Summarised inspection findings

Sgoil an Rubha and Sgoil Àraich

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

8 October 2019

Key contextual information

At the time of the inspection, an acting headteacher (HT) had been in post for approximately six weeks.

Sgoil an Rubha offers Gaelic Medium Education (GME), as well as learning through the medium of English, (EME). At the primary stages, there were 35 children in GME, with 103 in EME. In the Sgoil Àraich, there were 20 children in GME and 23 in EME.

Attendance is in line with the national average.

Exclusions are below the national average.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	good
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	

■ All staff have created a warm, welcoming and caring ethos based on the school's vision and values. The school's values are proudly displayed throughout the school. They are evident in the interactions between children and staff. Children across the school are polite, well-behaved and proud of their school. Classrooms and open spaces are bright, with attractive displays telling the story of children's learning across a range of curricular areas. There is a strong commitment to supporting children's rights. The school recently achieved the bronze Rights Respecting School Award. Children are able to talk about their rights, which are displayed around the school. Children in GME would benefit from having a written record of the rights available to them in Gaelic. The visibility of Gaelic around the school remains a priority.

■ Children in GME are happy in their learning. They enjoy supportive relationships with staff as an important basis on which children's immersion experiences are built. Immersion is implemented through high-quality Gaelic. An intervention to focus on developing listening, understanding and talking skills in Gaelic has impacted positively on children's fluency at the early level.

■ Children in English medium have opportunities to learn Gaelic. Recently all children had roles in a stage performance to re-enact the tragedy, An Iolaire. Gaelic was integral to this performance. Children develop their skills in singing and recitation through competing at the local Mòd. All of this learning should be captured as part of a coherent and progressive learning pathway for a 1+2 Approach to Languages. A next step would be to enable children to be developing the standard described in the National Benchmarks. There should be a continued high focus on recognising with all children the benefits they accrue from bilingualism as an outcome of GME and, to a lesser extent, Gaelic (Learners).

■ It would be important to develop a high level statement of what constitutes effective immersion at Sgoil an Rubha. This should include how children who need help with their learning may access support to retain them within GME. The statement should include how Gaelic is

1 | Summarised inspection findings
      Sgoil an Rubha and Sgoil Àraich (6232434)
      Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

integrated in EME to prepare children for living in a community in which they will hear and use Gaelic and English. This should be used in monitoring high-quality immersion learning, teaching and assessment.

- In GME and EME, almost all children are motivated and on task. They have regular opportunities to work individually, and collaboratively in pairs, and in small groups. In almost all lessons, teachers share the purpose of learning with children. In a few examples, children are involved in suggesting how they will be successful. Children should be provided with further opportunities to talk about success in learning to support them in understanding themselves as learners. Children value the verbal and written praise and feedback they get from teachers. Staff should revisit how they share feedback to ensure a strong focus on progress and next steps in learning. This will support further children to understand what they are doing well and how they can improve.

- Overall, across the school the quality of teaching is good. There is a purposeful and calm learning environment across the school. Teachers are keen to continue to improve their practice and engage in professional learning. As a result, they are implementing a range of teaching approaches within their classrooms. They have rightly identified the need to share their practice in a more structured way to improve further the consistency of learning and teaching across the school. 'Quality teaching looks like...' and 'Quality learner experiences look like...' posters have been created and displayed in all classes. A useful next step would be to include immersion, and the integration of Gaelic (Learners) within these. Stakeholders should be invited to co-create a refreshed, shared agreement on what excellent learning and teaching in EME and GME looks like at Sgoil an Rubha.

- Most lessons are differentiated to suit multi-level class arrangements. There remains scope to increase the pace of learning and level of challenge. Children should be given more opportunities to lead their learning, and make choices about how they will learn. Across the school, children talk about the learning activities with which they engage. They are increasingly able to describe the skills that they are developing. Most teachers use effective questioning to check children's understanding. In a few lessons, questioning is used to develop children's higher-order thinking skills.

- Children are confident in their use of digital technology to support learning. Those in GME recently worked with the digital platform, e-Sgoil in a talking competition. A range of digital resources such as video clips, interactive whiteboards and tablets are used well to enhance learning and teaching. Children are motivated by a newly-introduced app, which they use to share their learning with their parents. As planned, this should be developed further to support children in setting targets, gathering evidence of their progress and identifying next steps in their learning.

- Teachers in GME and EME create an annual overview plan of learning at the start of each year. This is built on during four medium-term planning blocks throughout the year. These approaches to planning have a strong focus on coverage of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) experiences and outcomes. Teachers have recently developed a progressive learning pathway for literacy and English. A high priority should be to build on this positive start to create progressive learning pathways for all curricular areas.

- All teachers know children very well. They use a range of formative assessment strategies to support ongoing assessment of children's progress. Teachers have made an enthusiastic start to moderating standards of children's work. They are at the early stages of using National Benchmarks to plan assessment in literacy and numeracy. They should ensure a strategic whole-school approach to having moderated evidence justifying their teacher professional judgements in literacy and numeracy. It would be useful to extend approaches to moderation

and assessment across the curriculum. Agreeing a whole-school approach to assessment will further strengthen teacher judgements.

- The HT and acting HT meet termly with all teachers to monitor and track children's progress in literacy and English, literacy and Gàidhlig, numeracy and mathematics, and health and wellbeing. Monitoring and tracking processes identify potential barriers to learning for individual children. The acting HT should review how this leads to planned, targeted interventions for individuals, with a focus on closing any gap that exists. Regular monitoring and evaluation of these interventions will ensure they lead to improved outcomes for children.

3 | Summarised inspection findings
       Sgoil an Rubha and Sgoil Àraich (6232434)
       Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

■ The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. 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 of urgency.

4 | Summarised inspection findings
Sgoil an Rubha and Sgoil Àraich (6232434)
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	good

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

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- The overall quality of children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is good. The school's predictions for children's achievement of CfE levels for 2018-2019 show that in P1 EME, almost all children will achieve early level in listening, talking, reading and writing through English. Most children in P1 EME and GME will achieve early level in numeracy through English and Gaelic, as appropriate to immersion. At P4 EME, most children will achieve first level in listening, talking, reading, writing through English, and numeracy according to mediums of learning. Almost all children across EME and GME will achieve second level in listening, talking and reading through the medium of English, with the majority achieving second level in writing. Most children in P7 will achieve second level in numeracy, according to mediums of learning.

Attainment in literacy and Gàidhlig

- Overall attainment in literacy and Gàidhlig is good, with some aspects being satisfactory. Evidence of children's achievement of CfE levels for 2017-2018 indicates that most children have achieved at early, first and second level in listening and talking, reading and writing. The relatively low numbers in GME presents challenges in analysing data for trends in improvements. Staff are tracking attainment, which needs to be underpinned by progression pathways. They should track skills in listening, talking, reading and writing at P7 separately for Gaelic and English.

Listening and talking

- Overall most children are making good progress in listening and talking. Children talk confidently to adults, and when in pairs and in small groups. Teachers regularly emphasise the features of being a good listener. Children respond well, to teachers' questions. Staff, as required, model for children how to improve the accuracy of language. Lessons focusing on improving grammar are working well. Children are developing appropriate technical vocabulary about language and analysing texts. Staff across the GME stages should evaluate how the delivery of the curriculum could reduce children's over use of English words within their communication through Gaelic. By second level, most children build on one another's ideas, and that of adults. They confidently interject teacher's explanation to ask a question, or add some detail. Children's confidence should be developed in debating themes in greater depth, with less direction from adults. When planning the curriculum, staff should ensure that their approaches to total immersion are addressing emerging common errors in grammar.

Reading

- Overall most children are making good progress in reading, in both Gaelic and English, as appropriate to age and stage of immersion. They use their knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns, as relevant to Gaelic and English to read texts with fluency. At first and second levels, children talk of their enjoyment of books written by particular authors. They give relevant

reasons for their choice. By second level, children would benefit from more practise in talking more deeply about the features of the writer's craft.

Writing

■ Overall attainment in writing in Gaelic is satisfactory. By the second level, children's skills in writing in English are good overall. Across the school, the majority of children are gaining a range of technical skills. At the early level, an initial intervention on acquiring fluency through play-based activity is now focusing on ensuring children are close to writing a sentence independently. It would be good to keep testing this intervention as children move through the school to ascertain its impact in improving fluency and attainment. At the first level, children are encouraged to write independently in Gaelic and are developing skills in using simple punctuation. At the second level, children write in both Gaelic and English using different genres. Monitoring of writing should ensure that children are writing regularly in Gaelic, in addition to doing grammar exercises. It will also be helpful to ensure high expectations of children's writing in Gaelic across the curriculum. As staff develop their policy on immersion, they should include strategies on supporting children who need additional help with their writing.

Literacy and English
Listening and talking

■ Almost all children listen very well in class. At early level, most children listen to and follow instructions from their teacher. Most respond appropriately to others when working in groups. At first level, most children listen and respond appropriately to others during group and class discussions in a respectful way. At second level, children contribute relevant ideas and opinions when engaging in group and class discussions. They are respectful of the opinions and views of others and offer their own point of view in an appropriate way. Children at first and second level plan and deliver presentations to their peers. They are supported to identify the range of skills they are developing through peer assessment. The implementation of the newly-developed progression pathway will improve further consistency across the school.

Reading

■ At early level, most children read sight and tricky words with increasing confidence. They know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. Most children are developing their preferences for books through voting for the books to read as a class. At first and second level, children have access to a range of quality novels in class. At first level, most children use context clues to deduce the meaning of unfamiliar words and distinguish between fact and fiction. They talk about authors they like and give reasons for their choices. They discuss some aspects of the writer's craft and answer simple questions about the text. Most discuss characters and settings as well as the main ideas. At second level, most children talk enthusiastically about the books they like to read and why they choose particular books and authors. They read fluently and share thoughts about structure, characters and setting as well as describing in detail the main ideas contained within texts.

Writing

■ A recent focus on writing is leading to a more consistent approach across the school. There is some scope to increase the frequency of writing lessons. This will increase the pace of progress and support more children to achieve expected levels. Children at early level use drawings to plan their writing and add additional detail. Progress through overwriting, underwriting and independent writing supports children to share their ideas. Most form their letters correctly and spell familiar words correctly. The majority use their knowledge of sounds to attempt unfamiliar words. At first level, most children write for a range of purposes. Most use common conjunctions to link sentences and use simple punctuation appropriately within their writing. At second level, almost all children create texts for a range of purposes and audiences

6 | Summarised inspection findings
Sgoil an Rubha and Sgoil Àraich (6232434)
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

© Crown Copyright

selecting appropriate genre, form, structure and style. Across the school, children have regular, planned opportunities to transfer their writing skills across the curriculum.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, attainment in numeracy and mathematics is good. A few children are making very good progress and are exceeding national expected levels. There is scope for increased use of data to plan learning, teaching and assessment to raise attainment further and reduce gaps. Teachers engage readily in professional dialogue in schools, and with other local schools. As a result, data is becoming more reliable. Increased participation in moderation activities will support the accuracy of the data. Teachers use standardised assessments to inform overall teachers' judgement. For children with additional barriers to learning, the evidence suggests that targets are specific and as a result, progress is measurable.

Number, money and measure

- Overall, most children are developing their skills in different contexts, including problem-solving. At early level, most children can order numbers forwards and backwards within twenty. At the end of first level, children talk confidently about number patterns, sequencing and simple addition and subtraction. An increased focus on multiplication will enable children to be more confident in using division. Most children understand place value and written computation. Most children can compare analogue and digital time. Children at first level need more practice in calculating units of measure, especially in real-life contexts. Most can apply their learning to mental problem-solving, money, fractions and measure. Children accurately add and subtract to 100 and can calculate change from £5. At second level, children can tackle concepts that are more complex. Children report that the opportunities for sharing strategies are helping them progress at a faster rate. By the end of the second level, most children show a level of understanding of place value, time, measure and decimals. Most use multiplication and division to help them identify equivalent fractions and compare fractions, decimals and percentages.

Shape, position and movement

- Children can draw simple shapes in repeating patterns. At first level, most children can identify 3D objects using the language of vertices, edges and faces. At second level, children can categorise 3D objects by their different properties.

Information handling

- Across the school, children are given a number of opportunities to develop data handling skills. At the early level, almost all children show an understanding of sorting by colour, shape and size. They can use appropriate language such as more than, the same as and can order materials accordingly. At second level, most children can find information from graphs and charts, and are learning to create their own from information given. They also produce bar and pie charts from data collected.

Attainment over time

- The school is at an early stage of measuring attainment over time. As discussed, the school plans to make better use of the Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA) data to track the progress of cohorts. The validity and accuracy of teachers' professional judgement is improving. Further moderation with colleagues from other schools and across sectors will help teachers make robust and reliable judgements on children's progress and attainment. Data presented by the school shows year on year improvement at early and second levels. Progress at first level is more variable. The school now needs to ensure continuity and progression across the levels to increase pace and raise attainment.

7 | Summarised inspection findings
Sgoil an Rubha and Sgoil Àraich (6232434)
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Overall quality of learners' achievement

■ Children have many opportunities for personal achievements, in which they contribute well to the life of the school and the wider community. Children have achieved success in the local Mòd. Their performance to mark the centenary of the "Iolaire" was reported to be highly successful. At the end of second level, an outdoor residential trip aims to build children's confidence and independence. Across the school, achievements are displayed, and recognised and celebrated at assemblies. The ongoing work on Children's Rights is closely linked to achievement. There is now scope to track and monitor children's achievements more rigorously for participation, and the development of capacities and skills. Children should be encouraged to articulate how personal achievements are improving their skills for learning, life and work.

Equity for all learners

■ Ensuring equity of opportunity is a theme that all staff should prioritise. There is a clear understanding of the social, economic and cultural context of the school, and the barriers to children's learning. The school should now carefully track the attainment and achievement of identified vulnerable children. The school's pupil equity funding is used to provide additional pupil support assistants and an education attainment apprentice. This supports the development of literacy, numeracy and wellbeing. As a result, children are gaining confidence and making good progress. Monies are made available to enable children to access school trips and events. As planned, the school needs to ensure that there is clarity about the measures and outcomes from the interventions, and that they are embedded within whole-school quality assurance processes.

8 | Summarised inspection findings
Sgoil an Rubha and Sgoil Àraich (6232434)
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Practice worth sharing more widely

The recent work on financial education enables children to apply their learning in mathematics and numeracy in real-life contexts. This has been well supported by the local community partners. Children were required to plan a European visit, within a realistic budget and manage transport timetables to maximise the impact of the trip. The local Credit Union made a significant contribution to this work through teaching the children about online financial scams. Staff realise the importance of this type of experience for children growing up in a remote location. Children researched interesting careers connected to financial education and made judgements about potential salaries. For many of the children, this raised the possibility of remaining on the island in a future rewarding career.

9 | Summarised inspection findings
        Sgoil an Rubha and Sgoil Àraich (6232434)
        Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity 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.

10 | Summarised inspection findings
Sgoil an Rubha and Sgoil Àraich (6232434)
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar