

Summarised inspection findings

Auchtertyre Primary School

The Highland Council

09 October 2018

Key contextual information

- · Auchtertyre Primary School and Nursery is part of a cluster arrangement with Loch Duich and Glenelg Primary Schools. These schools are managed by the same headteacher (HT). This cluster arrangement commenced in August 2017.
- At the time of the inspection, the HT was completing her first year at Auchtertyre Primary School and Nursery.
- The HT is supported by a 0.2 full-time equivalent (FTE) principal teacher (PT) who is based at the school. The PT has a remit for teaching, taking forward improvement priorities and deputising for the HT. A second 0.2 FTE PT is assigned to supporting the cluster, which includes a role for improving Auchtertyre Primary School. In the past year, the HT has had to manage staff absences which is reported to have hampered progress with leading change.
- Auchtertyre Primary School and Nursery serves the communities of Auchtertyre, Achmore, Balmacara and Dornie.
- 20% of the school's population comes from out with the catchment area.
- 91% of the school's population resides in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 5 and 6.

1.3 Leadership of change

weak

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change
- Parents are supportive of the new HT. They feel that she is approachable and starting to improve the school. The HT has consulted all stakeholders on the school's vision, values and aims. She should increase the pace of finalising the vision, values and aims to drive the strategic direction of the school. This should capture the relevance of having a curriculum that raises attainment and prepares children as citizens of the 21st Century.
- Staff are at a very early stage of building their understanding of self-evaluation frameworks such as 'How good is our school?' (fourth edition). Across the school, staff should strengthen their expertise in evaluating the school's successes. They need to have a greater awareness of having an outward look as part of self-evaluation.
- The school improvement plan (SIP) relates to the cluster, with one project which is specific to the school. Staff also plan as part of an associated school group (ASG). This has included carrying out moderation activities with neighbouring primary schools and Plockton High School. Priorities in the SIP need to precisely define the actions from self-evaluation required for improving Auchtertyre Primary School, while being aligned to the National Improvement Framework (NIF). Currently, there is not enough impact from priorities for improvement, with the pace of change being too slow. As a matter of urgency, important weaknesses need to be addressed. This includes raising attainment in key areas such as literacy and numeracy.
- Staff discuss the impact of the SIP. Senior leaders are still to formalise a robust and systematic range of activities to help measure the outcomes of implementing change. This was an intended action as part of the SIP in 2016. Establishing regular key monitoring activities would help realise ongoing strengths and the key weaknesses to be addressed as part of continuous improvement.
- Over the last two years, the SIP has included a project on the curriculum. As a result, staff are better able to identify local and unique aspects of the curriculum, which are important to them. The curriculum overview collates for each curricular area progression pathways, where they exist, and the resources which may be used in taking forward children's learning. The leadership of the curriculum is not sufficiently linked to attainment, progress and meeting national expectations. Senior leaders should put in place strategic guidance on planning learning and teaching. This should support progression and coherence for individuals and groups of children.
- Staff recognise the benefits of receiving feedback on learning and teaching. They engage in some peer observations across the school and cluster. For the last two years, the SIP has

had a focus on their leadership of learning. Staff need to take more responsibility for improving their own learning and teaching. Senior leaders should establish a structured approach to observations of learning and teaching. As part of this, they should set clear action points, which are then monitored for improvement. As a matter of priority, senior leaders should, in collaboration with staff, establish a shared understanding of what constitutes effective learning, teaching and assessment across the school and nursery.

- The school does not have a clear strategy on raising attainment. The school is at the very early stages of planning to implement a system to track and monitor attainment. This needs to result in a strategic and classroom-level overview of children's progress, which is proactively used as a tool for improvement. Currently, senior leaders and teachers record Curriculum for Excellence levels for literacy and numeracy on a Summary of Pupil Progress (SPP) tracker. This also takes account of progress and effort. Staff have used phonological awareness assessments as a way of improving attainment. The HT has assessed some children in numeracy and mathematics. Support for learning staff have taken forward some interventions with children. Structured action is now required in articulating a more strategic approach to guiding staff in meeting measurable improvements for their pupils' attainment. Senior leaders recognise the benefits of having robust and systematic discussions with staff on attainment and progress to help raise attainment.
- Senior leaders are increasing their knowledge of the school's context. They have considered this context in planning the use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) to improve attainment. All staff have discussed how PEF may be used. Senior leaders now need to be clear of how they will use self-evaluation to measure the success of PEF interventions.
- The HT is establishing a process for professional review and development (PRD) for staff. As part of PRD, staff should make rigourous use of the General Teaching Council for Scotland professional standards. The HT should also embed, as part of PRD, observing classroom practice and giving related feedback. Staff attend a range of career-long professional learning (CLPL) opportunities related to priorities for improvement. They read professional literature. The HT is keen to encourage further professional enquiry. Staff are able to demonstrate some impact of CLPL, although not sufficient. The HT would be assisted by having access to CLPL which is bespoke to being a cluster HT.
- Staff are positive about sharing practice with colleagues from across the cluster. They work collaboratively to take forward some improvements. For example, in promoting equity, 1+2 Approach to Languages and The Highland Council's emerging literacy project. While there is some impact of staff's contributions, they would benefit from more strategic direction in taking forward key responsibilities.
- Until very recently, the pupil council had lapsed. Children do not have a meaningful voice in shaping improvement in the school. Parents have been consulted on making Auchtertyre Primary a better school. Senior leaders should continue to increase the participation of children, parents and partners in continuous improvement.
- The pace of implementing change over time is too slow. Senior leaders and staff are committed to the school and its community. However, they should take prompt and structured action to give clear strategic leadership and direction to ensuring improved outcomes for all children.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

weak

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. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring
- Children are keen to learn and be successful, with the majority of children enjoying aspects of their learning. These include new opportunities, such as that related to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), outdoor learning and after-school clubs. Learning and teaching is still to be consistently underpinned by high-quality respectful relationships between teachers and children. Too often, children disengage from their learning and are passive. It would be helpful to take forward, at pace, the proposed values as one way of setting high expectations and mutual respect in learning and teaching situations. Teachers should ensure their effectiveness and consistency in dealing with interruptions to learning. Adults and children should work together to make classrooms calmer and more conducive to learning. Teachers should model, with their learning environments and interactions, high aspirations and expectations to help children build their self-esteem and sense of worth in learning.
- Children have opportunities to work in pairs and small groups, as well as be part of whole-class teaching. They have opportunities to work with children from across the cluster to enable them to be part of larger teams. The majority of children remain on task during learning activities which are stimulating. At times, teachers are not selecting pedagogy well enough to take forward learning. Teachers need to ensure that all tasks and activities are set at an appropriate pace and level of difficulty, with sufficient opportunities for depth, application and challenge. Staff should increase their use of more effective questioning to develop children's higher-order thinking skills. Teachers need to ensure that questioning accurately gauges and builds on children's knowledge and understanding. Children are often not encouraged to ask questions, or seek clarification of their learning. Teachers should aim for more efficient management of time within classes, and at times of transition.
- Pupil Support Assistants (PSAs) need to be more involved in planning children's learning so that they can be more proactive in classrooms. Currently, the possible support they may offer is curtailed by overly-led teacher direction and lack of planning.
- Teachers make regular use of interactive whiteboards to support their teaching. They need to consider further how well their use is supporting children's learning. Across stages, children report that they are motivated by using digital technologies for learning. There is scope to increase children's use of digital technology.
- Assessment is not yet integral to learning and teaching. Teachers and the HT use a variety of assessments and teacher judgement to ascertain children's levels. Teachers are starting to plan key assessment tasks in literacy and numeracy, and some other areas of the curriculum. Teachers should make more use of assessment information to ensure more of a focus on raising attainment. They should increase their planning for individuals and groups

of children to better meet their needs. Teachers are beginning to use National Benchmarks. Teachers should continue to build their confidence in having a range of evidence to make robust judgements on the achievement of a level. Staff have engaged in some moderation of their professional judgements within school and beyond. Senior leaders should now develop a strategic overview to ensure moderation activities are building teachers' confidence across levels and skills.

- Feedback to children on how to improve their attainment is highly variable. This is constraining children in making appropriately-paced progress. There are some examples of children evaluating their own and each other's work. However, children are yet to become conversant with the language or techniques to be successful in such roles. There is scope for teachers to make better use of learning intentions and success criteria to gauge children's progress in learning. Profiles are not yet valued by children. High-quality feedback to children in their learning should be developed further so that they are clearer on their strengths, next steps in their learning, how to raise attainment and have a clear understanding of the progress they are making.
- Approaches to planning learning are not consistent across stages. More account needs to be taken of national guidance, especially given that all classes are shared between more than one teacher. Teachers' planning should clearly show how individuals and groups of children are demonstrating breadth, challenge and application across all areas of learning. Teachers use the SPP tracker to record children's progress in literacy and numeracy. This information has much potential to be more robustly used in planning learning to raise the attainment of all children. Teachers should effectively analyse individual and group data over time and use this to inform effective planning.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- The curriculum requires prompt attention to ensure that it is raising attainment.
- Teachers record coverage of experiences and outcomes. It is unclear how this articulates with the learning pathways to support progress, know what is to be learnt and how it is to be learnt.
- Some teachers are aware of The Highland Council Overview which bundles experiences and outcomes. The school needs to develop an approach to bundling of experiences and outcomes to help build progression and coherence across the contexts of learning.
- The curriculum rationale outlines what is unique to learning at Auchtertyre Primary School. It also describes how the school delivers curricular areas. The school makes use of The Highland Council's progression pathways for literacy, numeracy, religious and moral education and science. The SIP should articulate how teachers will be leaders of developing further progression within the curriculum. There are gaps in the health and wellbeing programme. There is a high level of dependency on textbook-type resources.
- Children learn through topics. Teachers should develop a rationale for topic-based learning to build on knowledge, and to include important skills for learning, life and work. They should be clear on how topics afford application of learning, as well as the development of literacy. numeracy and health and wellbeing. There is some evidence of numeracy being transferred across other curricular areas. However, this is not a consistent feature of learning. Cross-cutting themes such as sustainability, creativity and enterprise should be robustly integrated within planning of the curriculum.
- The HT has increased the range of partners who enhance the curriculum as part of children's experiences. This is building children's awareness of the world of work. There is also positive participation with the local community, which includes intergenerational projects. Staff should continue to plan Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) more deeply. This should focus on the identification of key skills which are transferrable and support all children to make meaningful links across learning.
- There is scope for learning through play to be better planned to ensure more challenge in children's learning.
- Some learning takes place outdoors. The school is well situated to develop further depth in outdoor learning.
- Children are learning French and Gaelic (Learners) as part of a 1+2 Approach to Languages. Teachers are encouraging some use of these languages in other areas of the curriculum. Deeper learning and better progression in Gaelic should be considered for those who have transferred from Gaelic Medium Education (GME).
- Children would like more art to be part of their learning. Those who attend the art after-school club are highly motivated by their in-depth learning. It would be useful to clarify all children's coverage of experiences and outcomes within this curricular area.



2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners - parental engagement

- Parents are clear that the school has capacity to be better, which includes their children being more challenged in their learning. They would like more activities where they can learn with their children. A positive next step would be to involve parents in approaches to school improvement planning.
- The Parent Council, along with the wider parent body, are very keen to support the school. They raise funds for the school, which assists in delivering breadth in the curriculum.
- Parents appreciate the school's use of newsletters, letters and emails. Parents have requested more timely communication. It would be helpful to update the school's website to enable parents' access to key information. The HT plans to update the handbook to be fully based on Auchtertyre Primary School.

2.1 Safeguarding

The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. HM Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority that need to be addressed as a matter for urgency.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

weak

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality
- Staff know families and the community very well. They are sensitive to families facing challenging circumstances. Staff are committed to developing an inclusive school. This has resulted in them building trusting relationships with parents over time.
- The health and wellbeing curriculum, as described within the school's curriculum rationale, provides an overview of activities and collation of available resources supporting aspects of wellbeing. It takes account of in-class learning, physical education and assemblies. This will provide a helpful starting point to fully developing the responsibility of all for wellbeing across the school. Staff should ensure that delivery impacts on learners by taking account of progression, challenge, equity and raising attainment. Children should be afforded a full breadth of experiences, including wider achievements.
- There are important gaps in children's understanding of experiences of health. Through observations and focus groups, children were unable to identify the importance of food and approaches to healthy eating as part of lifestyle choices.
- The school's strategic approach to wellbeing is in early stages of development. The focus of rights and responsibilities is not yet fully understood by children, or consistently implemented by all staff. Staff, and to some extent children, have an understanding of Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) through the wellbeing indicators. However, this is at an early stage of impacting on outcomes for children. A series of whole-school assemblies has introduced and raised children's awareness of aspects of both wellbeing and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, rights and responsibilities. It will be helpful to use this start to develop further approaches that can support children to better understand their own progress in wellbeing, and how rights and responsibilities impact on their own daily lives and relationships.
- The HT has begun to work towards creating an ethos and culture of care. In taking this forward, children need to know they are listened to and what actions take place as a result.
- Too often, relationships throughout the primary stages are not conducive to positive learning experiences. There is a lack of positive behaviour management policy and practice. Interactions between children and teachers are not always respectful. Staff recognise when barriers and challenges are evident for specific individuals. They are not always clear on the best approaches and interventions to use in providing coherent and coordinated support to ensure wellbeing is consistently improving.

- From the range of inspection activities undertaken, the majority of children feel safe at school and think that the school helps them to feel safe. A minority of children expressed concerns about identifying someone with whom to speak if they are worried or upset. The majority of children feel that the school helps them to lead a healthy lifestyle. They relate this to the range of opportunities to take regular exercise or participate in sports.
- In a recent school questionnaire, almost all children in the upper stages expressed that behaviour in class could be improved and currently falls short of being acceptable. It will be important to revisit the anti-bullying policy, and develop a whole-school approach to positive behaviour.
- Across the primary, children are experiencing two hours of quality physical education. This is based on The Highland Council progression framework.
- The introduction of a focus on nurture, with specific groups of children, is beginning to improve aspects of inclusion and equality.
- There are important weaknesses in meeting the needs of all children. This includes those who require additional support in their learning and those who require additional challenge. Currently, the evidence of a planned, structured and coherent approach to the identification of children who require support for their learning is not yet well enough developed. In developing an effective approach, there needs to be clarity around interventions to provide support that is well-planned, evaluated and monitored on a regular basis. A few children who work with support staff are benefitting from their input. However, there is a need to review the deployment of PSAs to ensure that this targeted support is clearly linked to individual plans that have child-friendly specific targets. These should be shared and understood by staff and children. Currently, children are not confident in the purpose of some activities, or able to describe their targets for improvement. The HT recognises the need to have a strategic and collaborative approach to tracking and monitoring children's progress. This would help staff provide effective interventions that lead to improved wellbeing, attainment and achievement. Children and their parents should have much greater involvement in the setting of targets and evaluation of the effectiveness of interventions.

Fulfilment of statutory duties

- Religious Observance has not been fully met this year. Children experience a range of religions but need further help to understand their relevance. They need to be better able to appreciate aspects of diversity.
- All staff confirm their confidence in child protection procedures. They all have received recent training as part of their professional development.
- The HT should review how school staff record and log incidents, including those relating to bullying and complaints. These should be collated in an accessible and clear way that enables an overview to be gleaned. Staff need to be proactive in monitoring for possible patterns and trends.

Inclusion and equality

Staff understand the range of circumstances, including socio-economic factors, that can be a barrier to children's learning. There are a range of activities being undertaken to promote equity. A few staff have used relevant evidence to enable impact to be identified and measured. It will be important that impact across all these activities is captured in order to make decisions about further support.

met in order to maximise progress.	-
to celebrate their diversity and skills. This needs to become a consistent feature wider range of children who require additional support in their learning have their	to ensure a
inclusion. Where staff are fully supported by relevant agencies, children are well-	
There are currently no exclusions from the school. This represents a commitmer	it to

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

weak

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. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners
- The number of children in cohorts varies and is relatively small. Therefore, overall statements have been made about progression to ensure anonymity about individuals.

Overall attainment in literacy and numeracy

Overall, children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is weak. The school's own reporting of Curriculum for Excellence data for literacy and numeracy is showing underperformance and significant headroom for improvement. Teachers are engaging in moderation activities to increase their confidence in professional judgements. HM Inspectors did not find professional judgements in listening and talking to be accurate. Staff should increase the frequency and range of children's writing to assist with demonstrating the required standards for writing. All staff should now take the necessary steps to ensure a clear strategic direction to raising attainment in literacy and numeracy.

Attainment in literacy and English

Children are making insufficient progress from prior levels of attainment in literacy and English language. Children's attainment and progress in literacy and English language is weak. Teachers should increase their focus on meeting the needs of higher attaining children. By the second level, children are not clear of the relevance of literacy as a skill for learning, life and work.

Listening and talking

At the time of the inspection, children working at early level gave simple responses to questions. They share their experiences, views and opinions. Across stages and levels, children have difficulty in taking turns when working in groups and with adults. By first and second levels, children contribute to discussions. At first level, they do not respect others' contributions. At second level, children are able to show respect to each other's views when in a small group which is supported by an adult. In other situations, which entail a larger audience, they are less successful. For too many children, listening to conversations and instructions remains a challenge. At second level, children could not recall having regular opportunities to debate. There needs to be a consistent approach agreed by staff to developing the quality of children's listening and talking skills through planned learning activities.

Reading

At the early level, most children recognise sounds and connect these to making words. Children are able to talk about characters in books; the use of the cover and illustrations to entice interest and they identify the title and author. They are able to give simple predictions. At the first and second levels, there are too many children who are hesitant in reading aloud.

Most children can identify their favourite authors and explain why they appeal to them. There is scope for children to give more detail in analysing writers' craft.

Writing

There are significant weaknesses in children's progress in writing. This requires urgent action. The HT rightly identified that children's lack of progress stems from the curriculum not promoting a structured approach to teaching writing. She has taken some steps to address this. Children have not been writing regularly enough, and for a sufficient range of purposes. Children need more opportunities to apply their writing in other curricular areas to the same standard as that required of them in literacy and English language. In some cases, the over reliance on work sheets is preventing children from expressing themselves through writing. Children have limited opportunities to plan their writing. By P7, children have a good understanding of punctuation. At the second level, they are developing skills in checking and editing. There is significant scope to improve children's presentation of work in terms of layout, legibility of writing, spelling, correcting of errors and respect for their work.

Overall attainment in numeracy and mathematics

Overall, progress in numeracy is weak from prior levels of attainment. The headteacher and staff understand that for some children additional challenge and application is needed to help them fulfil their potential. This is also evidenced in the school's own data. Across stages, a significant number of children find it difficult to recall and articulate previous knowledge and skills.

Number, money and measure

- Through learning observations, jotters and focus group discussions, children achieving the early level in numeracy demonstrate abilities in counting and ordering numbers to 30. Most are able to add and subtract with concrete materials. As they progress through the school, most are able to manipulate a wider range of numbers. There are examples of multiplication and division strategies being used to solve problems.
- Children in the upper stages are beginning to develop understanding of equivalence of fractions and expressing this as a decimal.
- Across the school, children are developing an awareness of money and its use in buying items, calculating cost and change. By P7, children are able to apply their knowledge of number and money in a limited range of contexts, for example, to budget for a residential outing.
- The teaching of algebraic reasoning and problem-solving skills require further development. Children's mental calculation skills would benefit from activities that provide increased pace and challenge. To consolidate learning, teachers and children should engage in more discussion of a variety of mental calculation strategies.

Shape, position and movement

Children in the early level are confident at naming 2D-shapes, with the older children able to name the properties of 3D-objects.

Information handling

There is no evidence of children using data to present information well. This is a significant weakness.

Attainment over time

Attainment over time is based on standardised assessments - INCAS information and more recently Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA) - and SPP. All sets of data suggest that there is significant headroom for raising attainment in literacy and numeracy. Staff are yet to collect data on attainment in curricular areas beyond literacy and numeracy. The HT is aware that there remains scope for all children to be more actively challenged in their learning, including higher attaining groups.

Overall quality of achievement

Staff are very aware of children's particular interests, talents and achievements. Staff need to develop and robustly record, track and monitor children's personal achievements to support teachers in signposting those children who are at risk of missing out. This will help secure equity of access and increases in achievements. Across the primary school, and particularly at the older stages, children are involved in leading assemblies and taking part in a range of local competitions. Children are rightly proud of recent sporting successes including drama, football and shinty. Wider achievements are celebrated through displays. Recently, children have shared their musical talents in visiting a community day centre for elderly people. This has been appreciated by the adults. Children enjoy learning in the outdoors, which could be developed as a more consistent feature.

Equality for all learners

The HT is at the early stages of developing tracking that can easily identify helpful criteria to better inform decision-making on PEF. The current approaches to the use of PEF focus on improving children's emotional wellbeing through resilience. It will be helpful to ensure that strong outcomes and measures are developed to ensure that impact can be identified more clearly and help inform future planning. There are early signs of improvements, but it is too early to identify sustained trends.

Choice of QI: 2.4 Personalised support

- Universal support
- Targeted support
- Removal of barriers to learning
- Staff are proud of their commitment to all children being included in the school. They work hard to develop positive relationships with parents, which result in creating a climate of trust. Staff report that parents are willing to share their talents and expertise to enhance children's experiences. This has resulted in success in competitions for drama and engineering. These relationships are valued.
- The HT and staff have regular formal and informal discussions on children's learning and progress. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are in place for children requiring additional support in their learning. It will be important to develop relevant targets and ensure that all children are supported in identifying what they need to do to improve. This should be supported by reviews that are timely in accordance with need. Currently, almost all IEPs do not record parent or children's views. In order for children to make maximum progress, parents' and children's views should be sought, along with agreed future targets or next steps.
- It would be helpful to review the roles and responsibilities of the support for learning team. This should maximise their skills and support to better enable children to make progress. Some of the activities they currently undertake could be delivered by PSAs.
- Expectations of children's learning, progress and behaviour is too variable across the school.
- The new approaches to tracking will help provide a basis for looking more closely at specific factors impacting on children's wellbeing and progress. This should be used to make decisions about interventions that are clearly evidenced-based and focused on improving equity as part of the school's approaches to allocating PEF.
- Approaches to nurture have been welcomed by parents and children. This remains at the very early stages of development. Staff, parents and children should develop further their understanding of the principles of nurture.
- A wider range of partners have been introduced by the HT to now support areas such as mental health.

Explanation of terms of quality

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quality are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.