

STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT AITHISG INBHEAN IS CÀILEACHD

2023/24



Leadership, Aspiration, Compassion

ALNESS ACADEMY
HIGHLAND COUNCIL | ADD ESTABLISHMENT ADDRESS

School Profile

Pròifil na Sgoile

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 sources.

Alness Academy is a non-denominational secondary school on the Cromarty Firth in the Highlands of Scotland. We serve the town of Alness and the villages of Evanton and Ardross along with 5 associated primary schools. We have a current role of 481 students, this is growing year on year. The headteacher is supported by 2 permanent Depute Head Teachers and 6 curriculum principal teachers and 4 principal teachers support.

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 very good progress towards meeting their individual targets.

We are staffed across all subjects and have been successful in recruiting all vacant posts.

55% of our current school roll has been recorded as having additional support needs, 20% of our young people are registered for a free school meal, 48% of our young people are living in the most deprived zones in Scotland. Social and equity issues affect many of our young people, so we have focussed our Strategic Equity Funding along with our Pupil Equity Funding towards supporting nurture, wellbeing and attendance in our school.

Data relating to our context:

Pupil Numbers	Attendance	Exclusions	Teacher Numbers (FTE)
481	83.62%	17	40.30

S1 numbers	S2 numbers	S3 numbers	S4 numbers	S5 numbers	S6 numbers
93	86	98	95	73	33

SIMD Q1	SIMD Q2	SIMD Q2	SIMD Q3	SIMD Q5	Unknown
45.95%	23.28%	22.45%	22.45%	5.2%	1.46%

Overall ASN	Free School Meal	EAL	Glossary:
52.90%	25%	18%	FTE – Full Time Equivalent SIMD – Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1= % of pupils living in most deprived areas 5=least deprived areas ASN – Additional Support Needs EAL – percentage of learners for whom English is an Additional Language

Attainment

Literacy and Numeracy in S1-S3 – Broad General Education -

Level 3 2023/2024 Percentage of pupils achieving Curriculum for Excellence Levels by the end of S3

Reading	Writing	Listening and talking	Numeracy
82%	82%	82%	87.13%

Level 4

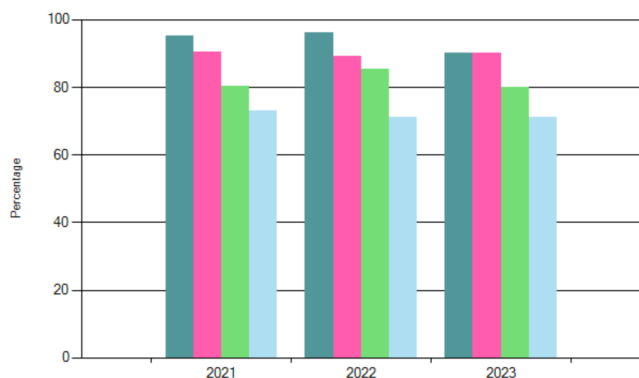
Reading	Writing	Listening and talking	Numeracy
59%	59%	59%	56%

Senior Phase Numeracy and Literacy

S4								
Establishment	Year	% Level 3 Literacy	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 5 Literacy	% Level 3 Numeracy	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Numeracy	Number in Cohort
Alness Academy	2023	96.88	90.63	68.75	92.71	78.13	57.29	96
Virtual Comparator	2023	95.17	89.17	65.52	90.73	83.23	56.25	960
National	2023	94.33	92.1	75.78	92.98	88.22	64.09	
Alness Academy	2022	97.33	96	92	96	92	61.33	75
Virtual Comparator	2022	90	87.2	62.53	89.47	81.6	51.2	750
Alness Academy	2021	98.48	92.42	66.67	95.45	81.82	48.48	66
Virtual Comparator	2021	91.67	87.42	61.67	90.15	80	45	660
Alness Academy	2020	98.33	95	71.67	96.67	93.33	58.33	60
Virtual Comparator	2020	92.83	88.33	58	93	83.83	44	600
Alness Academy	2019	100	95.38	69.23	96.92	95.38	43.08	65
Virtual Comparator	2019	91.54	86.15	59.85	91.23	83.23	47.85	650
Alness Academy	2018	91.14	75.95	60.76	89.87	77.22	26.58	79
Virtual Comparator	2018	91.9	87.72	59.62	90.76	81.27	44.18	790

Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy

Percentage of Leavers Attaining Literacy



Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy

Percentage of Leavers Attaining Numeracy



S5								
Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 5 Literacy	% Level 6 Literacy	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Numeracy	% Level 6 Numeracy	Number in Cohort
Alness Academy	2023	100	98.33	63.33	100	85	30	60
Virtual Comparator	2023	92	78.17	42.5	90.5	69	18.5	600
National	2023	95.5	86.87	56.86	93.1	76.05	27.36	
Alness Academy	2022	94.23	86.54	63.46	86.54	76.92	28.85	52
Virtual Comparator	2022	93.27	78.46	45.77	89.23	64.62	17.88	520
Alness Academy	2021	94.06	84.47	50.68	89.5	63.47	22.37	56
Virtual Comparator	2021	96.21	87.53	59.59	94.02	77.35	27.99	560
Alness Academy	2020	92.35	84.12	57.65	85.29	67.65	20.59	63
Virtual Comparator	2020	96.18	87.65	58.18	93.12	77.12	30.12	630
Alness Academy	2019	95.76	87.88	60	91.52	64.85	25.45	70
Virtual Comparator	2019	97.33	88.42	57.09	94.73	74.36	28.48	700
Alness Academy	2018	95.1	83.92	63.64	91.61	69.93	27.27	78
Virtual Comparator	2018	96.99	87.76	60.14	93.08	71.47	25.03	780

S5 English & Maths

Qualification Name	Qualification Level	Number in Base Cohort	Resulted Entries % of Base Cohort	National Resulted entries % of base cohort	% Grade A	National % Grade A	% Grades A to B	National % Grades A to B	% Grades A to C	National % Grades A to C	% Grades A to D	National % Grades A to D	% No Award	National % No Award
English	Higher	60	55	58.07	12.12	27.62	45.45	54.88	75.76	77.82	100	93.12	0	6.88
Mathematics	Higher	60	16.67	28.84	20	40.1	20	60.38	30	74.48	40	85.47	60	14.53
Applications of Mathematics	Higher	60	23.33	2.04	14.29	22.09	28.57	45.19	71.43	71.43	100	90.17	0	9.83
English	National 5	60	13.33	58.07	0	8.13	25	31.56	87.5	65.42	100	84.25	0	15.75
Mathematics	National 5	60		13.06										
Applications of Mathematics	National 5	60	16.67	8.78	0	9.06	0	23.49	20	43.66	40	63.63	60	36.37

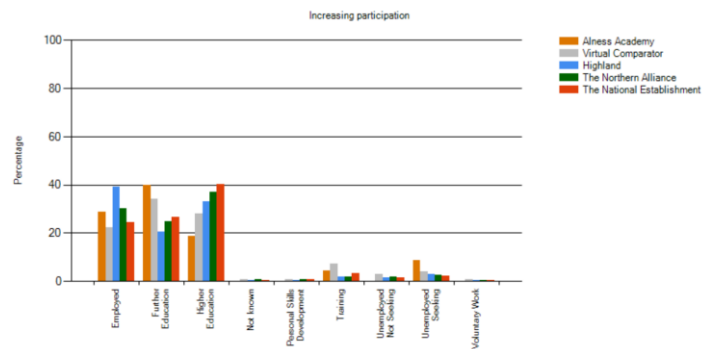
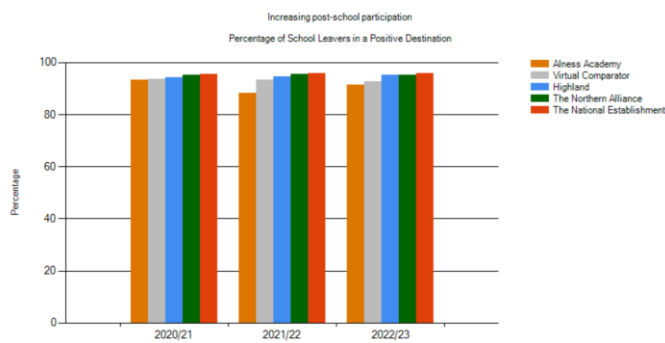
Pupils are only attaining a literacy or numeracy award if they gain an overall award for English and Maths/Maths Apps Priority is that pupils at least attain a numeracy and literacy award as free standing units even if they are not sitting English, Maths or Maths Apps full course award?

English presentation for both N5 and N4 is below the national average. Usually if it is below for N5 it is usually therefore above for N4. Pupils that are no longer to sit a level 5 must gain an overall course award at level 4 to improve attainment. Units are ok but in S4 pupils should be getting an overall award at some level. A presentation policy has been drafted to address this. The school also needs to target individuals and push stretch aims in S4. Pupils that stay on and aim for level 6 almost always make progress.

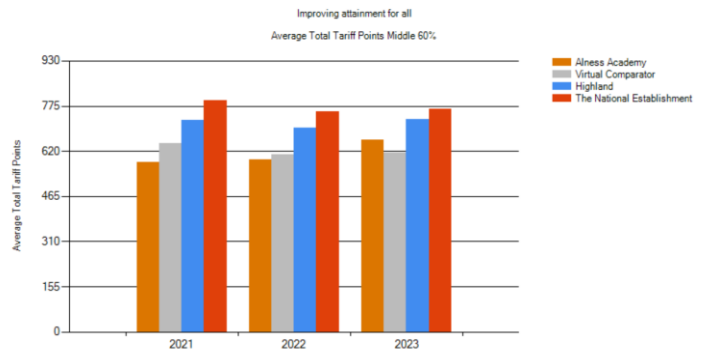
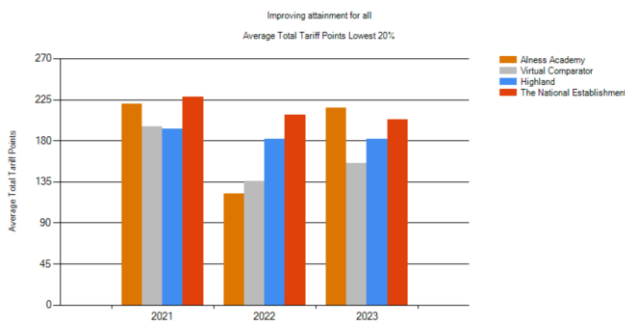
Destinations of School Leavers - For the last 3 years we have been below our virtual comparator for pupils going into positive destinations.

Action required:

- Early intervention
- High aspirations for pupils
- Audit of Career Education standards
- Increased partnership engagement.
- Regular 16+ meeting identifying at risk pupils.
- Increased support for transition
- Targeted support for attendance



Cohorts



In S5 Improving attainment for all is very pleasing and much healthier than S4. Lowest attaining 20% is 74 points ahead of VC, middle attaining 60% is 31 points ahead of VC and top attaining 20% is 72 above the VC.

The top 20 is an area we are targeting for development, through diversifying the curriculum and also making a strong effort to have more pupils studying 5 Highers.

School vision, values and aims

Lèirsinn, luachan agus amasan na sgoile

ALNESS ACADEMY VISION & VALUES 'Through hard work, compassion and aspiration, we are developing leaders of the future' Last session we reviewed our vision and values, working together as a team to identify our 'Unique Selling Point' along with the key aspects essential to our school's success. We wish to prepare our students for achievement beyond Alness Academy and we see our school at the heart of our community. Our values which will ensure this have been identified as:

LEADERSHIP

Developing strong skills in leadership is essential at all levels across our school and community. We aim to provide opportunities for students, staff, parents, and partners to develop experience and skills which will enhance leadership. Developing leadership will empower individuals in our community, and a school community of leaders is one which has a core strength on which to build academic and personal success.

ASPIRATIONAL

motivated and aspirational community is key to driving forward a thriving culture of improvement and success. By providing opportunities for all; by engendering an ethos of belief in yourself and in those around you; by equipping all members of our community with skills, knowledge and establishing effective partnerships, we aim to raise the belief in the endless potential of our students, staff, and wider community. To 'be all you can be' starts with believing in what is possible and setting our sights high.

COMPASSION

A strong team has its foundation in compassion. Looking after each other, lending support and encouragement, and maintaining high expectations for all is how we build positive and lasting relationships. It is through these relationships that we ensure wellbeing across our community, and that the right support and challenge is there for all to achieve to their full potential. Connectivity is at the heart of our mission.

Review of progress of improvement plan projects for session 2023/24

Ath-sgrùdadh air adhartas airson an t-seisein

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

School Improvement Plan Priority 1 - Improve attendance	
Summary of impact	Next steps
<p>Due to change in Management in December there is lack of information and data around this priority. Below is what is known:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ There has been some progress made to improve attendance targeting non attenders and pupils with bellow 50%. ✓ Clear policy and procedures introduced to monitor attendance. ✓ Evaluation of the impact of the school's actions to improve excellence and equity, and achieve positive outcomes for all children and young people is clear ✓ Home visits and daily calls have been successful in engaging children and young people, parents to attend school 	<p>Attendance will be prioritised within our improvement priority of Health and Wellbeing.</p>

School Improvement Plan Priority 2 - Implement updated Seemis Tracker	
Summary of impact	Next steps
<p>Due to change in Management in December there is lack of information and data around this priority. Below is what is known:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tracker introduced to monitor and track pupil attainment throughout the year. ✓ Staff tracking of pupils. 	<p>Tracking will be prioritised within our improvement priority of Leadership of Change.</p>

School Improvement Plan Priority 3 - Develop a school leaver profile	
Summary of impact	Next steps
<p>Due to change in Management in December there is lack of information and data around this priority. Below is what is known:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Not Completed 	<p>Leaver profile will be prioritised within our improvement priority of Curriculum/DYW</p>

School Improvement Plan Priority 2 - Further develop and embed Academic Mentoring programme with a particular focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap.	
Summary of impact	Next steps
<p>Due to change in Management in December there is lack of information and data around this priority. Below is what is known:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Senior pupils used as mentors for pupils in S1/2 	<p>Mentoring will be prioritised within our improvement priority of Learning and Teaching.</p>

Progress and impact of Pupil Equity Fund

Adhartas agus buaidh Maoin Cothromas Sgoilearan

Eg Increased attendance for 3 out of 5 S1 target group (from 63% to 78%)

Literacy S2 group all improved reading age assessments

Numeracy – all pupils in target groups in S1, 2 and 3 now at least level 2, with feedback re improved number fact confidence

Wider achievements

Coileanaidhean nas fharsainghe

- This year introduced Sports day and sponsored walk for the first time in 6 years.
- 2 of our pupils have attained scholarships to specialist schools for Sport and Music.
- Engaged with partners to increase motivation and Success – Evanton woods, the Place and field, the Ledge climbing wall, Growing together, Kartway. This has increased motivation for our young people to attend school.

Comments from learners, families, stakeholders and staff

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

Due to change in management in December no data and comments are available.

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 progress as follows:

	2023-2024
QI 1.3 Leadership of change	Weak
QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment	Satisfactory
QI 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion	Weak
QI 3.2 Raising attainment and Achievement	Satisfactory
Other QIs reviewed	

Our overall evaluation of our capacity for continuous improvement is:

We are confident in our capacity for continuous improvement.

At Alness we are building a strong team that are confident that we will take the school forward, raise attainment and provide an environment where all young people in school feel valued, loved and part of a team and community. This will be done through strategic planning, time phased monitoring, data collection and review.

Key priorities for improvement planning

Prìomhachasan airson planadh airson leasachadh

Improvement Priority Title	
1. Health and Wellbeing (Whole school)	LEADERSHIP OF CHANGE
2. Curriculum/DYW/16+	
3. Learning and Teaching	

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 our website or by contacting the school office.

Appendix 1: Local and National Context

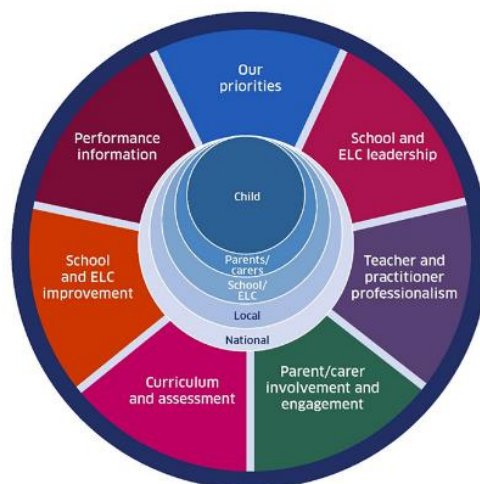
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This Standards and Quality Report is influenced by both Highland and national priorities. These can be summarised as follows:

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%	91% - 99%	76% - 90%	51% - 75%	16% - 50%	Up to 15%

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

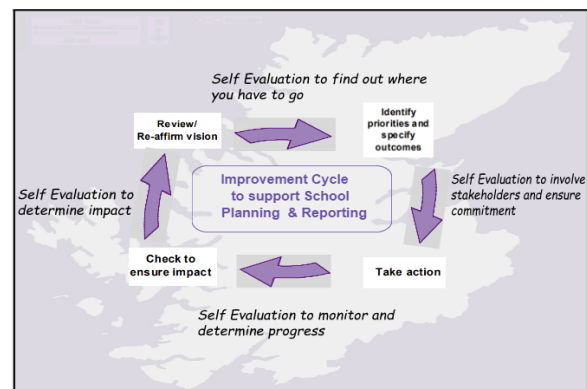
Looking to others for new ideas that challenge our practice and support continuous improvement allows us to learn from what works and what doesn't. This includes practice in other schools, learning communities and learning from educational research.

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.

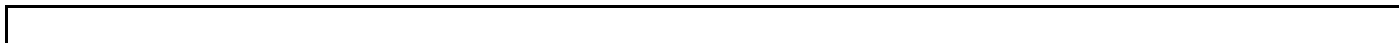
With positive experiences, our children and young people will always see the Highlands as home.

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

Name

Tom Magowan

School



Leadership, Aspiration, Compassion

Leadership, Aspiration, Compassion