

National Improvement Framework Evidence - Qualitative Feedback

<p>QI 1.3 Leadership of change QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement</p>	<p>Leadership in a few primary schools is very good as evidenced in school inspections, although overall leadership of change continues to be variable across all schools. The majority of schools would be deemed satisfactory with the capacity to support and improve increasing. Where schools have embraced the empowerment agenda, headteachers and other senior leaders are building capacity in leadership at all levels across the school which is impacting positively in improvements over time. Almost all schools have a clear vision and values, setting the direction for improvement. An increasing number are developed in partnership and is growing through a sound understanding of local intelligence and data. The majority of schools have created an ethos and culture of change and improvement with school improvement priorities forming a clear improvement pathway. An increasing no of staff are contributing to the improvement agenda with a few examples of effective practice where parents, pupils and partners are also involved. In the most effective schools, improvements are clearly evidenced through improved outcomes for learners. Learning, teaching and assessment is satisfactory and improving across schools. Positive relationships exist in almost all schools in Moray with an increasing amount of schools embracing a rights based approach. Almost all children are well-behaved and engaged in their learning. In a few schools there are examples of effective practice where learners are highly challenged and experience learning well matched to their needs. The quality of learning intentions and success criteria is improving although this could be improved further. Benefits would be gained in the majority of schools of an increased focus on pedagogy and improving the consistency of teaching. The sustained focus on moderation has ensured that assessment is increasingly integral to planning. Assessment approaches are variable and assessment evidence is wide ranging and the resulting teacher professional judgement is increasingly reliable. Moderation across ASGs and curriculum groups is increasing and as a result there is an improving trend in attainment in the BGE. Attainment across some key measures in the senior phase is improving although a continued focus is required across the authority to improve further including the launch of the revised raising attainment strategy. Our learners benefit from a growing range of opportunities to achieve, developing their skills for learning, life and work and the four capacities of CfE. Targeted use of PEF funding in most schools is impacting positively on those learners who face adversity. With increasing effective pathways planning and engagement activities with partners there is an increase in the number of learners who move into a positive pathway.</p>
<p>Effectiveness of moderation of teacher judgement of CfE levels in literacy and numeracy</p>	<p>Overall good progress continues to be made in developing teacher confidence across the authority in their teacher professional judgment. There is a clear moderation strategy (revised for session 2019/2020) and shared expectations for all schools in terms of making judgements of CfE levels. Over the last four sessions, a QIO has led on this, working in collaboration with central and school practitioners in order to provide schools with a range of guidance, support and events. There is a continued commitment to QAMSOs with almost all Associated Schools' Groups having access to at least one QAMSO to support learning and building capacity. Secondary subject groups have been replaced with Curricular groupings and four meetings per year have been used to develop staff's understanding of CfE levels, particularly in the responsibility of all in literacy and numeracy and understanding of assessment approaches. In addition to this, in-service days across this session were planned to include moderation activities to further enhance our shared understanding of expectations and standards across the authority. This has resulted in almost all staff being aware of national expectations, having completed exercises in line with national training materials and ongoing engagement with benchmarks. There continues to be a clear expectation that moderation activity should continue to happen within and across schools, Associated Schools Groups as well as across Moray, evident through SIPs and Working Time Agreements. Practice in moderation is developing and there are examples where confidence in CfE teacher professional judgement has developed. Overall, we have increasing confidence in the reliability of our data and we will continue with planned work in this area. This was confirmed through discussion with a Scottish Government colleague in recent review meeting.</p>

<p>Family learning</p>	<p>SIPs and PEF Action Plans continue to evidence school focus on Family Learning initiatives linked with other key National and local priorities. There are some examples of very good practice where schools and partners universally consult with and support families and routinely share learning using a range of events, home learning supports and initiatives to engage families and share strategies for learning together. Schools evidence their approaches, the majority using Social Media, Newsletters, Websites and events to showcase the impact of family learning. School self-evaluation reports positive impact of these family learning opportunities, including rights based focus and strengthened home-school links which are improving outcomes for learners. Schools continue to look for creative approaches to further engage families, including those hard to reach families and those affected by poverty related factors. This includes specific family learning targets as evidenced through the Child Planning process which is reviewed for progress and measures impact for children and families at each meeting.</p>
<p>Impact of parents on improvement</p>	<p>Our schools work in partnership with parents to shape priorities, contributing to self-evaluation activities for school improvement. Parental views are sought through a variety of forums including Parent Council, Parent Partnerships and through emerging examples of parent participation on school Working Groups. In wider Moray, parents are also an integral part of recruitment panels for promoted posts in Primary and Secondary Schools (Depute Head Teacher and Head Teacher appointments). The Moray Parent Forum is used to keep parent council office bearers up to date with national priorities and local plans to improve educational experience and meet children's needs. A biannual parental survey was completed last year, providing information on parental views. Many of our parents are employers and our Moray workforce, contributing to wider Careers Education and DYW related initiatives in our schools including work-related learning and interactions. Cognisance is being taken of work in our Early Years' strategic group so that any Education strategy ties in with the wider Community partnership plans. Relationships with parents and families are strong across our Moray schools where relational based approaches are commonplace. A strategy is currently in place where it has been identified that this now requires review in partnership with wider stakeholders.</p>
<p>School improvement planning is done in collaboration with teachers and parents</p>	<p>In formulating School Improvement Plans, support of key stakeholders is sought across our schools including teachers and parents, using self-evaluation evidence gathered as a basis. There are a growing number of schools who are developing collaboration in improvement planning with pupils, staff and parents in development of pupil and parent versions of School Improvement Plans, with shared responsibility for achievement of key outcomes. Schools are focused in on wellbeing, equality and inclusion for all in Moray. In all schools, time is set aside at meetings to discuss, agree and action school priorities and take forward improvements. In line with local priorities and in taking forward learning from Head Teacher meetings and Professional Learning events, Head Teachers are empowered to develop and embrace the culture of leadership at all levels using resources and strategies provided. Schools continue to refresh their vision and values on an ongoing basis, ensuring they reflect their communities and local contexts. In collaboration with pupils, teachers, parents and wider partners, most of our schools have developed their curriculum and curriculum rationale, embracing the four contexts for learning. All staff are clear on school strengths and areas for improvement, support by authority processes including 'Schools for the Future' visits, QIO support and challenge visits and wider self-evaluation activities supporting improvement.</p>

School Improvement plans reflect the national priorities as set out in the NIF

All schools have been given clear guidance on national and local priorities. School Improvement Plans in turn reflect these priorities. All schools have plans reflective of this guidance and are clearly linked to the NIF drivers, raising attainment and closing the equity gap. Quality Improvement Officers provide ongoing support and challenge to schools to improve the quality of plans and to ensure that they have appropriate purpose, providing feedback on key documentation. A few schools review their plans after authority visits or post-inspection activity. Revised guidance for School Improvement Planning and self-evaluation have been produced centrally and issued to schools in order to further support improvement. School Improvement Plans reflect the local authority Schools and Curriculum Development Strategic Plan, which was developed in line with National Priorities. Head Teacher meetings focus on our Strategic Plan, ensuring all schools embrace relevant National Priorities and key learning relating to key National Priorities is offered locally. Schools work collegiately and in collaboration with a range of central and support services to ensuring National Priorities progress across their schools. This includes work on wellbeing, equality and inclusion.

Progress with the priorities set out in the NIF

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children
- Improvements in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people

• There is an improvement in attainment over time for some measures and teacher professional judgements are improving. In some schools, staff shortages remain and continue to impact on attainment levels. In secondary, this is clearly evident in some subjects and one teacher departments. There are a growing number of schools involved in Northern Alliance Emerging Literacy in order to support early stage literacy and targeted intervention for identified pupils across stages. Northern Alliance evidence of impact highlights positive trends at this stage. In addition, practitioners from 25 identified schools were trained in SEAL (Strategies for Early Arithmetical Learning) focusing in on identifying gaps in learning in core numeracy skills for intervention and raising attainment. Senior Phase attainment is variable across our schools with collaborative working on curriculum offers, learner pathways, learning and teaching and supporting learners beginning to have positive impact. Some schools are using flexibility of the 33-period week to provide universal and targeted literacy and numeracy interventions supported by PEF initiatives.

• Most schools are using data more robustly to inform priorities. Supported by the local authority, all schools receive a range of data and the 'Moray Tracker' spreadsheet for data analysis identified as good practice by Education Scotland is being rolled out across our schools. This provides opportunities to analyse groups and cohorts, leading to universal and targeted intervention. Class teachers are more involved in conversations with senior leaders about pupil progress, developing approaches to data analysis at all levels, understanding and removing barriers to learning. Schools continues to embrace plans for PEF funding and have trialled a number of interventions in support of targeted groups/individuals and cohorts. Updated local guidance and support to ensure greater quality, data driven interventions should lead to greater positive impact on our children and young people.

• As a result of our revised Child Planning process, practitioners at all levels have a greater understanding of the staged intervention process which is leading to more robust universal and targeted interventions to meet the needs of all learners. Collaboration with wider multi-agency partners in a variety of forums is leading to improved outcomes for children and young people and shared learning. The revised Child Planning process ensures the 'voice of the child' is central and empowers families in becoming active partners in their child's development and wellbeing. Most Moray schools engage with UNICEF's Rights Respecting Schools award with almost all schools registered, the majority of schools having achieved Bronze level and a number having achieved Silver and Gold levels. Overall, Gold level schools are reporting a reduction in behaviour, attendance and exclusion rates as a result of their engagement with this programme. In partnership with Educational Psychology, schools are engaging with the "Building Relationships" programme which focuses on relational based approaches. Almost all children feel safe and happy and know who to go to when necessary for help or advice, as noted through Education Scotland inspection activity and school self-evaluation. An Inclusive Practice Toolkit has been provided to practitioners across our schools, supporting and informing universal and targeted support to meet the needs of all learners.

• The Moray Skills Framework provides a clear strategy and pledge to create opportunities for children to have access to identified sectors for future career paths. Work to date has focussed on schools working in partnership with a range of partners including DYW Moray, Moray College UHI and SDS. A series of Pathways and Partnership events including whole-authority Inset Day and Head Teacher meeting focusing in on Career Education Standards and Work Placement Standards have increased practitioner understanding, enabling these entitlement to be embedded in the curriculum. Significant work has been undertaken by volume and growth sectors to promote a broad range of opportunities throughout the curriculum as well as bespoke 'Sector Days' linked to the Moray Skills Pathway. Wider collaboration has included the development of an all age

Practitioners have a common understanding of expectations in literacy and numeracy across all curriculum areas

An area of emerging practice, practitioners across Moray are growing in confidence in their understanding of expectations in literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. Work in this area has been linked to the moderation strategy, with time set aside across a number of our Associated School Groups during recent Inset Days for cross-sector and school based collaboration. Working Groups supported by authority QAMSOs are leading this area of work forward in the coming session. There is an increasing awareness of staff responsibility for this which is becoming evident through school visits and authority in-service activity, notable in secondary with a few moving towards 'driver subjects' contributing to overall literacy and numeracy judgments. Focus on Literacy and Numeracy continues at pace with developments in Emerging Literacy, SEAL, Numicon (and concrete based approaches to Numeracy Learning) and past Numeracy event. This is an identified area for development and will be the focus for the sessions ahead with bid for Education Scotland grant funding submitted to progress work in this area.