated through staff collegiate sessions).
- Termly tracking and monitoring meetings are held with staff.
- SNSA data is considered by all staff (summarised and collated by SLT for staff). This is used to inform next steps in learning by class teachers.
- Consideration of trends in data are used appropriately to inform future improvement planning. Session 19-20 there has been a key focus to revise learning progressions and stage agreements (writing, spelling and numeracy).
- Feedback from parents/carers around the use of Seesaw to share learning, progress and feedback is very positive (however this has now been replaced by Google platform due to GDPR issues).
- School Facebook Page and School Blog are used to promote everyday learning and achievements.
- Members of teaching staff is Forest and Beach school trained and delivers/support outdoor activities with staff. The local woods/beach areas are well used as a learning resource. This is also used to provide targeted interventions/alternative pathway approaches for identified pupils.

### What are you going to do now?

### What are your improvement priorities in this area?

- Embed agreed processes and practice in relation to effective questioning, implementing features of visible learning approaches and feedback to support pupils appropriately (part of postponed self-evaluating school trio approach).
- Continue with work such as learning conversations with pupils so staff can ensure there are a variety of opportunities for pupils to take a lead role in their learning.
- Evaluation of pupils groups and further engagement of pupil friendly HGIOS via House Captain group in order to ensure this work is having an impact.
- Embed the practice around co-construction LI/SC, stage agreements are in place in order to ensure there is consistency across all classes/year groups.
- Continue to introduce aspects of visible learning/Rosenshine/AifL approaches to further review and improve pedagogical practice and improve outcomes for all learners.
- Continue to develop moderation processes and practice. Consideration of partnerships beyond the school (i.e. Eilon cluster, Bridge of Don schools group and self-evaluation trios) to promote effective learning and teaching going forward. Continue training for staff around assessment incorporating support from local authority QAMSOs or other recommended partners, training offers or online CLPL resources.
- Continue to familiarise/support all staff with the interrogation of SNSA data.
- Continue to work with community partners to continue to embed more sustainable business/DYW links working towards longer term planned opportunities (including outdoor learning partnerships and learner needs/community support partnerships).
- Further re-focus and review of our QA calendar which shares key areas of focus throughout the school year (based upon impact of COVID).
- Seek to introduce digital leaders or a digital learner group to build on remote and online learning approaches (resulting from COVID)
- Refocus on how technology is also used to support targeted interventions planned via ASL approaches e.g. increased global use of Read, Write & Gold, software supports such as NESSY. Reading Eggs, Espresso (source and cost other recommended online resources in use e.g. numeracy).
- Construct an ASL/ASN resource portal for staff and parents via school blog area (effective sharing of practical strategies, information guidelines and wider partnerships)

## How good are we at improving outcomes for all our learners?

### **QI 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion**

Wellbeing

Fulfilment of statutory duties

Inclusion and equality

**Relevant NIF priority: All**

**Relevant NIF driver(s): Assessment of children's progress, School improvement, Performance information**

**Level of quality for core QI: Good**

**How well are you doing?**

**What's working well for your learners?**

- All staff at Balmedie School have a good knowledge of learners, families and their community. A supportive and caring ethos exists across the school for all pupils.
- All staff are committed to ensure everyone is treated equitably and with respect. Staff consistently strive to build very positive relationships with all children allowing them to identify and support individual needs.
- The school has a nurturing and strong pastoral approach towards supporting all children, ABC monitoring is consistently used across the school to address, monitor and maintain positive behavioural approaches.
- Restorative approaches which also ensures opportunities for respite and key support/intervention staff in shared areas also ensures that children with significant support issues always have access to safe spaces.
- All staff are clear on the policies and procedures around child protection. Staff are vigilant and prompt in highlighting concerns and responding to issues.
- All staff are clear on principles and processes in relation to GIRFEC. Almost all pupils have an awareness of the wellbeing indicators and can discuss these appropriately
- School and the life of the school promotes a shared understanding of physical, mental and emotional wellbeing and supports learners to develop self-respect and respect for all others (includes introduction of enhanced pastoral support through the introduction of Seasons for Growth Input, Mindfulness and via wider partnerships)
- The school tracks Health and wellbeing through tracking and monitoring discussions as well as surveys carried out with pupils, parents and staff (around our 8 areas of wellbeing through the 'Incredible Balmedie' theme).
- Curricular work, assemblies and wider community partnerships encourage discussion, engagement, reflection and appreciation of faith, diversity and wellbeing.
- A range of universal supports are available in all classes.
- Clear procedures are in place to identify, assess and plan for pupils with additional support needs. Continued review of IEPs (and current formats in use). Risk assessments are in place for individual pupils as appropriate and are developed with pupils, as appropriate, and staff/parents/wider partners (where relevant) to improve outcomes for learners.
- All pupils have chronologies in place. Pastoral notes are used on SEEMIS to support chronology reporting. This includes a recording of significant concern incidents of alleged bullying (which are taken forward by SLT if unresolved from ABC promoting positive behaviours/restorative support formats).
- Termly tracking meetings with a member of the SLT and individual class teachers have a focus on pupils' needs and discussion re targeted interventions. This supports the deployment of staff including Pupil Support Assistants (PSA) and ASL staff.

- Class teachers liaise with ASL teacher and PSAs to plan general support and targeted interventions. ASL teacher offers learning and teaching support, co-operative teaching, consultation, direct intervention and professional development. ASL teacher has good relationships with families and outside agencies and is pro-active in working with the SLT team to address next steps.
- Transition programmes and activities are in place for Early Years/Primary/Secondary to ensure the well-being of pupils. Transition meetings are held annually for ASN pupils involving previous and new teacher.

### How do you know?

### What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners?

- Shared expectations in place across the school. Positive, supportive and restorative ethos throughout the school. The school needs to increase the profile of rights respecting work across the school.
- An open-door policy is in existence for all comments/queries. A record is kept of any complaints/queries.
- Annual update of GIRFEC/Child protection training carried out (annual AUG INSET).
- Staff revise bi-annual data protection, GDPR, health and safety, equalities and diversity training as offered by local authority (ALDO coursed)
- Single and multi-agency planning & wellbeing surveys are carried out with staff and parents to monitor wellbeing and promote discussions around wellbeing.
- School uses 8 areas of Wellbeing to support this (alternative focus due to online learning/COVID this year).
- ALEC/SCARF resources are available to staff, the school has Seasons for Growth trained staff.
- Eco green flag have been re-awarded in 2019. Beach and Woodland staff accreditations award linking to outdoor learning (programmes of delivery for all classes in partnership with The Sand Bothy). School remains highest UK fundraising school for legacy of ongoing RND fundraising.
- Effective partnerships are in place with local church and community groups, a number of charity organisations, local Scotmid, local library, out of school club, active schools, family learning, HWB instructors, Aberlour support agency, Befriend a Child Agency, Womans Aid Agency etc to name but a few ongoing partnerships.
- The school delivers leadership initiatives for upper stage children - an annual first aid input to upper stages, annual responsibility roles such as house captains and vice captains (not gender specific), friendshipers and buddies at P6 etc
- Targeted support is provided by class teachers, IPT staff, pupils support worker and others such as SALT/EAL. EP take part in the planning and assessment for pupils. Outside partner agencies continue to grow (such as SFG, Therapet, Rainbow Rogues, Mediation Services and Aberlour also have been established as part of an ongoing school/community support network).
- Outside agencies such as school nurse, doctor, Health Visitors and CAHMS are also involved with the consideration of targeted support for individual pupils.
- Sensory support, Hearing support and Clinical support partners provide ongoing guidance and support for families and staff.
- Some staff are nurture trained and Makaton/BSL trained and use this to support pupils
- The school keeps an up to date audit of need to support the deployment of staff and consideration of interventions to be planned for to support pupils (revised 2-3 times yearly).
- MAAPM process being fully implemented. Regular meetings with staff, parents and other agencies to meet pupils' needs (also held remotely and via online conferencing calls/meets during COVID lockdown period).
- SLT have ongoing liaison with ASL/SFL/PSA/Nursery teams in order to plan appropriately to meet and review individual needs (and progress of supports). This is reviewed for

impact on a termly basis too (in terms of transitioning, review of effectiveness and impact etc.

- Staff visit partner providers within the community to support transition from Early years setting to P1. A programme of five visits is carried out each year to support transition to p1. P6 pupils act as buddies for new P1 pupils in term1.
- The cluster has a comprehensive transition programme run in partnership with cluster primaries/Ellon Academy and Bridge of Don Academy. There are series of visits in place. There is an enhanced transition programme in place for any pupils who would benefit from this academy staff team provide a range of opportunities to engage with pupils and their families.

### **What are you going to do now?**

#### **What are your improvement priorities in this area?**

- Continue to develop approaches and incorporate more opportunities to develop mental wellbeing including the continued use of Therapet (where available), seasons for growth support/growth mindset, mindfulness, relax kids, restorative approaches etc. as developed through alternative support offers and in wellbeing Wednesdays during lockdown. Partnership with Foyer and Andy McKenchie (motivational speaker and H&WB coach) in previous year as part of upper stages and transition support input.
- Further develop approaches to reviewing the impact of targeted interventions on our pupils over time, particularly PSA led interventions.
- Continue to build capacity as a team to ensure the needs of all pupils are met. Number of pupils requiring targeted interventions is steadily increasing, year on year.
- Continue to embed whole school nurture and restorative approaches. Staff will be given ongoing opportunities to cascade any information from training received (e.g. via team meeting feedback, collegiate and INSET opportunities)

### **QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement**

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

Attainment over time

Overall quality of learners' achievement

Equity for all learners

**Relevant NIF priority: All**

**Relevant NIF driver(s): Assessment of children's progress, School improvement, Performance information**

**Level of quality for core QI: Good**

**How well are you doing?**

**What's working well for your learners?**

- There is a positive picture of attainment for Balmedie School. Most children are attaining expected levels in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Some children are exceeding expected levels.
- Universal supports are in place and targeted interventions for identified pupils and groups are put in place for those who need support.
- The school has a robust tracking and monitoring system in place which is discussed termly with staff to ensure individual pupil progress is tracked. Next steps are clearly identified and planned for. Interventions are also regularly reviewed for impact (each term).
- Staff have a good understanding of expected standards in literacy and numeracy supported by the local frameworks and national benchmarks, however, stage agreements and progressions are being reviewed to ensure greater continuity given increasing numbers of new staff appointments.
- Pupil Equity Funding has been utilised to enhance targeted support options and support outreach support and poverty proofing for our most vulnerable children and families.
- Most pupils are successful, confident and responsible. They contribute effectively to the life and work of the school. Their opinions are sought and acted upon allowing them ownership of initiatives and their school community. Most pupils are involved in whole school development groups and a growing pupil voice in a variety of pupil representation groups which contribute towards self-evaluation activities.
- Pupils participation with their wider community is successful through developing and sustaining partnerships (care home links, Scotmid links, Library links, Family Learning Links, wider school events e.g. family quiz evenings).
- Achievements are recognised and shared across the school mainly through our assembly forums, school display areas and school representation groups. The school needs to consider how this can now evolve with a greater emphasis on digital platforms.
- Pupils are increasingly given opportunities for developing their knowledge and skills through a variety of ongoing extra-curricular activities and through our 'star sessions' initiative.
- Attendance levels are generally high, exclusion rates are zero, and inclusion is successful for most pupils (part-time timetabling, respite/supported learning and nurture spaces and alternative pathways are being implemented as alternatives to exclusion)

**How do you know?**

**What evidence do you have of positive impact on learners?**

- Overall school professional judgements of CFE levels show satisfactory progress for most learners. Through school tracking procedures a small number of pupils are exceeding expectations in both literacy and numeracy. Staff are continuing to develop opportunities to promote challenge for all pupils.
- Universal supports exist in all classes but further work is needed to embed ASL/digital technology tools more globally e.g. Read,Write,Gold tool, Reading Eggs Nessy (including

the construction of an ASL information portal to support staff housed within our school blog)

- ASL supports are regularly reviewed in order to ensure resources are deployed appropriately to meet need within the allocation schools have (as part of a cluster allocation).
- Tracking and monitoring information is kept up to date/reviewed termly.
- SLT informally reviews specific cohorts of pupils (e.g.) pupils identified exceeding expectations, pupils with vulnerable characteristics as well as considering the impact of PEF on identified pupils.
- Balmedie school engages in an annual cluster attainment review which allows for sharing of good practice and identified areas of development (between SLT school groups).
- Training and collegiate sessions have taken place over the last year ensuring improvements in pedagogy and practice. Currently there is a focus on learning and teaching. Partner trio HTs supports development in these areas and also provide valued feedback.
- The school has an established before and after school club and good partnerships would community groups such as the brownies, beavers and scouts..
- All pupils involved in pupil groups including Health & Wellbeing, Charities, Leaders of Learning, Environment.
- Whole school action points and development work is shared through pupil forums. Development activities are displayed on pupil group display boards in the school (where relevant). There are further opportunities for pupil leadership through buddies, house captains, P6 toNursery and P7 to P1 buddies and friendship groups. Pupils also have opportunities to take ownership and share their learning through shared learning activities and events

Partnership working with community groups such as Ellon Cluster CLD links and community partners such as the Sand Bothy

- Ongoing awards are issued in assemblies and the Seesaw online platform was also used to share achievements (prior to replacing this with Google Classroom). All pupils (and parents) are encouraged to share wider achievements. All pupils are developing their skills for learning, life and work through our transition programmes.
- Staff support a variety of clubs after the school day which breaktime clubs, sing and smile, Glee club, Lego group.
- Pupils have the opportunity to run lunchtime clubs for others.
- Tracking of attendance and latest-HT monitors all lates/absence rates as towards the end of term or at the beginning of a new term.

### **What are you going to do now?**

### **What are your improvement priorities in this area?**

- Continue to develop moderation processes and practice looking beyond the school to promote effective learning and teaching (continued emphasis on pace/challenge) and further develop a shared understanding of standards. Continue training for staff around assessment incorporating support from local authority QAMSOs/QIO/development officers and pilot/consultation groups
- Continue to familiarise all staff with an SLT summary and interrogation of SNSA and other relevant school data (from tracking and monitoring progress).
- A pupil/parent friendly improvement plan/feedback school response will be created and hosted via a new blog area and this will be used to inform future self-evaluation activities by pupil representation groups.

## Balmedie School – Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) 2020-2021

<b>Identified gap</b>	COVID Recovery Closing the attainment gap (ongoing)
<b>Expenditure</b>	£19,972 fund allocated  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cover day investment for staff for additional development work (£1000)</li> <li>2. Additional PSA support hours (approx. 40 hours per week) funded for the school year (estimated £14,000)</li> <li>3. Outreach support services partnerships (160 hours) and estimated costs (£4000)</li> <li>4. Contingency/Emergency Poverty Proofing Fund (£992)</li> </ol>
<b>Expected outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. support targeting resources/home learning and development of ICT platforms (COVID recovery).</li> <li>2. Targeted support PSA staffing (additional hours budget) for intervention (COVID recovery), health and wellbeing support and support for learning.</li> <li>3. Health and Wellbeing focus - identified targeted supports &amp; for family and outreach support (includes COVID19 supports for vulnerable families). Build on established ongoing partnerships with Aberlour, Rainbow Rogues and build capacity with additional 3<sup>rd</sup> party providers.</li> <li>4. Support poverty proofing funding and funding support (COVID recovery). Budget in place for emergency contingency, additional funding e.g. trips, specific resources or costs etc, additional small technology budget (building on support from the Scotland Connect initiative).</li> </ol>
<b>Impact Measurements</b>	All children and families with vulnerability factors (already PEF identified), additional support needs and impacted by COVID will be the focus of global and targeted projected spend/investment through the supports planned above. Support is flexible and available on an ad-hoc basis through the year in the anticipation that prioritised interventions and supports continue be offered (both at school level and at family support level – through partner professional/specialist agencies).

### Capacity for improvement

School and Nursery staff are fully committed to the principle of continuous improvement. We wish to provide the very best for every child in our care. In this task, we are increasingly advised by performance data, such as pupil attainment data, GIRFEC and SIMD data so we can see clearly 'what' we need to improve and identify the 'poverty gaps' or global needs within our school community.

We will continue to look inwards, outwards and forwards to prepare and equip our young people for their future. We will continue to work in partnership with parents, health professionals, and others to 'get it right' for every child (engagement with new toolkit and revise recording formats/online systems).

A crucial part to this is budget/resource management and attempting to forecast budgets into the next year so that we can maintain and project a stable support staffing model (e.g. PSA deployment, early identification of targeted support needs/transition needs, development of environments and approaches to supporting both existing and new learners, identifying and forecasting predicted budget and demand for partnership/ongoing networking services or sourcing of 3<sup>rd</sup> party voluntary or paid intervention supports e.g. Rainbow Rogues, Aberlour, application for alternative learner pathways).

## Action plan overview (ref Appendix for ongoing action plans)

### Primary Drivers

### Supplementary Drivers

<p><u>National Improvement Framework Priorities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.</li> <li>• Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children. (POST COVID – GLOBAL)</li> <li>• Improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive destinations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key drivers of improvement</b> <b>School leadership</b></p> <p>Teacher professionalism</p> <p>Parental engagement</p> <p>Assessment of children’s progress</p> <p>School improvement</p> <p>Performance Information</p>	<p><b>HGIOS and ELCC</b></p> <p>1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement 1.2 Leadership for learning 1.3 Leadership of change 1.4 Leadership and management Of staff/practitioners 1.5 Management of resources (learner environments) to promote equity 2.1 Safeguarding and child protection 2.2 Curriculum 2.3 Learning teaching and assessment 2.4 Personalised support 2.5 Family learning 2.6 Transitions 2.7 Partnerships 3.1 Improving/ ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion</p> <p><b>Specific to HGIOS 4</b> 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement 3.3 Increasing creativity and employability</p> <p><b>Specific to HGIOELC</b> 3.2 Securing children’s progress 3.3 Developing creativity and skills for life</p>	<p><b>Aberdeenshire Priorities:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improving learning, teaching and assessment.</li> <li>2. Partnership working to raise attainment.</li> <li>3. Developing leadership at all levels.</li> <li>4 Improvement through self-evaluation.</li> </ol> <p>Supplementary School Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support professional learning and review (revised GTC guidance and online platform)</li> <li>- Revisit school aims and rationale (post COVID and further linked to school recovery and parental partnerships)</li> <li>- Maintain use of learning technologies post COVID (reference points for CLPL and staff development.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>School Priorities</b> Priority 1 : School Recovery (H&amp;WB, Curriculum) Priority 2 : Learning Teaching &amp; Assessment Priority 3 : GIRFEC and universal support Priority 4 : Digital Technologies, RRS and DYW</p>	<p><b>Data/evidence informing priority: .....</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. School Recovery Planning, collegiate working groups, targeted support, survey/audit and use of additional funding (TERM 3/4 – March 21 to June 21)</li> <li>2. QA processes and self-evaluation (re-focus calendar) (TERM 1 – Aug 21 – TERM 4 June 22 programme)</li> <li>3. INSET and collegiate sessions, staff/pupil/parent feedback, cluster working, partnership feedback (NOV 21 – FEB 22)</li> <li>4. INSET and collegiate sessions, cluster working (OCT 21 – JUN 22)</li> </ol>
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<b>Key actions</b>	<b>By whom</b>	<b>When?</b>	<b>How will we evaluate impact? (Measurements of success)</b>	Progress
				<span style="background-color: #28a745; color: white; padding: 2px;">On Track</span> <span style="background-color: #ffc107; color: black; padding: 2px;">Behind Schedule</span> <span style="background-color: #dc3545; color: white; padding: 2px;">Not Achieved</span>
Priority 1 : School Recovery (H&WB, Curriculum)	SLT/Staff	APR-JUN 21	SURVEY/FEEDBACK COLLEGIATE W/Groups	Behind
Priority 2 : Learning Teaching & Assessment	SLT	T2, T3, T4 NOV 21 - FEB 22	QA Calendar	Behind
Priority 3 : GIRFEC and universal support	All	MAR 22	Collegiate, Feedback	On Track
Priority 4 : Digital Technologies, RRS and DYW	All	MAY 22	Survey, Cluster/ASG, INSET	Behind

## Supplementary Information

### Key Developments (School Recovery – re-instate post COVID)

Link to PRIORITY 1 - Re-engagement with staff working groups on curriculum developments e.g. 1+2, Health and Wellbeing, finalise stage progressions in Grammar and Spelling, Curriculum Bundles revision (to include consideration of RRS/DYW links)

Link to PRIORITY 2 - Re-engagement with self-evaluating schools pilot (YEAR 2 – if COVID recovery permits), re-engagement with approaches to moderation and peer classroom visits (between schools). Revisit whole school approach to school review and GTC. Further engagement through local authority development offers in relation to Learning, Teaching & Assessment support.

Link to PRIORITY 1 and 4 School Recovery, 1140 (in Nursery), QA re-focus in Nursery and School and continued development of digital learning technologies (post COVID)

Link to PRIORITY 4 - Renewed partnership with Bridge of Don ASG schools group (transition links with zoned academy) to support DYW/STEM initiative at P5-S2

### Key Features of Evidence

#### Monitoring & Shared Expectations

- Experience for pupils (ongoing measurement of participation levels/pupil sample groups)
- Active engagement (shared understanding/collaborative – quality of engagement against progression of skills)
- Pupils take responsibility for their learning (learners as leaders, pupil voice, develop vocabulary & mindset)
- Pupils are motivated and opportunities to lead (engagement with pupil representation groups/pupil version of 'wee HGIOS')
- Range of teaching approaches (AiFL, aspects of visible learning, Rosenshine principles)
- Effective and well timed (QA measure pace and challenge – Rosenshine principles)
- Feedback that supports progress (effective Qs and Feedback – possible follow up of Ellon Cluster training opportunities e.g. Talk Less Teaching Part 2 tba/outsource other CLPL or visitor training)