



STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT AITHISG INBHEAN IS CÀILEACHD

2023-2024

Applecross Primary & Nursery



Kind Respectful Hard-Working

Introduction: Local and National Context

Ro-ràdh: Co-theacsa Ionadail agus Nàiseanta

This Standards and Quality Report is influenced by both Highland and national priorities. These can be summarised as follows:

Highland Priorities



National Improvement Framework Priorities



Entitlement, Excellence & Equity:

We will raise attainment and achievement for all, especially for children and young people from disadvantaged circumstances, including rural deprivation. We will focus relentlessly on improving standards and the quality of learning and teaching, to ensure that entitlement, equity and excellence are delivered across the system.

Empowerment & Leadership:

We will develop leadership skills at all levels of the system, for now and the future, building a culture of empowerment and professional capital.

Relationships:

We will maximise health and wellbeing for all children and young people, to give them the best possible start in life. We will ensure every child and young person feels part of the community they live in.

Opportunity:

We will maximise opportunities for our children and young people, and for the wider Highland community and its visitors, through the provision of high-quality services.

The key priorities outlined in the National Improvement Framework are:

- Placing the **human rights and needs of every child** and young person at the centre of education
- Improvement in children and young people's **health and wellbeing**
- **Closing the attainment gap** between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
- Improvement in skills and **sustained, positive school-leaver destinations** for all young people
- **Improvement in attainment**, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

Self-evaluation

To support self-evaluation, quality indicators from the national evaluative framework *How Good Is Our School?*4 are referenced.

Links to these sources (and others referenced) can be found here:

- [National Improvement Framework Improvement Plan](#)
- [HGIOS? 4](#) and [HGIOELC](#)
- [Health and Social Care Standards](#)
- [National Gaelic Language Plan](#)

In this report the following words are used to describe the numbers and proportions used:

All	Almost all	Most	Majority	Less than half	Few
100%	Over 90%	75% - 90%	50% - 74%	15% - 49%	Up to 15%

We are pleased to present our Standards and Quality Report for Session 2023-24. This report forms part of our quality improvement framework and provides important information regarding our school's progress to date and our next steps in school improvement.

Self-Evaluation for Self-Improvement is at the heart of our practice. 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. All staff understand that self-evaluation is an integral aspect of our approach to continuous improvement through addressing the 3 key questions:

- How well are we doing?
- How do we know?
- What are we going to do now?

Throughout the year we continuously evaluate what we do and how it makes a difference to our learners. We want to know what is working well for our school community and what needs further improvement. We inform decision making and actions through a continuous process of looking inwards, outwards and forwards.

Looking inwards - starts with those working with our children and young people

We focus on the impact on outcomes for learners. Our self-evaluation processes triangulate information, data, people's views and observation of practice to measure impact and inform planning for improvement.

Looking outwards - learning from others

Looking to others for new ideas that challenge our practice and support continuous improvement allows us to learn from what works and what doesn't. This includes practice in other schools, learning communities and learning from educational research.

Looking forwards - creating a vision and planning for implementation

Through leadership at all levels, we anticipate challenges and explore creative solutions. This helps us to create an aspirational vision for our school which shapes our actions and provides a focus for improvement.

Our children and young people are actively consulted and involved in this process. We also give staff, parents/carers, and other partners the opportunity to participate in discussions and activities to shape our improvement journey.

When we develop our improvement plan, we use key questions at scheduled review times throughout the session to know how well we are progressing towards achieving these positive outcomes and changes.



Together we are working hard to ensure the Highlands is the best place for children and young people to grow up safely, learn, develop and achieve.

With positive experiences, our children and young people will always see the Highlands as home.

Le eòlasan deimhinneach, bidh ar cloinn is ar n-òigridh daonna a' faicinn na Gàidhealtachd mar dhachaigh.

Mrs Kirsteen Hotchkiss
Head Teacher
Lochcarron Primary School

School Profile

Pròifil na Sgoile

The following information can be found on [Parentzone Scotland](#). It is important to remember that statistical data alone is not a measure of how well we are doing. All schools are unique. To understand how well we are doing it is important for us to look at a range of different data sources.

Attendance
92.9%

Average Class Size
10

Meeting PE Target
Target Met

Pupil Numbers (inc nursery)
10 (+3 nursery)

Teacher Numbers
1

Pupil Teacher Ratio
10\1

Applecross Primary School is located in a rural, coastal setting serving the local community of Applecross on the west coast of Scotland.

There are 10 children attending the school and 3 children in nursery, ranging from N4 – P5. P1 - 5 are taught together in a single multi-stage class and there is a separate nursery for 3 and 4 year olds.

The headteacher has overall leadership responsibility for Applecross Primary School and Lochcarron Primary School. The headteacher is supported by a principal teacher, who is based in Lochcarron but travels to Applecross on a regular basis.

As the school roll comprises a small number of children, attainment and progress will be expressed in 'overall' statements, rather than specific year groups or Curriculum for Excellence levels. This is to ensure the identity of individuals is not disclosed.

Overall, attainment across the school in literacy and numeracy is good. Children achieve appropriate CfE levels in literacy and numeracy across the school by the end of primary 7. A few children who face barriers to learning are making good progress towards meeting their individual targets.

Overall children are making the following progress:

Reading

Good progress

Writing

Good progress

Listening and talking

Good progress

Numeracy

Good progress

We have had no exclusions this year.

School vision, values and aims

Lèirsinn, luachan agus amasan na sgoile

Our collective nursery and school vision is:
'To learn together to be caring, creative and co-operative.'

Values:
Kind, Respectful, Hard-Working

Aims:
Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included (SHANARRI)

(Our new Vision and Values were chosen by the children during session 2023_24 after consultation with children, staff and parents).

Review of progress for session

Ath-sgrùdadh air adhartas airson an t-seisein

These projects are linked to the vision and priorities for Scottish Education based on delivering excellence and equity. Parent/Carer information is available [here](#).

School Priority:

Further develop teaching of writing, with a focus on strategic approach to planning and assessment

Purpose:

To support practitioner confidence in the use of benchmarks to inform achievement of levels and to provide reassurance in judgments with regards to the assessment of writing.

Progress:

Content:

- ✓ Three-year writing framework based on 9 text types by Stephen Graham created by cluster staff and implemented.
- ✓ Benchmarks used to assess learning and inform planning and next steps.
- ✓ Classroom observations of CT covered writing or literacy focus where possible.

Impact:

- ✓ Framework clearly supports teaching of 9 text types across all levels, throughout children's attendance at Lochcarron. Class teacher (CT) can see clearly where text types are to be covered and is able to be flexible with coverage when the need arises i.e. when covering IDL work.
- ✓ Teacher is using the benchmarks to inform achievement of a level in writing. New rubrics provided by HC are being used to inform judgement.
- ✓ Observations showed good understanding of Stephen Graham strategies for writing from CT, and good understanding from children. Children are beginning to transfer skills into other areas of curriculum e.g. using their report writing skills within IDL areas. Children are able to use structures learned for Stephen Graham Writing text types within other subject areas and for personal enjoyment.

- ✓ Children beginning to be aware of next steps in learning through use of High-Quality Assessments. (HQAs)
- ✓ Tracking meetings held with CT every term (Term 1/2, 3, 4) and summary of progress recorded for each child.
- ✓ ELC engage in high quality observations and have embedded 'Words Up'.
- ✓ CT is keen to embed and develop the teaching strategies further, to ensure excellence and equity for all.
- ✓ New HQA layout with 'Bus Stop' format is showing good progress. Children can talk about their learning and most are aware of their next steps in learning.
- ✓ Children show a willingness to write and are producing improved quality and quantity of work. Children are responding well to SG structured writing format. Children are choosing to write in their own time and have formed their own group called 'The Authors'.
- ✓ Increased use of IT is enabling children with literacy difficulties to access independent writing.
- ✓ Ct is engaging in professional discussions around children's learning and progressions within the levels for all children.
- ✓ EYPs have engaged with further training and personal development around language development. Confident with their skills.
- ✓ Good progress was made in Priority 1.

Next steps:

Engage with further online training planned for session 24/25 addressing the remaining 4 text types including Recount, Procedure, Response and Discussion.

Continue to use PM writing resources to support teaching of SG Writing.

Engage with HC rubrics and Benchmark sheets (Literacy for All) for ASG Moderation discussions.

Wraparound spelling format to be introduced across whole cluster.

School Priority:

Focus on literacy across the school through the implementation of the updated Highland Literacy Progression, and Literacy for All training.

Purpose:

To implement new HLP framework across the school to support clear, differentiated planning of lessons. To implement literacy tracking for learners with persistent literacy difficulties from early years and identify the need for interventions at earliest possible time.

Progress:

Content:

- ✓ Literacy lessons are planned effectively using new Highland Literacy Progression.
- ✓ Differentiation is visible across all stages and is evident in termly planning.

Impact:

- ✓ Termly & Daily plans reflect Highland Literacy Progression (HLP)
- ✓ CT plans lessons using Learning Intentions (LI) and Success Criteria (SC) taken from HLP
- ✓ Most children are engaged in assessing their own learning against LI and SC
- ✓ HQAs in writing and Reading planned using new HLP.

- ✓ Literacy for All training attended by CT and literacy trackers started for children showing signs of persistent literacy difficulties.
- ✓ New 'Phonicbooks' purchased to support early readers, and learners with difficulties with reading.
- ✓ ASN Tracker introduced with details of all interventions being followed by children.
- ✓ Children are beginning to formulate own next steps for learning using new HQA Bus Stop format.
- ✓ CT is beginning to have better understanding of 'Literacy for All' Highland Approach.
- ✓ CT is more aware of signs of Dyslexia
- ✓ CT is becoming more confident with using 'Literacy for All' tracker.
- ✓ CT is very happy with the pace of the books and the progression the children take through phonics.
- ✓ CT reports that children are engaging with new books and have developed their reading skills.
- ✓ Most children are progressing at a significant pace.
- ✓ Children's progress is tracked accurately, and CT knows where children are in terms of their literacy levels and gaps that may be present.
- ✓ CT is confident in raising Form 1s if required.
- ✓ Head Teacher, ASNT (consultation role) and Class Teacher can see overview of interventions being used.
- ✓ Good progress was made in this area.

Next steps:

Further embed the 'Literacy for All' tracking.

Further embed the new Highland Literacy Progression Framework.

Continue to track interventions and impact on learning

Introduce full 'Phonicbooks' reading scheme across infants and uppers, for those needing support.

School Priority:

Embed prompt and structured actions to raise children's attainment in literacy - Focus on Moderation and Assessment across ASG Moderation of Writing

Purpose:

To develop staff confidence and understanding in using the assessment and moderation process to support consistent judgements of levels, across the ASG, and to support staff confidence in judgement of ACEL (focus on writing)

To support children to make the best possible progress in writing.

Progress:

Impact:

Content:

- ✓ CT has engaged in regular moderation activities with colleagues in cluster school and across Plockton ASG. Recent moderation has been focused on writing and led by two QAMSOs.
- ✓ CT is keen to learn from others to ensure they continue to refine and improve their moderation practice.

- ✓ As a result of all moderation activity to date, the CT has a clearer understanding of national Benchmarks in writing.
- ✓ In addition, children benefit from CT's increased confidence in making more accurate professional judgements on children's progress within a level.
- ✓ Good progress was made in this area .

Next steps:

ASG to continue with Focus on Moderation of Writing
ASG to develop moderation of High-Quality Assessments

Progress and impact of Pupil Equity Fund Adhartas agus buaidh Maoin Cothromas Sgoilearan

1 hour extra per week – PSA:

The PSA hours were banked until the final term when they could be used as a block to support reading and writing along with HWB. Interventions on a daily basis have supported the children's attainment and there has been clear improvement. Achievement of level.

Emotional literacy books:

Emotional literacy books are used as and when required and allow for discussions to be held between PSA or Teacher, and children. The books support children's understanding of mental health.

Wider achievements Coileanaidhean nas fharsainghe

The class teacher wrote and produced a Christmas show, which all school and nursery children took part in and performed at the local hall.

The children took part in Gaelic singing and invited their cluster school Gaelic Medium class to join them.

The children travelled to Lochcarron and took part in two Outdoor Learning days.

The school participated in the Marion Gillies Love Memorial Competition which was exhibited and judged at the Spring Bulb and Baking show on Saturday 23rd March in Plockton. The subject this year was 'Under the Sea'. A P3 pupil won First Prize for his beautiful painting.

The children take part in 'Wild Wednesdays' every Wednesday afternoon at Torgarve Woods as part of our Outdoor Learning programme.

We took part in the tree planting day at Glen Shieldaig Estate with the Woodland Trust.

The children regularly take part in the community 'Strupag' at the village hall – singing songs and enjoying soup and sandwiches made by the hall committee.

Comments from learners, families, stakeholders and staff Beachdan bho luchd-ionnsachaidh, teaghlaichean, luchd-ùidhe is luchd-obrach

Feedback from Stakeholders:

The children were very enthusiastic about singing and dancing at our Gaelic event. They really made it lively and fun! Bealach member (Applecross Gaelic Group).

We appreciate when the primary and nursery children are involved in our community fundraising events. Everyone enjoyed their singing- very professional! (Applecross Hall Committee Members).

There has been a noticeable improvement in behaviour over the past year. (Beavers and Scouts.)

It was lovely to see how the older children looked after each other at the event- they were all so caring of each other. (Woodland Trust employee).

I love coming over to Applecross Primary. The children are so keen to learn and take part! (Fèis Rois instructor).

Feedback from Pupils:

What is working well in our school?

I love Forest School and being outside.

I like seeing the nursery every day.

I like looking after Dave (the fish).

I am in the Author's Club. There are four of us and we write in break times and choosing time. We have written four and a half chapters.

I didn't know about recounts and now I do.

I loved doing the zigzag writing books. I wrote a lot. I like writing now and I didn't before.

I want to keep getting better at 'Magic Cat'. I am on page three.

I really like doing the sum stories and the four operations. (Numeracy)

I like sounding out and reading. (Daily intervention with PSA)

What changes would you like to see made?

I would like to do more things outside. I like it when we do maths sums outside with leaves and sticks.

I would like to do different maths things online; I don't like Hit-The-Button as it is timed. I like the Bitesize 'Defenders of Mathtica' instead.

Feedback from Families:

I'm extremely grateful for having such an amazing support for myself and my child from everyone in the school. I feel that the team that now works in the school is professional, involved and engaged. I feel that we couldn't have a better team! Thank you!

No problems with the school or staff. Further classroom support would be beneficial but not school's fault.

Additional PSA time would be beneficial to not only my own children but the whole class.

Very appreciative of all the hard work, long hours done to catch up...Progress is so noticeable and wonderful. The whole team is fabulous, and our school is great once again!

Feeling once again welcome into the school and having a chance to see examples of our children's work and achievements, is something that has been sorely missed. We are very happy and grateful.

Brilliant. So grateful for the changes that have been put in place this year. Thank you.

It is fantastic to see the progress ... has made during this term. He is really blossoming.

Thank you for making the time for us.

Since Mrs Gillies started teaching, my child has made such huge progress that it's almost hard to believe. I'm absolutely amazed with the service that's being delivered. Thank you.

Feedback from Staff:

What is working well in our school?

I value the supportive and understanding SMT / HT. At times this has been a challenging class this year and I greatly feel the support and encouragement.

I feel that my ideas and contributions are listened to.

I have found the SG writing and the moderation highly valuable.

I feel well supported in my role as EYP in Applecross Nursery. I think that our staff team is one of the top reasons for this.

I like the positive, rich and nurturing ethos of the school which provides the children with a fantastic inclusive learning environment.

What changes would you like to see made?

I would like to not be part of the part of meetings that only apply to the Lochcarron Staff, but I understand that this is not always convenient, and I certainly wouldn't want to impact on working hours of the SMT/HT.

Improvement – Training for PSAs

Capacity for continuous improvement

Comas airson leasachadh leantainneach

Using indicators from 'How Good is our School 4' together with learner, parent, carer, partner and community feedback we believe we have made the following progress this session:

	ELC	PRIMARY
QI 1.3 Leadership of change	Satisfactory	Good
QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Good	Good
QI 3.1 Wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Good	Good
QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement/Securing children's progress	Good	Good

Our overall evaluation of our capacity for continuous improvement is:

We are confident in our capacity for continuous improvement.

Key priorities for improvement planning

Prìomhachasan airson planadh airson leasachadh

- ✓ Continue to raise attainment in writing through engagement with further Stephen Graham training sessions, moderation across the ASG and development of moderation of HQAs.
- ✓ Introduce Wraparound Spelling format across whole cluster.
- ✓ Develop concise planning system to encompass 4 contexts for learning to ensure broad and balanced coverage of curriculum with clear differentiation.
- ✓ Develop IDL 3-year overview to ensure breadth, depth and challenge within Broad General Education.
- ✓ Embed the 'Literacy for All' tracking to support early identification of children with persistent literacy difficulties and support them with targeted interventions in order that they achieve their potential.
- ✓ Embed prompt and structured actions to raise children's attainment in literacy and numeracy, as well as other areas of the curriculum (Focus on Moderation and Assessment across ASG) Moderation of Writing - ASG.

Planning ahead

A' planadh air adhart

Full details of the school's 2024/25 improvement priorities and actions are detailed on the school improvement plan, which can be accessed on our [website](#) or by contacting the school office.