



# STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT AITHISG INBHEAN IS CÀILEACHD

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2023-2024

Ballachulish Primary School



# 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 daonnan a' faicinn na Gàidhealtachd mar dhachaigh.

Mary Evans  
Acting Head Teacher  
Ballachulish Primary School

## School Profile

### Pròifil na Sgoile

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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**  
89.7%

**Average Class Size**  
17

**Meeting PE Target**  
Target Met

**Pupil Numbers (inc nursery)**  
35 (+12 nursery)

**Teacher Numbers**  
3

**Pupil Teacher Ratio**  
11.6

Ballachulish Primary School is in a rural setting serving the community of Ballachulish and Kentallen. We are in South Lochaber near the shores of Loch Leven, traditionally this would be identified as Argyll.

There are 32 children attending the school, ranging from P1 – 7. They are taught in two multi-composite class. The school has a nursery with a current roll of 12 children attending.

The headteacher has overall leadership responsibility for St Bride's Primary School and Glencoe, Ballachulish and Duror Primaries. There is currently a vacancy for a principal teacher. Staff and children from the 4 schools work together regularly.

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 satisfactory. Children achieve appropriate CfE levels in literacy and numeracy. Most children who face barriers to learning are making good progress towards meeting their individual targets.

Overall children are making the following progress:

**Reading**

Satisfactory progress

**Writing**

Satisfactory progress

**Listening and talking**

Satisfactory progress

**Numeracy**

Satisfactory progress

We have had no exclusions this year.

## School vision, values and aims

### Lèirsinn, luachan agus amasan na sgoile

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In Ballachulish Primary School we ensure that all children develop the attributes, knowledge and skills they need to thrive in life, learning and work. They will be able to demonstrate the four capacities (successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens) through the four contexts for learning (curriculum areas and subjects, interdisciplinary learning, ethos and life of the school and opportunities for personal achievement) and in a curriculum which reflects the seven principles of design (breadth, progression, depth, personalisation and choice, challenge and enjoyment, coherence and relevance).

Our values are based around being safe, ready and respectful and we aim to work, learn and grow together and are currently under review and will be updated following consultation with children, families, staff and the community.

## 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:

#### Raising attainment in literacy

##### Purpose:

This project was developed in response to our assessment data for writing and reading. Teaching staff observed that there was a decline in the quality and consistency of grammar and spelling for most children in P4 – P7 across the cluster. Observations of learning showed a lack of consistency in terms of the teaching and assessment of writing. This impacted moderation of standards across the cluster.

Improvements in reading were noted. The project aimed to maintain the growth of Standardised Age scores and Reading Ability scores.

##### Progress:

- ✓ All teachers attended Talk for Writing training and now use the approach when teaching writing.
- ✓ Approaches to assessing progress in writing were reviewed and agreed. These are now scheduled within an annual assessment calendar. All teachers worked together to moderate examples of writing to agree shared standards.
- ✓ Most parents and carers attended a writing workshop to find out more about the Talk for Writing approach.
- ✓ The QAMSO attended Stephen Graham reading and cascaded information. All teachers use a reciprocal reading approach to teach reading skills.
- ✓ Work was started on developing phonics, grammar and punctuation progressions. This

##### Impact:

- ✓ Observations of learning showed a consistent approach to writing within and across schools by end May 2024 with an increase in learner confidence and engagement noted by class teachers. Jotter monitoring shows an improvement in the quality of writing for most children. Most children attained appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels in writing.
- ✓ There is consistent use of diagnostic and formative assessment approaches in writing. Together with moderation activities, this has supported teachers to evaluate and moderate learners' progress to better track progression in writing and plan learning to target gaps in understanding.
- ✓ Feedback from parents and carers was positive. As a next step, families will be asked for their views to design and deliver content for writing.
- ✓ Observations of learning show a consistent approach to teaching reading within and across schools with continued improvements in reading reflected in assessment evidence. Support and challenge for individual learners is planned well.



will be carried forward with support from the Literacy Development Officer and Highland Literacy Roadmap resource.

✓ Staff will continue to become familiar with Highland literacy resources, using this to develop progressions.

### Next steps:

1. Develop progressions for phonics, grammar and punctuation
2. Resources for the teaching of grammar and punctuation identified and purchased
3. Ensure that all new staff have completed Talk for Writing training at the relevant stage.
4. All Primary ASG staff engage in Writing Moderation activities.
5. Ensure staff across the ASG have opportunities to plan together and share good practice.
6. Gather pupil/staff views about the teaching of writing.

### School Priority:

## Developing approaches to play pedagogy

### Purpose:

Following positive inspection feedback for St Bride's Primary, this project plans to share and scale up this good practice across the cluster to develop, enhance and progress child-initiated play within and beyond Early Years.

### Progress:

- ✓ All teachers attended sessions lead by Tina Fraser (Principal Teacher, St Bride's) with a focus on the Anna Ephgrave 'planning in the moment' approach. Teachers have engaged with national guidance.
- ✓ All staff attended Makaton training.
- ✓ Teaching staff were involved in peer observations to observe approaches to play learning.
- ✓ A meta-skills tracker has been developed to track skills progression of children.

### Impact:

- ✓ Observations of learning show that the majority of teacher's are developing confidence in embedding play-based learning. Children are involved in whole school play learning together. Children and staff engage well with each other during play which helps to extend children's learning. Staff are beginning to use observations to assess individual children's learning and plan the next steps.
- ✓ Strategies are in place to support children with additional support needs to be fully included, engaged and involved in play experiences.
- ✓ Teachers used peer observations as an opportunity to reflect on their own professional knowledge and skills. All staff actively engaged in peer observations to improve their practice. There is a culture of learning and support across the cluster which is leading to meaningful opportunities for staff to learn from each other. This is building staff confidence and capacity.
- ✓ Most children can talk about the skills they have achieved through a range of activities. Most children are starting to take ownership of their own learning. Play learning is enabling most children to make connections, explore ideas,

identify problems and seek solutions. These are tracked and used to inform future learning.

### Next steps:

1. Continue to develop experiences that match children's age and stage of development.
2. Continue to consider the balance between adult-directed and child-led activities to develop further children's independence and problem-solving skills.
3. Finalise and implement skills tracker to help inform future learning.
4. Continue to track skills development in order to inform future learning pathways.
5. Continue to develop approaches to planning and observation

School Priority:

## Maximising learner participation

### Purpose:

HMI engagement with two schools within the cluster identified the need to maximise learner participation, outlining the need to provide children with more opportunities to share their views and take responsibility across the school. Reports indicated that children should have more opportunities for children to lead their learning. This will support them in developing more confidence, which will in turn support their wellbeing.

### Progress:

- ✓ Pupil groups have been introduced in all schools. These groups have been involved in planning playground improvements, fundraising for charity events, gathering pupil opinion, developing road safety awareness and improving the school learning environment. We are developing opportunities for them to reflect and lead on school improvement
- ✓ The 'Learning Pit' has been developed in all schools
- ✓ Embed daily Health and Wellbeing 'check ins'

### Impact:

- ✓ Staff used the [Learner Participation in Educational Settings \(3-18\)](#) tool to audit current approaches. As a result pupils are now involved in decision making groups. This is supporting them to influence:
  - management and leadership
  - school budgets, systems and structures
  - school rules, policies and procedures
  - school building and grounds development and design
  - engagement with learning
- ✓ Learning Pit activities are providing children with opportunities to influence and participate in decisions about learning and teaching approaches. This includes; approaches taken, the topic, sequence, and structures. Most children are able to articulate how they learn, are taught, and assessed. Through this, learners are starting to exercise a key role in actively supporting curriculum development through on-going dialogue with teachers and others. Observations show that most children enjoy and engage well with learning.
- ✓ All children engage in emotional check-ins. As a result, most children have a good understanding of wellbeing and report that they feel safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

Relationships across the school and cluster are very positive. All staff are proactive in promoting positive relationships. Children feel supported to do their best and feel that they are treated with respect.

- ✓ Home-school links enhanced through creative activities
- ✓ Wellbeing is supported through the provision of creative activities which encourage home/school communication.

### Next steps:

1. Pupils will be more involved in the school improvement process. Child-friendly School Improvement Plans will be displayed in school and pupils will be involved in collecting evidence of SIP priorities through floorbooks, etc.
2. Pupils will be surveyed twice a year to gather views about their learning and school experience.
3. P7 Committee will work with pupils across the school to ensure all pupils have the opportunity to share their views and take on leadership opportunities.
4. All P6 & P7 pupils will participate in your leader training run by Active Schools Coordinators and will be encouraged to lead activities for younger pupils.
5. Pupils' wider achievements and learning opportunities will be tracked across all classes – parents, pupils, staff and the wider community will be surveyed to gain insight into the key learning experiences they feel pupils should have during their time at our school.
6. A whole school social emotional programme – Zones of Regulation – will be implemented across the ELC and school. This will lead to pupils having increased self-awareness and social and emotional skills and they will use a common language for communication, problem solving, and emotional understanding.

## Progress and impact of Pupil Equity Fund

### Adhartas agus buaidh Maoin Cothromas Sgoilearan

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Our PEF Plan 2023-24 focussed on:

1. Creative and developmental play therapy delivered by Kinlochlovin' It. This is an effective intervention and targets specific pupils to develop their play and communication skills.
2. PSA Support – individualised support to deal with emotional regulation, ACEs and anxiety. This continues to be a positive and effective intervention for our pupils.
3. Photon Productions – whole school opportunity for children to work collaboratively and to perform in a Christmas Production for all parents and the Ballachulish community. All pupils participated and the show was a big success.

## Wider achievements

### Coileanaidhean nas fharsainghe

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Children develop well the four capacities through opportunities to be involved in a range of activities. These include skiing, swimming, music tuition, cross country running, athletics and downhill mountain biking. Children compete at shinty and football. Pupils in the upper stages competed in the Lochaber Music Festival. Pupils perform for parents and community at our annual Christmas Show.

## Comments from learners, families, stakeholders and staff



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

Almost all parents who completed a parent/carer questionnaire in March 2024 responded positively. The felt that children felt safe and happy and enjoyed learning at school.

'The school has made huge progress' Parent

'The school has transformed' Parent

Pupil feedback indicates that the pupils like learning at school and feel that their teachers know them well. A number felt that pupil behaviour across the school could be improved.

## 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
<b>QI 1.3</b> Leadership of change	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
<b>QI 2.3</b> Learning, teaching and assessment	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
<b>QI 3.1</b> Wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
<b>QI 3.2</b> Raising attainment and achievement/Securing children's progress	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Our overall evaluation of our capacity for continuous improvement is: Satisfactory

We are confident in our capacity for continuous improvement.

## Key priorities for improvement planning Prìomhachasan airson planadh airson leasachadh

1. Raising Attainment in Literacy – continue to improve Learning & Teaching Approaches in Literacy with a particular focus on developing approaches to the teaching of grammar and punctuation.
2. Improve Health & Wellbeing – introduce a new social emotional curriculum across the school to increase self-awareness and develop social and emotional skills
3. Empowerment & Leadership – Pupils wider achievements, opportunities and experiences will be tracked to ensure all pupils have the opportunity to achieve in a variety of ways.

## 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.

*Work together, learn together, grow together*