

California and Shieldhill Primary Schools Standards and Quality Report 2024-2025

School/ELC Context

- There is a great sense of community within California and Shieldhill Primary Schools and local residents are very proud of it.
- Our schools are in small villages in the Braes Cluster. Housing stock in Braes Cluster catchment areas, as defined by council tax band, have a higher proportion than the Falkirk average of band D-H*. Although housing stock is in a higher band, we are aware that a number of our families live in private lets within these areas. This is reflected in our SIMD data where children receiving free school meals live in higher SIMD areas.
- 37% of California children received free school meals. This is an increase of 16% from Session 2023-2024.
- 28% of Shieldhill children receive free school meals. This is an increase in 7% from Session 2023-2024.
- We have a small number of Traveller children who attend our schools.
- California has 5 EAL families.
- Shieldhill has 4 EAL families.
- Most children live in SIMD 4-9.
- We have highly effective professional partnerships with many different agencies; Health, Social Work, Police Scotland, Educational Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy and Family Support Services are all regular participants in planning for our children and families.

There are no large-scale employers in the Braes area, although 'Ineos' is in relatively close proximity (due to close the ethanol plant soon). The majority of our parents within Braes Cluster are employed in public services and wholesale retail and motor.* As detailed in the

[Statistics & census: Area and settlement profiles - Falkirk Council](#)

Successes and Achievements

Both schools marked significant anniversaries—60 years and 110 years—with celebratory concerts. Families were invited to join us in commemorating these special milestones.



Both schools have earned the Silver Sport Scotland Award, highlighting our ongoing focus on sport and wellbeing. All teaching staff have helped to lead extra-curricular activities this year. Our Football club in particular have attended a variety of events across the year. Additionally, P7 young leaders successfully implemented lunchtime sports club with pupils in P1-4.



Following our achievement of the Silver Rights Respecting Schools Award last session, we remain committed to uphold our status as a Rights Respecting School.

Shieldhill pupils in P5-7 participated in and were very successful in the Falkirk Schools Basketball League and Falkirk Schools Cross Country Championships.



Fundraising efforts continued throughout the year, led enthusiastically by our Charity Champion Decision Making Group.

Our pupils took part in the Glee Competition, where they developed their performance skills and experienced the value of teamwork and community through the collaborative experience.



We continue to foster a strong reading culture through our Reading Schools Initiative having achieved a Reading Schools Award.



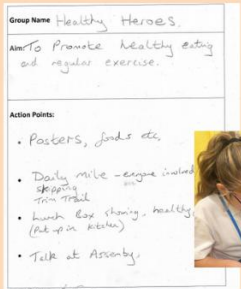
P7 representatives from both schools participated in the Rotary Quiz, with California proudly claiming first place and hosting the event next year.

Decision Making Groups continue to capture our learners' voices, with their feedback influencing potential changes to the format for the upcoming session.

Our P7 pupils enjoyed a three-day residential camp at Lockerbie Manor as part of their transition programme to Braes High School.



Focus weeks, such as Health, Eco and Enterprise, brought our schools together to develop skills whilst fostering a strong sense of community and shared learning.



Our schools successfully received their Eco-Schools renewal, reflecting our ongoing commitment to sustainability and environmental education.



Staff at both schools have received training in the Seasons for Growth programme and implementation of the sessions is already underway, better supporting learners emotional wellbeing in our school settings.

All members of management across both schools have been trained in Agile Leadership Management. Our leadership team are becoming more adaptable, collaborative and responsive when planning for our learning environments.

Successes and Achievements



Review of Progress 2024-2025

California ELC

All staff have been involved in a 'Spaces' audit to identify the main areas for improvement in the outdoor space. Some new resources have been purchased to enhance the areas including:

- Waterproof suits * Play on pedals bikes/helmets * Playhouse from Parent Council funding
- Planting/growing equipment * Woodwork equipment * Marvellous meals equipment – jugs/picnic plates

The STEM shed has been firmly established and is embedded as another area in our outdoor space. All staff participated in training on delivering woodwork skills and the shed is currently the woodwork station. Resources were purchased and children have grown in confidence to use the tools to develop their hammering skills in a safe environment. One staff member has attended STEM training and cascaded their knowledge to the team who have been able to implement the training successfully. All children have had opportunities to include STEM activities in their outdoor play. Parental views have been gathered throughout the process and one family has been involved in planting and donating flower pots. 'Stay and play' has been extended to include the outdoor area and all parents have given positive feedback to this improvement. The greenhouse and vegetable patch have been established and all children have been involved in planting, weeding, watering and tending to the plants. Some children are now able to describe and discuss the science behind the process. Almost all children have had the opportunity to be involved in the spaces audit and risk assessments.

Review of Progress 2024-2025

Shieldhill ELC

All staff have been involved in a 'Spaces' audit to identify the main areas for improvement in the outdoor space. Some new resources have been purchased to enhance the areas including:

- Guttering for water play * benches * water butt
- Garden equipment * planters * ivy backdrops * bamboo

A greenhouse was purchased but unfortunately was damaged in high winds and had to be dismantled. Some children were involved in the problem solving process and cold frames were purchased as a replacement. All children have been involved in planting, weeding, watering and tending to the plants. Some children are now able to describe and discuss the science behind the process. The outdoor literacy space has been established and is now available daily. Development of communication and mark making in this area has improved in almost all children and all children have been observed to visit the area throughout their session. Confidence in exploring through risky play has increased in almost all children leading to improvements in gross motor skills. Parents have supported the nursery by gardening and installing our new sign as well as attending 'Stay and Play' sessions. All parents have joined our class dojo app to see our progress in our improvements.

Review of Progress 2024-2025

Listening and Talking

As a result of participation in effective professional learning activities, almost all class teachers have a good understanding of expected levels of progression across CfE Levels in Listening and Talking. They have developed enhanced pedagogical approaches which have enabled the development of effective listening and talking in classrooms across the curriculum.

As a result, the pace and depth of learning has improved in almost all classes across the schools.

This is evidenced by an 8% increase in the number of learners achieving expected levels in Listening and Talking. Almost all teachers have observed an improved use of vocabulary during class discussions.

1+2 Languages

Due to effective partnerships which the schools have fostered with specialist language teachers in Braes High School, we were able to utilise in-house training to increase the confidence of all teachers in the effective teaching of French and Spanish at all levels of CfE. As a result, we have ensured all class teachers now have a good understanding of the expectations of our 1+2 policy and have developed clear learning pathways and resources to support full implementation. This is evidenced through SLT observations and quality assurance procedures.