

Agenda Item	5.a
Report No	LA/16/23

The Highland Council

Committee: Lochaber Area Committee

Date: 31/10/2023

Report Title: School Inspection Report –
Bun-sgoil Àth-Tharracail agus Sgoil Àraich/ Acharacle Primary
School and Nursery

Report By: Education and Learning Manager

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides details on Education Scotland's report of Acharacle Primary School and Nursery Class that took place in January 2023. The Report was published in March 2023.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. Note the Report's findings in relation to the School.
- ii. Note the Report's findings in relation to the Nursery.

3. Implications

3.1 Resource none -

3.2 Legal - none

3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island) - none

3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever - none

3.5 Risk - none

3.6 Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people) – none

3.7 Gaelic - none

4. Inspection

4.1 The Inspection focussed on the following Quality Indicators for the School:

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator.

For the Nursery the following QIs were used:

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experience for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised

3.2 Securing children's progress

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success.

4.2 Grades

The School was graded **very good** for 2.3

The School was graded **good** for 3.2

The Nursery was graded **good** for 2.3

The Nursery was graded **good** for 3.2

5. Areas of Strength

5.1 The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- Children are keen, enthusiastic and successful learners. They are skilled and confident in performing and sharing their learning, language and skills in Gaelic, music and song with each other and the community.
- The headteacher and staff have worked well together to offer children a rich range of experiences and opportunities through Gaelic and English. Staff's strong understanding of immersion produces children who are fluent speakers of Gaelic. They are increasing the number of speakers of Gaelic in the school and the community.
- The headteacher and staff have been solution focused and creative in assisting children sustain learning during challenging times. The headteacher and staff are making new and imaginative use of digital technology from that used during the pandemic. As a result, children's progress and attainment is good in numeracy and mathematics, and in literacy and Gàidhlig. Attainment in literacy and English is very good across the school.

6. Areas for Improvement

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from The Highland Council.

- 6.1
- The headteacher and staff should continue with their individual-by-individual approaches to raising further attainment. This is to ensure that all children across the nursery and primary classes continue to make the best possible progress.
 - The headteacher and staff should continue to take forward their vision for Gaelic (Learners) and immersion to continue to grow Gaelic in the community and nationally.

7. Practice worth sharing more widely

Inspectors found that the headteacher and staff have made systematic and robust use of the "Advice on Gaelic Education" as a self-evaluation audit over time in the school. As a result, there has been steady and successful progress in increasing the numbers in Gaelic Medium Education. Almost all enrolments in the school are for Gaelic Medium Education. The headteacher and staff have a very strong understanding of the principles of immersion and how it is taken forward. The curriculum is developed to integrate music, culture, technology, sport, the local area and language to develop children's strong sense of identity with Gaelic and their local area. Former pupils are returning to their school as teachers, and other valuable roles. Children in English Medium Education also experience some high-quality interactive learning of Gaelic as an additional language. Their progress has been interrupted by the pandemic. Teachers apply relevant findings from educational research to impact positively on children's progress.

8. Next Steps

The Inspectors are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so will make no more visits in connection with this inspection.

Designation: Area Education and Learning Manager

Date: 19/10/2023

Author: Mhairi Macdonald

Background Papers: Education Scotland Summarised Inspection Findings for Acharacle Primary School and Nursery. Education Scotland Inspection Report for Acharacle Primary School and Nursery.

Appendices: None

Agenda Item	5.b
Report No	LA/17/23

The Highland Council

Committee: Lochaber Area Committee

Date: 31/10/2023

Report Title: School Inspection Report –
Banavie Primary School and Nursery

Report By: Education and Learning Manager

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides details on Education Scotland's report of Banavie Primary School and Nursery that took place in December 2022. The Report was published in February 2023.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. Note the Report's findings in relation to the School.
- ii. Note the Report's findings in relation to the Nursery.

3. Implications

3.1 Resource none -

3.2 Legal - none

3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island) - none

3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever - none

3.5 Risk - none

3.6 Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people) – none

3.7 Gaelic – none

4. Inspection

4.1 The Inspection focussed on the following Quality Indicators for the School:

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator.

For the Nursery the following QIs were used:

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experience for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised

3.2 Securing children's progress

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success.

4.2 Grades

The School was graded **good** for 2.3

The School was graded **good** for 3.2

The Nursery was graded **good** for 2.3

The Nursery was graded **good** for 3.2

5. Areas of Strength

- 5.1 Happy, enthusiastic and confident children who enjoy learning in nursery and school. They show respect, empathy and kindness as they learn and play together across the different age ranges. They are very proud of each other's successes and achievements.
- The warm, welcoming family ethos in the nursery and school. Senior leaders and staff ensure that all children are known well as individuals. As a result, all children are supported, nurtured and encouraged to succeed.
 - The strong support of the Parent Council, families and the wider community. Children benefit from these positive partnerships.
 - Senior leaders' use of assessment information to ensure that staff are taking the right steps to provide equity for children who are disadvantaged.

6. Areas for Improvement

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from The Highland Council.

- 6.1 Continue to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy, ensuring that all children across the nursery and school are challenged to make the best possible progress.
- Continue to develop high quality learning and teaching approaches in the nursery and primary classes, including through richly resourced play and outdoor experiences.

7. Next Steps

Education Scotland are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so will make no more visits in connection with this inspection.

Designation: Area Education and Learning Manager

Date: 19/10/2023

Author: Mhairi Macdonald

Background Papers: Education Scotland Summarised Inspection Findings for Banavie Primary School and Nursery. Education Scotland Inspection Report for Banavie Primary School and Nursery.

Appendices: None

Agenda Item	5.c
Report No	LA/18/23

The Highland Council

Committee: Lochaber Area Committee

Date: 31/10/2023

Report Title: School Inspection Report –
Rum Primary School and Nursery

Report By: Education and Learning Manager

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides details on Education Scotland's report of Rum Primary School and Nursery that took place in May 2023. The Report was published in June 2023.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. Note the Report's findings in relation to the School.
- ii. Note the Report's findings in relation to the Nursery.

3. Implications

3.1 Resource none -

3.2 Legal - none

3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island) - none

3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever - none

3.5 Risk - none

3.6 Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people) – none

3.7 Gaelic - none

4. Inspection

4.1 The Inspection focussed on the following Quality Indicators for the School:

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator.

For the Nursery the following QIs were used:

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experience for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised

3.2 Securing children's progress

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success.

4.2 Grades

The School was graded **very good** for 2.3

The School was graded **very good** for 3.2

The Nursery was graded **very good** for 2.3

The Nursery was graded **very good** for 3.2

5. Areas of Strength

5.1 The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

The inspiring leadership of the headteacher. She has transformed the learning experiences for the children of Rum, supported strongly by the staff team. Her thorough approach and wide-ranging skills ensure that all children can achieve their potential.

- The warm, nurturing and supportive ethos. Staff use highly effective approaches to meet the wellbeing and learning needs of children. All staff and children are respectful and kind to one another. This creates a family feel across the nursery and school, where children thrive.
- The rich and exciting learning experiences that make the most of the unique rural island setting. Children are very knowledgeable about the geography, history and environmental importance of their island. They are proud 'guardians of Rum'.
- Curious, creative and responsible children who are highly engaged in their learning. They have risen to the challenge of embracing new ways of learning and teaching. They actively lead their own learning, play a key role in improving their school and contribute significantly to island life.

6. Areas for Improvement

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from The Highland Council.

- 6.1 Continue to provide high quality, enriching and motivational learning experiences that will prepare children well for the future.

7. Practice worth sharing more widely

Rum Primary School and Nursery Class – a school at the heart of its community

In her very short time in post, the inspirational headteacher has led an exceptional process of transformational change to improve the quality of children's experiences and attainment. The new staff team, led very ably by the headteacher, has worked tirelessly together in a very short time to create a welcoming, nurturing and positive environment for learning, where children thrive.

In developing a new curriculum rationale, teachers have ensured that outdoor learning is a key feature of children's learning. Staff plan highly effective use of the school grounds, woodlands, shoreline and wider island community to provide children with exciting contexts to learn. This includes high-quality opportunities for interdisciplinary learning, personalisation and choice, the life of the school and individual curriculum subjects. Children are highly knowledgeable about their island, and they enjoy sharing their expertise about the history, geography and natural environment with staff and visitors. Children contribute significantly to the island community through very well-planned learning. They demonstrate their creativity and enterprising skills by making crafts to sell in the island gift shop. They apply their knowledge about cooking and local produce when they make haggis for the community Burns Supper, and venison burgers for the island bonfire night party. They develop important team-working, communication and critical thinking skills as they work with adults on the island community council to apply for 'Dark Skies Status', which, they hope, will boost the island's economy. As part of the

community's submission, children devised lessons and activities for other children, based on their own knowledge and research of light pollution and the night skies.

Recently, children have established themselves as tour guides, hosting weekly school parties from other Highland schools who visit for the day. Children apply their leadership and communication skills very confidently in this dynamic and stimulating venture. They lead visiting children confidently on activity trails they have devised around the village and give highly informative talks. In addition, they apply their literacy, numeracy and creativity skills particularly well, as they take responsibility for planning and leading the trips. They are rightly very proud ambassadors for the Isle of Rum.

The headteacher and staff have established important partnerships with island businesses and organisations. In doing so, they ensure that children benefit from a wide range of visitors to Rum, who agree to spend time with children in school, sharing their expertise and knowledge. Children clearly enjoy these stimulating visits that help to boost their confidence in interacting with a range of adults. This is helping to broaden their horizons and understanding of the wider world, which is often a challenge for children in remote, rural schools. The headteacher and staff make every effort to ensure that children's experiences are enriched through all potential learning opportunities that the unique context provides.

8. Next Steps

The Inspectors are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so will make no more visits in connection with this inspection.

Designation: Area Education and Learning Manager

Date: 19/10/2023

Author: Mhairi Macdonald

Background Papers: Education Scotland Summarised Inspection Findings for Rum Primary School and Nursery. Education Scotland Inspection Report for Rum Primary School and Nursery.

Appendices: None

Agenda Item	5.d
Report No	LA/19/23

The Highland Council

Committee: Lochaber Area Committee

Date: 31/10/2023

Report Title: School Inspection Report –
Spean Bridge Primary School and Nursery

Report By: Education and Learning Manager

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides details on Education Scotland's report of Spean Bridge Primary School and Nursery that took place in June 2023. The Report was published in September 2023.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. Note the Report's findings in relation to the School.
- ii. Note the Report's findings in relation to the Nursery.

3. Implications

3.1 Resource none -

3.2 Legal - none

3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island) - none

3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever - none

3.5 Risk - none

3.6 Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people) – none

3.7 Gaelic – none

4. Inspection

4.1 The Inspection focussed on the following Quality Indicators for the School:

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator.

For the Nursery the following QIs were used:

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experience for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised

3.2 Securing children's progress

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success.

4.2 Grades

The School was graded **weak** for 2.3

The School was graded **weak** for 3.2

The Nursery was graded **satisfactory** for 2.3

The Nursery was graded **satisfactory** for 3.2

5. Areas of Strength

5.1 Positive relationships across the school and nursery between children and staff and children and their peers which create a caring and positive ethos. This is leading to children who feel safe in school and are confident, enthusiastic and ready to learn.

- Children are provided with regular opportunities to use the extensive school grounds and the 'Discovery Zone' to enhance their learning and develop skills. This is motivating for children who use their attractive learning environments to extend their learning.

6. Areas for Improvement

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from The Highland Council.

6.1 Teachers and practitioners should continue to engage in relevant professional learning to improve approaches to learning and teaching. Staff should improve how they plan for learning to ensure that all children have high quality experiences across the school and nursery.

- Teachers should engage with the National Benchmarks to improve approaches to assessment and gathering robust evidence about children's progress. This will support staff to make more informed professional judgements about children's attainment and plan learning with the right level of challenge.
- All school staff should develop further their understanding of inclusion to support all children and use appropriate approaches to meet the needs of all learners.

7. Next Steps

As a result of the inspection findings it was decided that the school needs additional support and more time to make necessary improvements. Education Scotland will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within 12 months of the publication of the report.

Designation: Area Education and Learning Manager

Date: 19/10/2023

Author: Mhairi Macdonald

Background Papers: Education Scotland Summarised Inspection Findings for Spean Bridge Primary School and Nursery. Education Scotland Inspection Report for Spean Bridge Primary School and Nursery.

Appendices: None

Agenda Item	5.e
Report No	LA/20/23

The Highland Council

Committee: Lochaber Area Committee

Date: 31/10/2023

Report Title: School Inspection Report –
St Brides Primary School and Nursery

Report By: Education and Learning Manager

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides details on Education Scotland's report of St Brides Primary School and Nursery that took place in April 2023. The Report was published in June 2023.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. Note the Report's findings in relation to the School.
- ii. Note the Report's findings in relation to the Nursery.

3. Implications

3.1 Resource none -

3.2 Legal - none

3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island) - none

3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever - none

3.5 Risk - none

3.6 Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people) – none

3.7 Gaelic - none

4. Inspection

4.1 The Inspection focussed on the following Quality Indicators for the School:

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator.

For the Nursery the following QIs were used:

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experience for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised

3.2 Securing children's progress

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success.

4.2 Grades

The School was graded **good** for 2.3

The School was graded **good** for 3.2

The Nursery was graded **good** for 2.3

The Nursery was graded **good** for 3.2

5. Areas of Strength

- 5.1 Strong, nurturing relationships between senior leaders, staff and children across the school and nursery. As a result, children are calm, relaxed and enthusiastic about their learning.
- The strong approach to team work among all staff who willingly embrace change and new ideas to improve the school and nursery.
 - Approaches to outdoor learning and play which provide exciting stimulating, learning contexts across the school and nursery.
 - Partnership working with parents, staff and the community to provide children with motivating learning experiences.

6. Areas for Improvement

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from The Highland Council.

- 6.1 The headteacher should develop robust approaches to monitoring and tracking the work of the school to secure children's progress and raise attainment further.
- Continue to develop approaches to planning and assessment across the school and nursery. In doing so, ensure appropriate individualised planning in place for children who require it.
 - Continue to develop approaches to provide children with opportunities for wider achievement and to link this to skills development. In doing so, take steps to enable all children to develop their leadership skills and influence decisions that affect them.

7. Next Steps

The Inspectors are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so will make no more visits in connection with this inspection.

Designation: Area Education and Learning Manager

Date: 19/10/2023

Author: Mhairi Macdonald

Background Papers: Education Scotland Summarised Inspection Findings for St Brides Primary School and Nursery. Education Scotland Inspection Report for St Brides Primary School and Nursery.

Appendices: None