



**Education  
Scotland**  
Foghlam Alba

# **Sharing HM Inspectors' findings: Building capacity by illustrating improvements**

**Joan Esson HMI**

Comann nam Pàrant Nàiseanta  
March 2022

Local Authorities Network  
February 2022

# Aims for this session

- **Promote improvement and build capacity through identifying and sharing effective practice within early learning and childcare, and school sectors for Gaelic**
- **Spotlight some new resources**
- **What's this not? All you will need for self-evaluation for improvement in Gaelic Education**

# Sharing HM Inspectors' findings to support improvement

This presentation is based on HM Inspectors evidence as we resumed activity in schools. We visited over 200 schools and services that were due to have a further inspection, with others visited as part of national thematic inspections.

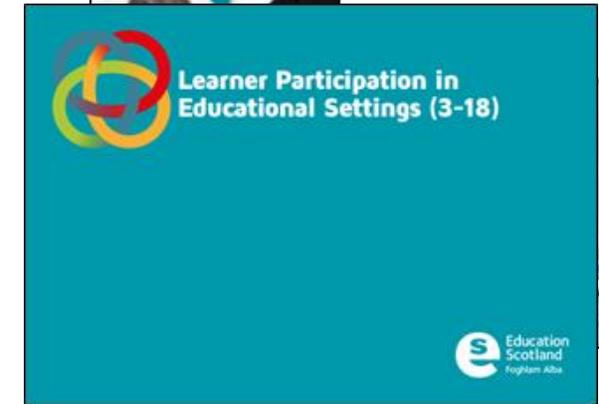
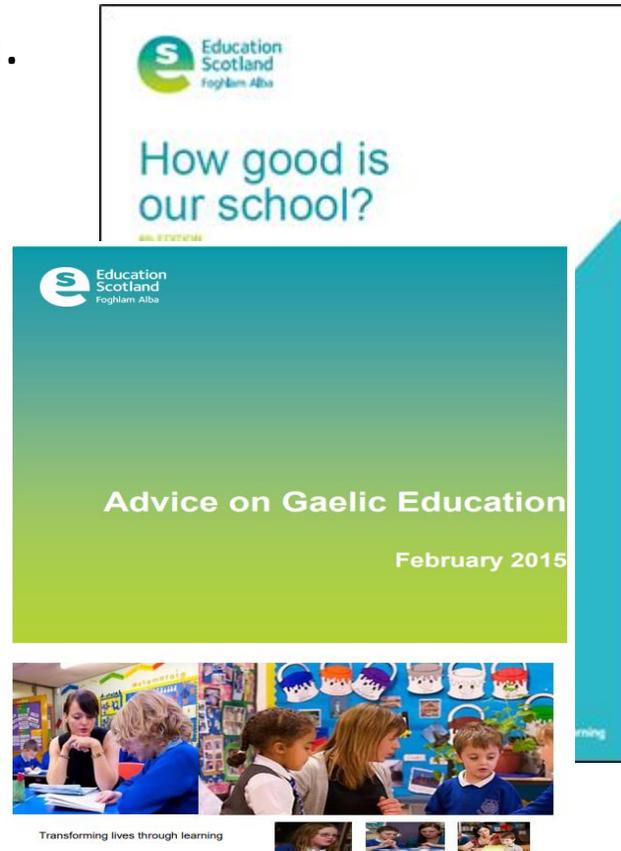
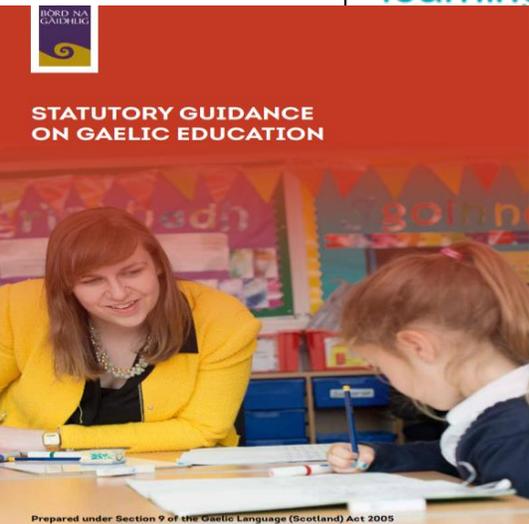
This presentation illustrates how establishments, who were due a further inspection, took forward priorities for improvements for Gaelic.

The national thematic inspection inspections focused on **outdoor learning, recovery and wellbeing**.

**HM Chief Inspector of Education, Gayle Gorman said: “I am acutely aware of the pressures schools remain under currently, and have been engaging with school leaders and others, and listening to the day to day experiences with which they deal. It is with this understanding of the daily challenges that we make this announcement to resume activity in schools”.**

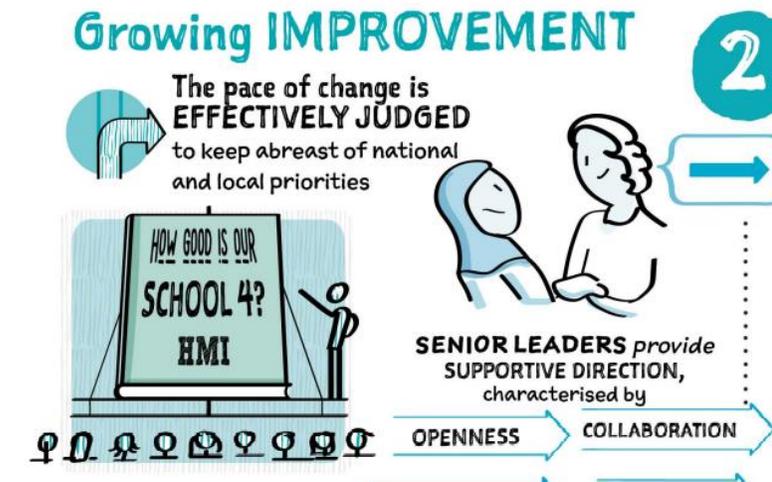
# How well are we doing in the Gaelic sector? How do we know?

The Advice on Gaelic Education and Statutory Guidance should be used with the [suite of quality frameworks How good is our ..?](#) to contextualise these to the Gaelic sector. These frameworks set out the standards we use to evaluate and report on quality and improvement in Scottish education.



# Illustrating some improvements in leadership

- The headteacher leads with a **clear vision** that promotes all staff as leaders and partners in change.
- The headteacher has **realistically paused a few improvement priorities** due to COVID-19 and **commenced other projects**. The headteacher has introduced online **questionnaires** to seek views on what is going well and what needs to improve. She skillfully **incorporates questions on the school's context for Gaelic**.
- Staff have made very **important changes to their roles, responsibilities and professional learning** to lead change for Gaelic Learner and Medium Education (GLE, GME).
- Staff and senior leaders should continue using **'The Advice on Gaelic Education'** and **'Statutory Guidance for Gaelic Education'** to maintain and extend the improvements they are making.
- **Expectations** are increasing of staff and their role and responsibility in achieving the best for children and young people.
- **Community Learning and Development** identified and supported transition to secondary.



# Illustrating some improvements in wellbeing and outcomes

- Children have **regular opportunities to talk about their wellbeing**. They are familiar with **national wellbeing indicators** to express their feelings and get support. Staff used this information to provide individual support to help children cope with the pandemic.
- At times, all children in GME were online together to support the **community ethos they have created for learning through the medium of Gaelic**.
- Teachers of GME offered **additional online live meets** to help children retain their fluency in the language.
- On children's return to in-school learning, **teachers retained a focus on listening and talking in Gaelic**. This is **building children's confidence** in their use of Gaelic, whilst supporting their skills in reading and writing.

## RELATIONSHIPS

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION,  
CONNECTEDNESS, COMPASSION

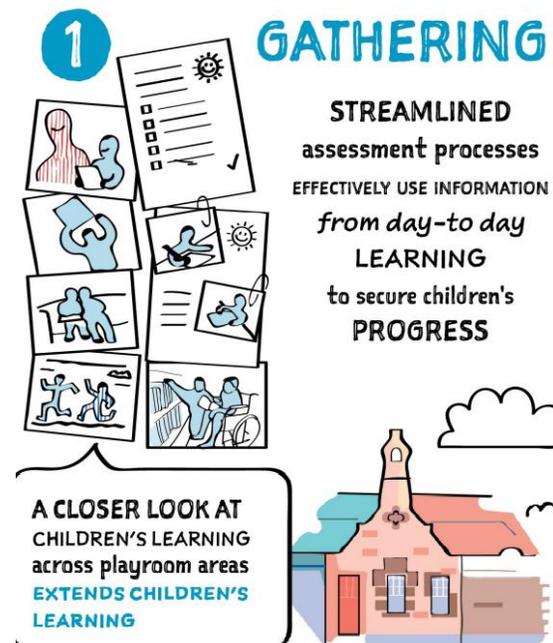
## HEALTH and WELLBEING

FUNDAMENTAL to LEARNING.



# Illustrating some improvements in early learning and childcare

- In the playroom for total immersion through Gaelic, the headteacher has successfully recruited **fluent speakers of Gaelic**.
- The headteacher has given a **clear steer** to improving the sgoil àraich. She has compiled very useful **policies** to which the staff refer.
- Children in GME have a **good balance of total immersion activities led by adults**. Children develop **decision-making skills** in adult-led activities by choosing songs to sing. Often, they are using the titles of songs in Gaelic to state their preferences.
- Practitioners engage well with **small groups of children** in total immersion play. They provide **commentaries** in Gaelic and **ask questions** so children are more actively thinking about their learning.
- Children's **confidence is increasing in speaking and singing Gaelic in social situations and routines**.
- Children have **established routines** where they show their understanding and use of Gaelic. They can talk about their feelings, the days of the week and stories that are being read to them.



# Illustrating some improvements in the curriculum

- There is a **shared vision** that includes GME.
- **Staffing has been increased** to deliver more GME.
- **Professional learning** has been used to lead change for Gaelic Learner and GME. For example, a year-long immersion course in Gaelic, with others enrolled for the learners' course, 'Speak Gaelic'.
- A 3-18 school is starting to implement **social subjects** and **art and design** through Gaelic at the secondary stages. Partnership arrangement for recruitment with the digital platform, e-Sgoil.
- A 3-18 school is starting to starting to implement **social subjects in S1**. This is **done jointly with teachers and young people at another school through the use of technology**. Importantly, it enables learners to build on **local aspects**.
- Young people are learning through Gaelic in **projects**, with partners and in opportunities for **wider achievements**. This also developed an understanding of the **importance of Gaelic language, culture and music** to their local area and beyond.



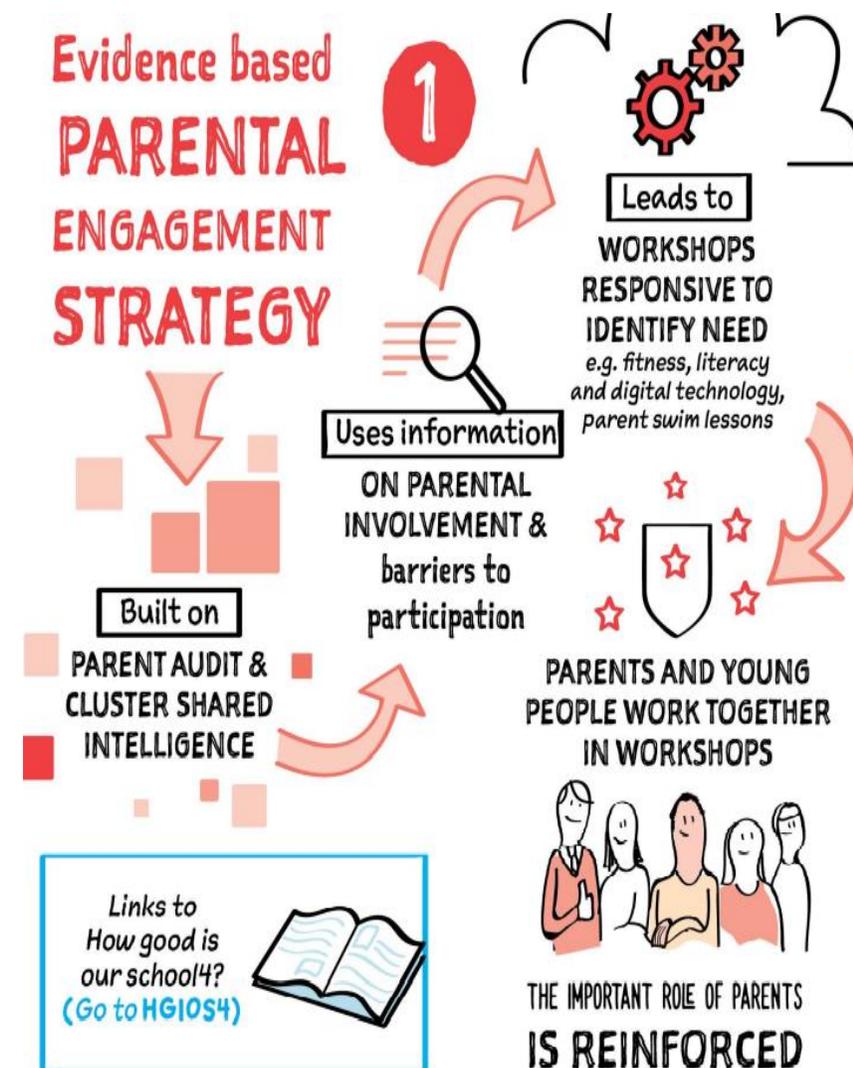
# Illustrating some improvements in immersion

- Teachers in GME have evaluated their practice as they pursue **even higher quality immersion education**.
- Teachers have made **evaluative use** of ‘The Advice on Gaelic Education’. Teachers have written a **policy on what informs high-quality learning, teaching and assessment through immersion**.
- They have developed a robust way of teaching **grammar** in an active and engaging way. They have also looked at increasing pace and challenge by identifying ways that literacy skills in Gaelic can **support skills** in English.
- Teachers have planned an **increased focus on total immersion play at the early level**. In this, younger children are listening, understanding and talking in Gaelic. Teachers are **beginning to measure how this is raising attainment in talking, reading and writing**.
- The older children in GME **articulate clearly the benefits of increasing their writing activities**. Children are aware of how this skill helps them as they **move through education and into employment**.



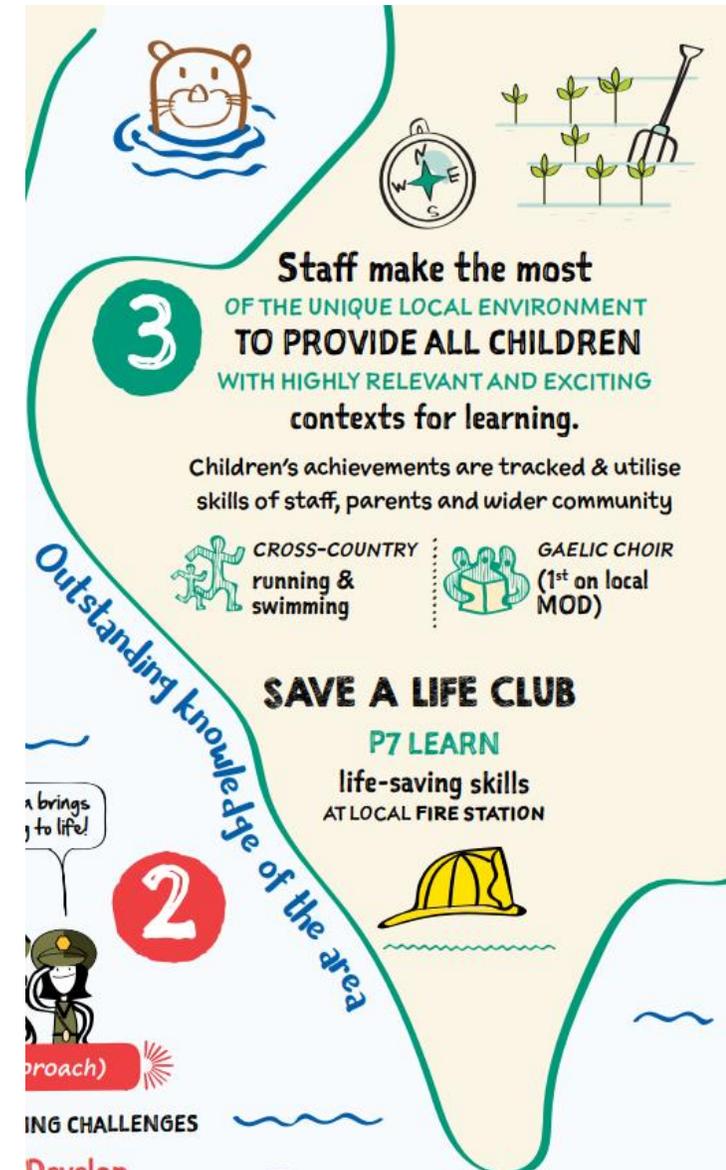
# Illustrating some improvements in family learning

- Staff make very regular use of a **digital tool to communicate with parents, check on children's progress in learning and share children's successes.** Parents found this approach helped them to have **meaningful conversations** with their children on learning.
- Parents of those in GME felt that this **encouraged children's use of Gaelic in the home.**
- On returning to school, staff are **maintaining this digital approach as part of building on what worked well during lockdown.**



# Illustrating some improvements in Gaelic (Learners) as an additional language

- Children's learning of Gaelic at the primary stages as an additional language in the English Medium primary classes is now more **meaningful**. This learning **begins in the sgoil àraich** through songs and common phrases.
- A **singing tutor** provides a rich dimension to children's curriculum.
- Staff use **events** like Là na Gàidhlig to help all children be more aware of the benefits that learning Gaelic affords them.

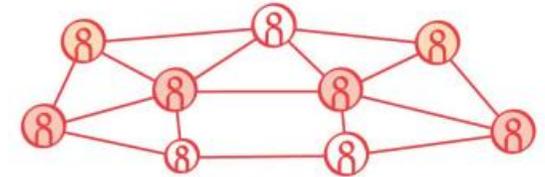


# Illustrating some next steps to improve

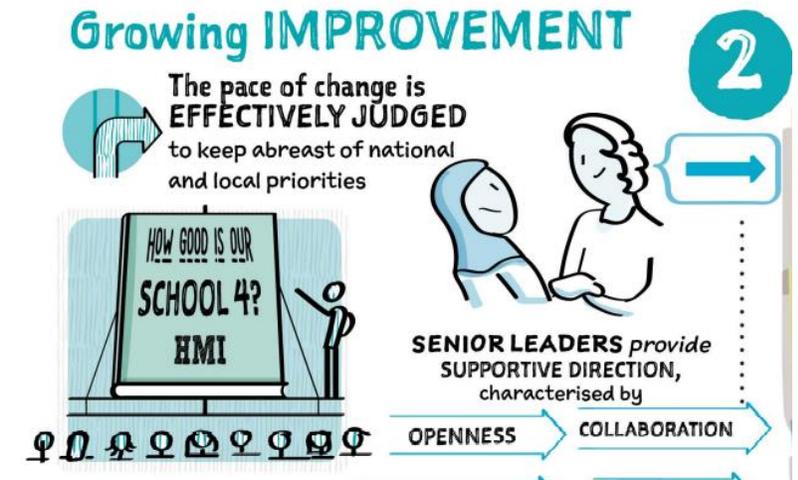
- Going forward, senior leaders need to ensure that a strong **strategy** drives the **continuous** planning and delivery of the curriculum for Gaelic.
- The school's **improvement plan needs to be explicit** on increasing the number of young people achieving national qualifications and awards in Gaelic Medium and Learner Education. It also needs to define how the statutory duty of providing a **greater proportion of learning through Gaelic** is fulfilled.
- Senior leaders advised us of the **greater use and celebration of Gaelic in the life and work of the school**. They should ensure **higher visibility** of written and spoken Gaelic as one way of conveying value for learning in and through Gaelic.

## LEADERSHIP

CRISIS and CHANGE MANAGEMENT ARE ESSENTIAL SKILLS.



## Growing IMPROVEMENT



# Moving forward: How are HM Inspectors continuing to support improvement?



## Purpose of visits:



hearing from  
you about your  
current priorities  
for recovery or  
improvement;



learning what is  
working well, the  
challenges faced  
and solutions  
found;



identifying and  
sharing examples  
of effective  
practice.

# Moving forward: How are HM Inspectors continuing to support self-improvement?

## Improving the secondary curriculum for Gaelic Medium Education

Pupils at Portree High School, The Highland Council, have produced a short film to exemplify their curriculum, which also demonstrates quality outcomes in their learning and fluency in Gaelic. This resource can be viewed in [Gaelic](#) and [English](#). We have also produced challenge questions to support professional dialogue.

## Improving the total immersion curriculum for Gaelic Medium Education

East Dunbartonshire Council and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar have produced films to exemplify total immersion play. (Films start at 3.12 in the link below.) [This has been developed into a professional learning resource](#) with challenge questions.



How good is our CLD →



DÈ CHO MATH 'S A THA AN  
T-IONNSACHADH IS  
LEASACHADH  
COIMHEARSNACHD AGAINN?

## How good is our CLD?

We are inviting case studies demonstrating how HGIOCLD? can be used in a Gaelic context.

# Successful Approaches to Learning Outdoors - Gaelic Medium Education



Education  
Scotland  
Foghlam Alba

Modhan-  
obrach  
soirbheachail  
airson  
ionnsachadh  
a-muigh

Aithisg le Luchd-



- HM Inspectors sampled Gaelic Medium Education for this national [report](#).
- This helps us meet the needs of learners and a priority in our statutory Gaelic Language Plan, 2022-2027.
- HM Inspectors found that learning outdoors is increasingly a feature of learners' everyday experiences.
- Learning outdoors in Gaelic Medium Education is planned, through the medium of Gaelic and meets the principles of immersion. See the [Advice on Gaelic Education](#)
- Curriculum partners make a valuable contribution to delivering learning outdoors. See examples to support curriculum making [here](#).

# Moving forward: Thematic Inspection Reports continuing to support improvement?

**“Teachers/Practitioners lead and plan learning in all contexts of the curriculum through the medium of Gaelic. Children and young people are enabled to develop vocabulary, language skills, grammar and an appreciation of Gaelic language and culture” Advice on Gaelic Education, HM Inspectors of Education**



<http://ow.ly/9uBV50I0YVa> #outdoorlearning #effectivepractice

# Spotlight on a Resource: What Scotland Learned



**What Scotland Learned: BUILDING BACK BETTER**

**RELATIONSHIPS**  
EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION, CONNECTEDNESS, COMPASSION  
People built strong collaborative relationships led to a sense of "red hands" leading to fast decisions. To work, learn and achieve success in dealing with COVID-19.  
\* The OECD identified maintaining effective relationships as only second to supporting learning.

**LEADERSHIP**  
CRISIS AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT ARE ESSENTIAL SKILLS  
Relevant professional learning for those in formal leadership roles post-pandemic.  
Collaboration with a range of partners to provide the most robust support for learners and their families.  
Leadership is not just about a promoted position or title; we need to respect the professionalism of all our educational staff. Support senior leaders' wellbeing is needed.

**HEALTH and WELLBEING**  
FUNDAMENTAL TO LEARNING  
Schools are important in meeting children's non-academic needs.  
\* We need to create more equitable education systems by identifying and supporting all "vulnerable" learners for as long as that support is needed.  
We need to promote wellbeing all of the time in our educational settings not just in a crisis.

**LEARNING and TEACHING**  
EFFECTIVE AND INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY and ASSESSMENT APPROACHES to support learners through recovery and beyond.  
PROMOTE INDEPENDENT LEARNING SKILLS IN PUPILS to become self-directed learners.  
COLLABORATION AT ALL LEVELS, with peers, parents and a range of partners will support practitioners to share effective practice and develop evidence based approaches.  
REIMAGINE EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE – what will our learners need to help them flourish and achieve in a post-Covid world.  
BUILT ON DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY, to develop progressive skills in digital literacy.

**COMMUNITIES**  
BUILD BACK BETTER—SCHOOLS, partners and the wider community need to work in collaboration.  
INCREASING RELATIONSHIPS HAVE BEEN STRENGTHENED.  
SCHOOLS HAVE HIGHLIGHTED THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WIDER COMMUNITY made up of individuals and groups that can support our children.  
The pandemic brought about a collective urgency to work together at pace.

**SUCCESSES and ACHIEVEMENTS**  
RECOGNISE AND CELEBRATE those to realise hope for the future.  
Educators are more skilled in using digital technology and authorities make digital technology accessible to all children and young people.  
TEACHERS BUILD CONFIDENCE to support effective self-regulation.  
FLEXIBLE CURRICULUM that supports change is clearly evidenced in actions taken in response to the pandemic.  
ABILITY AND MOTIVATION of staff to collaborate and support one another – clear focus on children and families.

## What Scotland Learned: 100 Stories of Lockdown

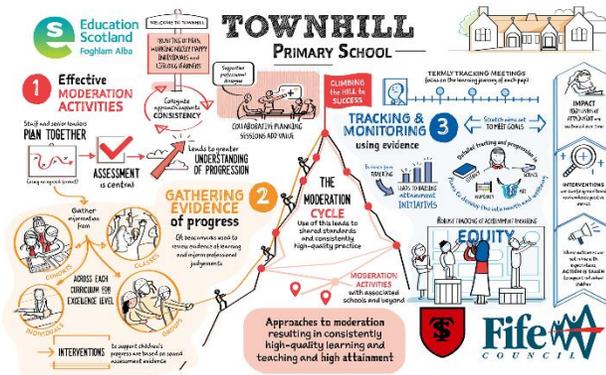
[what-scotland-learned\\_100stories.pdf](https://www.education.gov.scot/what-scotland-learned_100stories.pdf)  
([education.gov.scot](https://www.education.gov.scot/))

## What Scotland Learned: Building Back Better

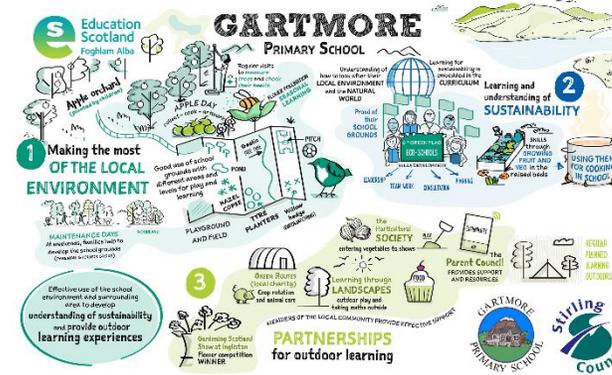
[What Scotland Learned – building back better - January 2021](https://www.education.gov.scot/what-scotland-learned_building-back-better-january-2021.pdf)  
([education.gov.scot](https://www.education.gov.scot/))

# Spotlight on a Resource: Sharing effective practice in recovery

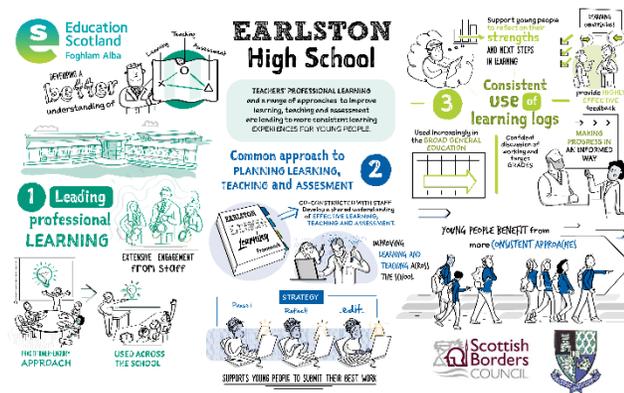
Several of the sketchnotes that illustrate effective practice identified through inspection now have recovery updates from senior leaders. Here are a few examples.



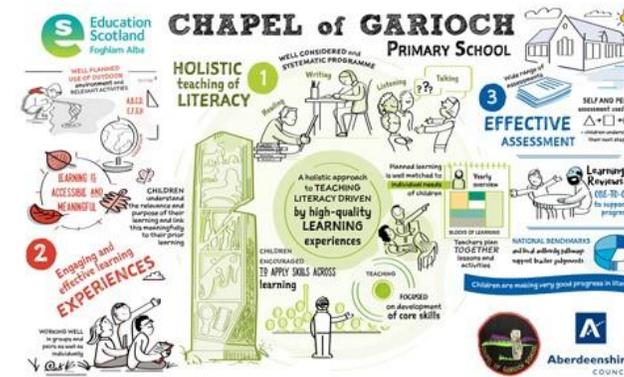
Read the recovery update from Townhill Primary [here.](#)



Read the recovery update from Gartmore Primary [here.](#)



Read the recovery update from Earlston High School [here.](#)



Read the recovery update from Chapel of Garioch Primary [here.](#)