



Standards and Quality Report September 2015



GAIRLOCH HIGH SCHOOL, Achtercairn, IV21 2BP
The Highland Council
Education, Culture and Sport Service
Skye Ross and Lochaber Area

Our school vision and values

Vision

We believe that all members of a school community should be equally valued and, by example, teach that they should value each other equally. Each pupil should develop the social and learning skills needed to move successfully into the world beyond school.

Values

In S1 to S3 we put particular emphasis on personal development of a wide range of skills providing the framework for a healthy and balanced approach to relationships and work that will foster success in any field that the pupil decides to develop. As pupils enter the senior school the emphasis is in using these skills to achieve academic success as well as other achievements that will support the ambitions of each pupil.

Aims

1. To provide a place of education within which each pupil will participate in a wide range of learning opportunities designed to develop the basic skills, knowledge and understanding required by modern society.
2. To ensure that each pupil has an awareness of the possibilities available to him/her within society and the responsibilities required by society.
3. To develop an atmosphere in which will flourish self-discipline, responsibility to, and awareness of, the needs of others in the school, community and society in general.
4. To maintain an ethos and offer a structure of courses and activities that will ensure that the achievement of every pupil is raised to a maximum; at the same time allowing for their different needs, abilities and skills to be developed to their fullest extent.
5. To show appropriate and proper concern for the demands and expectations of pupils, parents and of society in general, and to implement the best contemporary educational practice in partnership with the Local Authority.
6. To maintain effective communication with parents concerning the progress of individual pupils and school life in general.
7. To provide a secure and happy environment within which staff and pupils can work together to achieve their aims.

The Core Areas of our Practice

This report summarises the strengths of our school, our recent improvements and what needs to improve further. We gather this information throughout the year in a variety of ways so we can make sure our report is as accurate as possible. We take time to compare what we do with national examples of best practice. We visit other classes to share standards in learning and teaching. We look at children and young people's work to see how they are progressing. We cross mark work. We make use of factual data and information including attainment results responding and adapting our teaching in line with children's needs. We assess using our own expertise, standardised testing, cross marking and results tracking. Children peer assess and self assess. We gather the views of children, parents, staff and members of the local community. We use all of this information to arrive at our view of the quality of education we provide.

Improvements through self-evaluation	Key Themes: <i>Commitment to self-evaluation</i> <i>Management of self-evaluation</i> <i>School improvement</i>
What we do well: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff who are fully committed to improving the learning and achievement of our pupils.• A strong vision, set of values and aims which direct improvement and evaluation of our work.• Open climate for discussion between staff, parents and pupils.• Strong links with Parent Council who take an active role in CfE developments within the school.• Staff committed to reviewing attainment and planning improvement.• Good formal and informal self-evaluation procedures in place.• Good practice in learning and teaching across the school and ASG. What we need to work on: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to work with Primary colleagues across the ASG to share standards and improve progression in mathematics and numeracy.• Continuing to embed consistency in terms of Learning and Teaching practice. This will involve returning to some key aspects of a good lesson perhaps by making them the focus for classroom visits and professional dialogue.• Review formal and informal Classroom Observation procedures to impact on learning.• Strengthen evaluation procedures within the school to improve learning, teaching and achievement.• We are further developing use of Highland tracking information from P7 and S2 into our monitoring procedures.• We plan to develop the Pupil Council into a Learning Council and provide more effective feedback to pupils.	

Improvements in performance

Key Themes: *Standards of attainment over time*
Overall quality of learners' achievement
Impact of the school improvement plan

What we do well:

- Data shows significant improvement in performance is happening within Science in the S1 –S3 when compared to the incoming pupils' AfE data provided by the Primary schools.
- Attainment in the Senior phase is characterised by good performance in SQA exams.
- Exam data shows that the school performs in line with or ahead of Highland in all 3 attainment categories linked to 'Attainment for All'.
- Achievement in Level 5 and Level 6 Literacy is above the virtual comparator and has seen significant improvement in the last 3 years.
- Level 6 Numeracy is significantly above the comparator and has improved from last year.
- Insight data shows that pupils leaving Gairloch High are very likely to move on to positive destinations - the most recent data for 2012/13 shows 92.86% of Gairloch High School leavers going on to positive destinations.
- Across the school there are opportunities for achievement and leadership e.g. Pupil Council representatives, John Muir Award, Duke of Edinburgh Award, House Captains, Prefects, extra-curricular provision.
- Pupils comment positively on opportunities to take part in activities outside school – Indoor rowing competition, football, basketball, climbing and music opportunities – Pipe Band, C for Craic.
- Very good recognition procedures for achievement including website, local news and radio.

What we need to work on:

- Maintain and consolidate on-going improvement in Maths and English attainment through various strategies
 - Continued efforts to develop literacy and numeracy skills.
 - Further efforts in upper school to support success in exams with specific attention to the 'top 20%'.
- Monitor provision of additional qualifications outside traditional academic options.
- Further develop tracking progress of pupils in both attainment and achievement.
- Develop curricular transition including development of profiling and teaching methodologies.

Learners' experiences

Key Theme: *The extent to which learners are motivated and actively involved in their own learning and development*

What we do well:

- There is a great pride in being part of our school and we have a strong positive ethos.
- We are a successful school with positive relationships enhanced by a highly regarded support structure.
- We have a House system that engenders tradition and fosters competition throughout the school.
- Our pupils are well behaved and generally supportive of each other.
- Pupils are canvassed through anonymous questionnaires and issues raised are handled appropriately.
- Senior pupils are consulted in the development of the annual timetable.
- Prefects are challenged to take on responsible positions. Those in S6 aspire to this and rise to the challenge.
- Pupils contribute written statements to their annual reports.
- Wider achievement fully recognised, supported and recorded.

What we need to work on:

- Continuing to develop a range of learning and teaching strategies including revisiting the School's Learning and Teaching Policy and working to ensure consistency across classes.
- Continuing to develop opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and take more responsibility for their own learning and development.
- Formalisation of CfE personal support programme throughout S1-S3 to further promote motivation and engagement of each pupils own learning and development.
- Ensure quality dialogue about pupil's attainment and achievement at key stages e.g. increasing staff-pupil and pupil-pupil mentoring roles.
- We continue to develop strategies for identifying and supporting senior pupils who are unclear about future pathways.
- Continuing our departmental work on using pupil feedback to improve learning.

The Curriculum

Key Themes: *The rationale and design of the curriculum*
The development of the curriculum
Programmes and courses
Transitions

What we do well:

- Effort and commitment of staff to maintain choice and breadth in the curriculum.
- Flexible timetable structure that supports variable blocks of time for lessons depending on needs e.g. inter-disciplinary projects, hospitality and outdoor activities.
- We have a clear plan for S1 to S3 in providing a Broad General Education and we have shared this with parents.
- Curriculum Rationale designed to meet the demands of the Highland Steer and updated advice from Education Scotland. Plan shared with Parent Forum.
- Outdoor Learning is a priority with successful SMART course and Cairngorm Residential week in S1.
- Working towards positive destinations for all pupils.
- We maintain a broad range of traditional subjects and additionally include a variety of Skills for Work courses that include employability skills.
- We have developed a number of partnerships allowing us to introduce courses in Outdoor Education, ASDAN, Rural Skills, Activity Tourism and Travel & Tourism.
- Strong international links across Europe and in Malawi.
- Additional partnership with West Highland College provides Hospitality, Drama and Psychology courses.
- We have a wide range of extra curricular activities including Duke of Edinburgh's Award, climbing, hockey, chess, badminton, basketball, football, cooking and bike maintenance.

What we need to work on:

- Successful management of ongoing change during period of falling roll, reduced staffing and budget restrictions.
- Implementation of new exams in Higher and Advanced Higher.
- Review of National exam implementation to ensure we are meeting pupil needs.
- Adjust Broad General Education across S1-S3 to allow successful implementation of Senior Phase whilst maintaining entitlements.

Meeting learning needs

Key Themes: *Tasks, activities and resources*
Identification of learning needs
The roles of teachers and specialist staff
Meeting and implementing the requirements of legislation

What we do well:

- We know our pupils well and have flexible structures in place to understand and support, wherever possible, the learning needs of each.
- Teaching staff supported by professional team of Support staff who are allocated on identified need, targeted to support classes and/or individuals.
- Effective mechanisms in place for teachers to liaise closely with Pupil Support and Senior Managers with regard to social and academic needs of all pupils.
- Plans to deliver Additional Support Needs are appropriate for specific pupils.
- Identification of literacy learning needs on transition and supported reading programs put in place.
- Provision of Study Support and Exam Revision courses for all pupils in S4, S5 & S6 prior to exams.
- Gaelic plays an important role in the school day for a number of pupils. This resulted in our 2011 success in the National Gaelic Debate. Pupils have taken part in FilmG Projects and participate annually in the local Mod.

What we need to work on:

- Continue to develop transition moderation across a wider range of curricular areas and share understanding of CfE levels 2 and 3.
- Review and develop (if necessary) agreed PLP for transition between P7 and S1 within ASG.
- Further develop involvement of pupils in reviewing their own learning and action planning in collaboration with teachers including Key Adults. Current evidence suggests this is producing better organisation and learning skills for some pupils.
- Determine whether procedures for monitoring is helping pupils set more appropriate targets.
- Develop pace, challenge and differentiation in subject areas particularly for S1/2 and the most academic.

Summary of our Key Strengths

Improvements through Self – Evaluation

- Professional staff and supportive parents driven by single intention of providing a quality learning experience for all pupils.
- Staff committed to reviewing attainment and planning improvement.
- Good practice continues to be developed in learning and teaching across the school and ASG.

Improvements in Performance

- Across the school there are opportunities for achievement and leadership e.g., Pupil Council representatives, John Muir Award, Duke of Edinburgh Award, House Captains, Prefects, extra-curricular provision and Sports Ambassadors.
- Attainment in the Senior phase is characterised by good performance in SQA exams.
- Data shows that the school performs in line with or ahead of Highland in all 3 attainment categories linked to 'Attainment for All'
- Provision of a broad range of academic and skills-based courses in the senior phase allowing choice and progression for most pupils
- Very good support and recognition of wider pupil achievement.
- Insight data shows that pupils leaving Gairloch High are very likely to move on to positive destinations
- National success for several pupils in the Mod, Indoor Rowing and Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

Learners' Experiences

- School has a strong positive ethos and good relationships exist between staff and pupils.
- Gaelic continues to play an important role in the school.
- Pupils are motivated to succeed in areas where they have strengths and supported to improve in others.
- We are a successful school with positive relationships enhanced by a highly regarded support structure.
- We have a House system that engenders tradition and fosters competition throughout the school.
- Our pupils are well behaved and supportive of each other.
- Pupils and parents have an opportunity to raise issues and take part in open discussion related to learning.

The Curriculum

- Broad flexible curriculum that meets the demands of Curriculum for Excellence and gives pupils an opportunity to experience a wide range of activities given the constraints of a small remote rural school.
- The curriculum is designed to support positive destinations for all pupils.
- There is strong provision for global working with Inspire/Aspire as part of the Broad General Education (S2). There are also links locally – Forest Schools, wider community and the world – Comenius Project and the Malawi project. These are all appreciated by young people and are supporting the development of citizenship.
- Staff take every opportunity to enhance and develop curriculum opportunities to benefit the pupils.

Meeting Learning Needs

- We know our pupils well and have flexible structures in place to understand and support, where possible the learning needs of each.
- *Strong Pupil Support and Support for Learning* teams that work closely with teaching staff and *Senior Management Team* to address identified needs of all pupils whether academic or emotional.
- The school works with a range of agencies to support the needs of learners.
- Identification of literacy learning needs on transition and supported reading programs put in place to allow individual pupils to catch up.
- Provision of Study Support and Exam Revision courses for all pupils in S4, S5 & S6 prior to national exams.

Our Improvements last session

Improvements through Self – Evaluation

- Revised self-evaluation documents based on updated HMI expectations have been introduced to help provide focus on CfE requirements within departments.
- Increased use of tracking information.
- Initiated transfer of curricular documents from Primary to support transition of pupils to secondary.

Improvements in Performance

- This year we had notable success for several pupils in new vocational courses related to Travel & Tourism, Activity Tourism, Rural Skills and ASDAN.
- In S4 all pupils have achieved National 4 level in Numeracy and Literacy.
- In S5 half of the year group achieved at least 3 passes at Higher Grade with three pupils achieving 5.
- In S6 two thirds of pupils achieved 3 or more additional Highers.
- One third of S6 pupils achieved at least one Advanced Higher award with one pupil achieving 3 A passes.
- Data shows significant improvement in performance is happening within Science in the BGE when compared to the incoming pupils' data provided by the Primary schools.
- Achievement in Level 5 and Level 6 literacy is above the virtual comparator and has seen significant improvement in the last 3 years.
- Level 6 Numeracy is significantly above the comparator and has improved from last year.
- Insight data shows that pupils leaving Gairloch High are very likely to move on to positive destinations - the most recent data for 12/13 shows 92.86% of Gairloch High School leavers going on to positive destinations.
- One Gaelic Learner has been accepted onto a fluent Gaelic course at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig.
- Increased mentoring and support for pupils has resulted in better relationships between staff and pupils and allowed more effective use of shared information in relation to learning.

Learners' Experiences

- Pupils continue to experience a range of learning and teaching methodologies.
- The school continues to develop a very wide range of opportunities to achieve wider achievement leading to national success and recognition for several pupils.
- Pupils are consulted regularly in the development of the curriculum.
- Pupils continue to develop their voice through the Pupil Council and issues raised are discussed and actioned in partnership with staff.
- We continue to have an active Parent Council and a highly supportive community.

The Curriculum

- Once again all S1 pupils achieved the John Muir Trust Discovery Award.
- Our links with West Highland College continue to develop increasing pupil course options in Hospitality and Psychology and Drama. Hospitality is now part of the S1 SMART course.
- We continue to develop Global Citizenship through strong international links with our partner school in Malawi and our second Comenius Project culminated in a very successful visit by members of the partner countries.
- In the Senior Phase all pupils get the opportunity to have a minimum of 1 weeks work experience.
- We have developed our interdisciplinary projects and science teaching using our participation in the Rolls-Royce Science Prize 2015.

Meeting Learning Needs

- Effective mechanisms in place for teachers to liaise closely with Pupil Support and Senior Managers with regard to social and academic needs of all pupils.
- Identification of literacy learning needs on transition and supported reading programs.
- Staff know young people well as individuals and respond to emerging needs during lessons.

Our Priorities For Improvement

Improvements through Self – Evaluation

- Continue to develop the use of a revised transition document containing tracking and samples of work to support transition of P7 to S1.
- Further develop use of tracking in P7 to S6 using MIS.
- Refresh Faculty PT structure to support learning and teaching across the curriculum.
- Develop 'Pupil Voice'.
- Increase our focus on revised expectations of CfE through creation of revised department profiles and evaluation of new courses.

Improvements in Performance

- Continuing to raise attainment during period of significant change through improved tracking P7 to S6.
- Extend use of data analysis through additional training to support staff in professional judgement of learners progress.

Learners' Experiences

- Development of Personal Support.
- Improve use of differentiation, increase pace and challenge particularly in S1/2 and top 20%, develop benefits of Rolls-Royce initiative.
- Ensure quality dialogue about pupil's attainment and achievement at key stages.
- Further develop tracking and assessment of S1 to S6.

The Curriculum

- Continued implementation of Curriculum for Excellence including
 - development of S4-S6 structures to support Senior Phase
 - implementation of new Higher and Advanced Higher exams
 - develop numeracy strategy to support learners across the curriculum
 - review of Broad General Education (S1-S3) to allow continued provision of entitlements.

Meeting Learning Needs

- Involving pupils more in setting their own learning targets and then tracking their own attainment and achievements across the curriculum.
- Working across our Associated School (ASG) to meet priorities in moderation and sharing of numeracy outcomes.
- Improve pace, challenge and ambitions of pupils.
- Develop shared PLP model for P7 transition.