

2 April 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

In December 2018, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Dingwall Academy. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

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

- The positive and respectful relationships across the school, which have been fostered by the headteacher. These provide an inclusive and supportive environment, in which young people can learn and achieve. Staff are now ready to build on these relationships to further improve the school.
- Polite and well behaved young people, whose positive attitudes to their learning are a credit to the school and its community.
- Young people and specialist staff for Gaelic enjoy positive relationships and mutual respect. Over time, specialist staff for Gaelic have driven developments in Gaelic Education in which young people are attaining very well in National Qualifications for Gàidhlig and Gaelic (Learners).
- The school works well with the wider community to offer a considerable range of opportunities for young people to enhance their skills and attributes. The school rightly prides itself on being one with a strong sense of vibrant community.

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

- Focus more purposefully on the development of a shared understanding across the school of what high-quality learning, teaching and assessment look like. This should include ensuring that all staff, including senior leaders and principal teachers, are clear about their role in bringing about improvement in young people's learning and development.
- Involve young people and the school's partners more closely in planning, delivering and evaluating learning across the school.
- Continue to develop strategies to raise the attainment of young people across all stages. Systematic monitoring and tracking of progress and achievement will support young people to know what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve.
- Continue to develop equity for young people in Gaelic Education by embedding its further development within the strategic planning of the school. It would be beneficial to be making more use of bespoke self-evaluation frameworks for Gaelic to inform whole-school improvement.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Dingwall Academy

Quality indicators	Evaluation
Learning, teaching and assessment	satisfactory
Raising attainment and achievement	satisfactory
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school? (4th edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:

<https://education.gov.scot/inspection-reports/highland/5119138>

What happens next?

We will ask The Highland Council for a report on progress with the agreed areas for improvement within 12 months of the publication of this letter. Taking account of the progress report, we will then decide whether further engagement with the school is required. This may involve another inspection visit. We will write to you again detailing the improvements the school has made and outlining any further action that we intend to take, as agreed with The Highland Council.

Jacqueline Gallagher
HM Inspector