

2023/24



Sylvie Sinclair (Bower Primary)

Introduction: Local and National Context

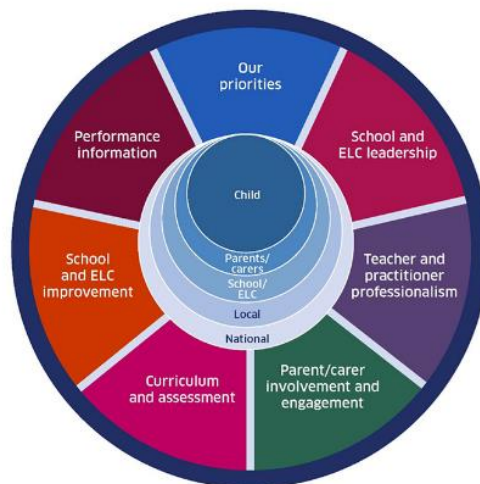
Ro-ràdh: Co-theacsa Ionadail agus Nàiseanta

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



The key priorities outlined in the National Improvement Framework are:

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:

- 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](#)

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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.

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

<u>All</u>	<u>Almost all</u>	<u>Most</u>	<u>Majority</u>	<u>Less than half</u>	<u>Few</u>
<u>100%</u>	<u>91% - 99%</u>	<u>76% - 90%</u>	<u>51% - 75%</u>	<u>16% - 50%</u>	<u>Up to 15%</u>

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.

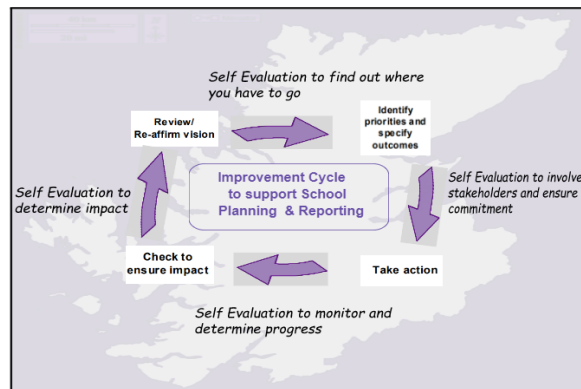
Looking forwards - creating a vision and planning for implementation

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.

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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 daonnan a' faicinn na Gàidhealtachd mar dhachaigh.

Sylvie Sinclair
 Head Teacher
 Bower Primary School
 Keiss Primary School & Nursery

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 95%	Average Class Size 11/1	Meeting PE Target Target Met
Pupil Numbers 22	Teacher Numbers 2	Pupil Teacher Ratio 11.1

2023/24 Proportions of pupils achieving Curriculum for Excellence Levels (P1, P4, P7 combined):

Reading Majority	Writing Majority	Listening and talking Most	Numeracy Most
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We have had no exclusions this year.

Bower Primary School is located in a rural setting serving the local community of Bowermadden, Hastigrow, Gillock, Hunster, Brabsterdorrán, Murza, Thura and Kirk on the north east coast of Caithness.

The Head Teacher has overall leadership responsibility for Bower and Keiss Primary School and Nursery cluster. Staff and children from both schools work together regularly.

At Bower Primary School, there are 22 children ranging from P1 to P7. During the 2023-24 academic year, we organised two multi-composite classes: one for P1-P3 and another for P4-P7 pupils. The teaching staff consists of three teachers, with one teacher working full-time and the other two sharing responsibilities on a job-share basis. For P1 to P4 class, two teachers alternate teaching days: one teacher teaches them on Monday and Tuesday, while the other takes over for the remainder of the week. Similarly, for P5 to P7 pupils, the schedule involves two teachers, with one teaching on Monday and Tuesday, and the second teacher taking over on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

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 English and numeracy and mathematics is **good**. Children achieve appropriate CfE levels in literacy and numeracy and, across the school, a few children are exceeding nationally expected levels. Most children who face barriers to learning are making good progress towards meeting their individual targets.

Overall children are making the following progress:

Reading	Writing	Listening and talking	Numeracy
Good progress	Good progress	Good progress	Good progress

We have had no exclusions this year.

School vision, values and aims

Lèirsinn, luachan agus amasan na sgoile

At Bower, we are a small school that delivers BIG Education.

Vision:: Our school is a place of learning where everyone (pupils, staff, parents and the wider community) works together in a responsible, respectful, creative, hard-working and successful environment.

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Values: We will work together to develop our school values: Happiness, Respect, Kindness, Community, Teamwork and Healthy.

Aim: At Bower Primary School we aim to:

- Provide exciting and memorable experiences.
- Provide an ethos that fosters integrity and respect.
- Encourage learners to be resilient, independent and make sensible decisions.
- Encourage learners to be confident, to accept and
- Be willing to tackle challenges

These were reviewed in consultation with pupils, staff and parents in October 2023.

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: Developing Play Pedagogy

Purpose:

There has been growing interest in a more play-based pedagogy in Scottish Education and there is strong evidence that it increases attainment. Whilst the standard of Teaching and Learning is very good overall, a more secure understanding of play Pedagogy would ensure consistency across the school and curriculum.

Progression:

- Teachers understand the rationale behind Play Pedagogy
- Teachers understand the different types of play (child initiated, adult initiated and adult-directed activities).
- P1-3 have implemented play in their classroom and tried the 3 experiences detailed above.
- Children are reviewing and consolidating their meta-skills

Impact :

- Teachers comprehend the value of play in children's learning and environment.
- Teachers recognise the varied ways children engage with learning and development, enable them to create rich and balanced environments that support each type of play effectively.
- Teachers have observed that children are more engaged in their learning.
- Children can adapt, problem solve and collaborate effectively in various

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social and academic contexts.

Children in P1 to 3, have learned and practised meta-skills such as integrity and now are able to take part in games more effectively.

- We created a timetable
- Staff regularly share experiences and best practices
- Leuven scale of involvement and Health & Wellbeing before starting implementation of Play Pedagogy and revisited again later.
- Parents have been consulted throughout the development of our pedagogy and informed about the benefits of play. (questionnaire/ leaflet/ open day)
- Play is now incorporated in our daily timetable. First 45 minutes of every day is protected free play. (not able to plan for teacher and children led play)
- Teachers can draw from each other's insights, refine approaches and enhance quality of play based learning experiences for children
- At the beginning of our play journey some of the learners were tracked as being having a high level engagement however this declined as the session went on to an extremely low level of engagement with some of the children flitting from activity to activity with no purpose. A Leuven scale was then carried out in May and showed very different results. The children's engagement was tracked as being moderate moving up to extremely high as the play session continued showing concentration, creativity and persistence.
- Parents understand the benefits of play and support the school in continuing this initiative. They are aware of the learning taking place.

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Next steps:

- To expand the implementation of play pedagogy to older children by incorporating outdoor learning.
- To design an effective assessment system for efficient tracking.
- To organise indoor and outdoor environments effectively to facilitate play-based learning.
- To design a play policy in consultation with all stakeholders.

School Priority:**Right Respecting Schools****Purpose:**

Whilst the school is a nurturing environment and respects and listens to views and opinions of learners, a more formalised and structured approach will ensure consistency. Working towards Rights Respecting Schools will ensure all our learner know about their rights and responsibilities.

Impact:**Progress:**

- A RRS committee has been set up. Members chose a number of articles to learn throughout this session.
- A culture of respect , inclusivity and empowerment throughout the school community, fostering positive relationship among pupils , staff, parents , while ensuring that the rights and wellbeing of all individuals are upheld and respected.
- A right has been introduced by the HT during fortnight assemblies and teachers organised follow-up activities

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related to that article in the week that followed.

- Pupils/ staff/ parents surveys were organised to review vision, values and aims.
- All staff reinforce the above throughout the day.
- The whole school community has worked together to create a playground and classroom charter.
- All stakeholders have been made aware of children's rights through posts on Seesaw, displays, newsletters, etc.
- A comprehensive plan has been developed outlining all actions to be taken throughout the year.
- All pupils know that they have rights and what these are.
- A reviewed set of vision, values and aims has been created.
- Planning reflects rights and responsibilities
- Children can refer at all times to their playground/ classroom charters.
- Community know children's rights
- The school achieved its Bronze Award at the end of session.

Next steps:

- To continue embedding rights in our planning and every day tasks
- To work towards achieving Silver award.

Progress and impact of Pupil Equity Fund

Adhartas agus buaidh Maoin Cothromas Sgoilearan

No Pupil Equity Fund

Wider achievements

Coileanaidhean nas fharsainghe

Opportunities to ensure achievement through a wide range of activities are promoted across the school. We recognise individual achievement by regularly sharing at assembly. Out-of-school events and success in competitions/awards are also shared at assemblies, in newsletters, and on Seesaw. Winning entries of artwork, competitions, etc., are displayed at the entrance of the school. We have 'Celebrating Success' wall displays to further highlight accomplishments.

We believe strong, supportive, and nurturing relationships are key to our school community thriving together. Relationships at all levels are based on our key values of kindness and respect. Children identify with this ethos of achievement and have a strong belief that they can be

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successful locally and nationally too. We are very proud of our pupils who are confident, aware of their responsibilities, and have a positive “can-do” attitude.

Additionally, we actively encourage and support interdisciplinary activities that provide opportunities for children to explore their interests, develop their talents and transfer their skills.

Furthermore, we prioritise the well-being and mental health of our pupils. We have dedicated staff members ensuring that every child has access to support when needed. Our inclusive and nurturing approach fosters a sense of belonging and emotional resilience among our pupils, empowering them to overcome challenges and reach their full potential.

Comments from learners, families, stakeholders and staff

Beachdan bho luchd-ionnsachaidh, teaghlachan, luchd-ùidhe is luchd-obrach

Comments from learners:

Pupil Questionnaire	Session : 2023-2024	Term 4	in%	
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
20 responses				
I enjoy learning in school	40	60	0	0
I enjoy lunch time in the dinner hall	75	25	0	0
I feel safe in the school	60	40		
My teacher listens to my views	45	55		
Staff talk to me regularly about how to improve my learning	50	40	10	
I get help when I need it	35	60	5	
Children in school are friendly	50	45	5	
I think it's a good idea to wear school uniform	40	40	15	5
I have adults in the school I can speak to if I am upset or worried about something	55	40	5	
Pupils think that the teachers at Bower PS are good	60	35	5	
Staff make sure pupils behave well	50	45		5
Staff are good at dealing with bullying behaviour	50	45	5	5
The pupil council is making improvements to the school	35	55	10	
I take part in out-of-class activities and school clubs	25	40	25	15
People think Bower is a good school	50	45	5	5
I am pleased that this is my school	55	45	5	
Comments: Write down three things you really like about Bower PS				
Big Playground, wooden house, card and songs				

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Fun for 31, break & lunch

Playing football, PE and when Alyn comes for lunch

I learn things that I should know

The pupils, the food and playtime

The classroom is bright and colourful. There are not too many people and I enjoy working in the Polycrub

The teachers are nice, I have lots of friends and we do lots of different activities.

Funny pupils, fun coffee morning, we are so friendly.

In the 6 hours of school we get 1 hour playtime, there are fun activities and there is a Polycrub.

Dress down Friday, lunches, people.

I like how staff are friendly and the pupils are nice and that we go outside to grow plants in our Polycrub on Wednesday afternoon.

Reading, writing and PE

Everyone is nice, I like learning with the wood

Art Maths and reading

I like how we get more playtime to learn more . I get to play with the older ones.

Playing, having food and reading

Learning in school, the teachers, I really love making new friends

I like learning about weddings , I like playing with my friends

Write down 3 things you would like the school to improve, change or develop in some ways

Making learning funnier and easier

Football nets, more equipment and less shouting teachers

Better football nets, football pump, better football

Bigger lunch hall, new footballs, new pens

In my opinion, I think the school should improve on not being sexist (because they favour girls), being nicer to the boys and better outdoor equipment

Fix/Tidy the holes in the walls of the building, more flowers and better football nets

Better football nets, better benches and not being sexist

Timber trail, football nets recycling capacity

More casual clothes, more science , clubs

I would like the school to look at the gazebo because it has missing wood n the sides . instead of doing sports in PE, I would like to do other stuff than sports. Pump up some of the footballs

I don't really like the way we stand for the school song, I can't really think of anything else.

Gymnastics, darts and more reading

More gymnastics, more maths and piano

I don't know

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Comments from families:

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE	Session: 2023-2024		(10responses- 5/8 P1-3 & 7/14-P4-7)	
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
My child likes being at this school	7	3		
Staff treat my child fairly and with respect.	7	3		
I feel my child is safe at school	9	1		
The school helps my child feel confident	8	2		
I feel the staff really know my child as an individual	9	1		
My child copes well with their learning	7	3		
My child receives the help he/she needs to do well.	7	3		
The school is welcoming and there are opportunities to get involved	9	1		
My child is encouraged by the school to be healthy and take regular exercise	9	1		
The school supports my child's emotional wellbeing	7	3		
My child is making good progress at school	7	3		
I receive helpful, regular feedback of how my child is learning and developing e.g. informal feedback, reports and learning profiles	8	2		
School and class newsletters are informative and easy to understand	8	2		
The information I receive about my child reaches me at the right time.	8	2		
I understand how my child's progress is assessed	7	3		
The school gives me advice on how to support my child's learning at home	7	3		
I receive helpful and regular information about the school	7	3		
The school organises activities where my child and I can learn together	7	2	1	
The school seeks my views and listens to my concerns	6	4		
I feel comfortable approaching the school with questions, suggestions and/or problems	7	3		
I feel encouraged to be involved in the work of the Parent Council	6	4		
I am kept informed about the work of the Parent Council	6	4		
I am satisfied with the quality of teaching in the school	6	4		
The school is well led and managed	8	2		

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The school encourages children to treat others with respect	9	1		
I would recommend the school to other parents	9	1		
Overall, I am satisfied with the school	8	2		
The school deals with behaviour issues	7	3		

Comments from stakeholders:

- A brilliant school and staff team, with a wonderful group of bairns. The school building is what it is but it would be nice if the Council could look to improve space and facilities which may allay fears for the future.

Further community with links with the nursery and toddler group, etc. would be great to cultivate. Thank you all for your hard work and efforts, it is appreciated.

- It’s a nice small school, with a personal feel that enable children of all ages to mix and play.
- Caring, friendly, professional, hardworking, nurturing. Clearly a very close team that works very well together to the benefit of the pupils.

Comments from staff:

The number of teachers and PSAs , at the school is small. Whilst their views are taken into account, it is not appropriate to publish these responses because the risk of being able to identify individuals is high.

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	SECONDARY
QI 1.3 Leadership of change	Choose an item.	Good	Choose an item.
QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Choose an item.	Good	Choose an item.
QI 3.1 Wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Choose an item.	Good	Choose an item.
QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement/Securing children’s progress	Choose an item.	Good	Choose an item.

Our overall evaluation of our capacity for continuous improvement is:

We are confident in our capacity for continuous improvement.

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Key priorities for improvement planning

Prìomhachasan airson planadh airson leasachadh

- Continue to improve literacy attainment especially writing, ensuring children can spell common and less common words accurately.
- Continue to improve numeracy attainment.
- Continue to develop Play Pedagogy focussing on outdoor learning.
- Continue to improve teachers' confidence in tracking and monitoring the progress of learners.

Planning ahead

A' planadh air adhart

Full details of the school's 2023/24 improvement priorities and actions are detailed on the school improvement plan, which can be accessed on the link [SIP BOWER 24 25.docx](#) or by contacting the school office.