

California and Shieldhill Primary Schools Standards and Quality Report 2025-2026

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.
- 40% of California children received free school meals. This is an increase of 3% from Session 2024-2025.
- 30% of Shieldhill children receive free school meals. This is an increase in 2% from Session 2024-2025.
- We have a small number of Traveller and EAL children who attend our schools.
- Most children live in SIMD 4-9. New housing developments are already impacting the school demographic and will continue to do so into next session.
- 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

To foster a positive school culture, we regularly celebrate pupils who are ready, respectful and safe through initiatives like such as Hot Chocolate Friday and Top Table Lunch.

We recognise and share our pupils personal achievements through whole school assemblies.



As part of our School Improvement Priority, our entire staff undertook comprehensive PM Reading Training with Stephen Graham. This professional development changed our teaching of reading; we successfully implemented new assessments, bought new resources, created new groups and completely restructured the delivery of reading across both schools to ensure a consistent approach to reading pedagogy.

Pupils in P5-7 participated in and were very successful in the Falkirk Schools Basketball League, Falkirk Schools Football Tournaments and Falkirk Schools Cross Country Championships. The P5 Shieldhill girls team won the championships trophy.



Following our achievement of the Silver Rights Respecting Schools Award, we remain committed to uphold our status as a Rights Respecting School, including creating school mascots and celebrating Children Right's Day.

Fundraising efforts continued throughout the year, including equitable practices such as uniform swap and Christmas jumper swap.



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.



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, Enterprise and DYW brought our schools together to develop skills whilst fostering a strong sense of community and shared learning.



P6 Shieldhill pupils participated in a young leaders training day and organised and implemented P1-3 multi sports lunchtime clubs.



Our Decision Making Groups continue to play a vital role in capturing our learners' voices, ensuring their insights directly shape and inform the format of our upcoming sessions.



Our P7s planned and hosted their own Burns Supper, inviting families to join the celebrations.



All members of the management have completed Agile Leadership Training and are now in a phase of implementing skills learned.



Review of Progress 2025-2026

California and Shieldhill ELC

All staff have participated in Numeracy training using the Early Numeracy materials. Both nurseries have conducted an audit of current resources to identify gaps in each area. Staff have met to discuss opportunities for mathematics in each area of the nursery and amended their core provision to reflect this. Recent observations have highlighted mathematics being more visible in the resources and provocations on offer with staff providing resources for areas such as Time and Measure which had been lacking before. Huddle discussions around the Assessment and Progression Framework have demonstrated an increase in confidence in all staff in their ability to identify evidence in pupils of their progress in Numeracy. This is reflected in more detailed Tracking reports by almost all staff and very specific comments based on evidence as seen in Quality Assurance procedures. Pupil progress in maths is being more accurately assessed which showed a dip in figures at the start of the session but with the increased opportunities for maths and an increase in staff ability to plan and deliver mathematics opportunities, these figures are now rising. Evaluative comments on spontaneous observations, reports and tracking have shown an increased ability and confidence in most staff to accurately analyse exactly what skills pupils are demonstrating and what their next steps should be. Margaret Aitken has completed a Care and Support audit to review the Environment and has recommended further resources which could be purchased and some tweaks to the environment to further increase opportunities for mathematics. This work has allowed staff to review the Environment as a whole and identified this as a area of improvement for next year.

Review of Progress 2025-2026

Curriculum, Learning, Teaching and Assessment – Reading

Due to participation in effective professional learning activities, almost all teachers have improved the consistency and effectiveness of the teaching of reading. As a result, most pupils are working at expected levels of CfE in Reading

Culture, Ethos, Relationships, Equality and Inclusion

Due to the effective partnerships the schools have fostered with our pupils, parents and partners, we were able to work together to develop our updated 'Rights and Relationships Policy'. As a result, almost all staff feel empowered and supported by a clear framework for promoting positive behaviour and learners feel valued as part of our community.

OUR VISION
Our vision is a community where all children feel safe, happy and achieving their full potential. We believe in the importance of:

- Learning
- Creativity
- Communication
- Teamwork
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Confidence
- Achievement
- Well-being
- Inclusion
- Diversity
- Equality
- Sustainability
- Partnership
- Innovation
- Excellence
- Integrity
- Honesty
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Collaboration
- Synergy
- Empowerment
- Empathy
- Compassion
- Kindness
- Generosity
- Gratitude
- Positivity
- Optimism
- Resilience
- Perseverance
- Determination
- Focus
- Concentration
- Attention
- Engagement
- Participation
- Involvement
- Contribution
- Commitment
- Dedication
- Passion
- Enthusiasm
- Energy
- Motivation
- Inspiration
- Creativity
- Innovation
- Excellence
- Integrity
- Honesty
- Transparency
- Accountability
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- Gratitude
- Positivity
- Optimism
- Resilience
- Perseverance
- Determination
- Focus
- Concentration
- Attention
- Engagement
- Participation
- Involvement
- Contribution
- Commitment
- Dedication
- Passion
- Enthusiasm
- Energy
- Motivation
- Inspiration

OUR AIMS
We aim to provide a high quality education for all children in our community. We aim to ensure that all children are safe, happy and achieving their full potential. We aim to ensure that all children are given the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive. We aim to ensure that all children are given the opportunity to develop their talents and abilities. We aim to ensure that all children are given the opportunity to become active citizens of our community. We aim to ensure that all children are given the opportunity to become responsible and caring individuals. We aim to ensure that all children are given the opportunity to become confident and resilient individuals. We aim to ensure that all children are given the opportunity to become happy and successful individuals. We aim to ensure that all children are given the opportunity to become the best they can be.

Visions, Values & Aims
AT Sheildhill and Cullinstown

OUR VALUES
Respect Others, Be Happy and Focus on Learning

- Introduce the use of the Falkirk Skills Framework within all Primary and ELC classrooms to improve and record skills development of our learners.
- Continue to enhance the consistency and effectiveness of the teaching of literacy to improve pupil attainment in reading

- Implement the "Thinking Classrooms" framework to transition from passive learning to active engagement, fostering a culture of collaborative problem-solving, critical thinking, and mathematical literacy.

- Improve the environment to ensure it includes well-organised spaces that foster emotional security and create opportunities for sustained shared thinking between pupils and adults.

- Increase staff confidence in **Sensory Circuit** provision to improve emotional regulation and school readiness for targeted pupils across the ELC and school.