

17 June 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

In March 2025, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Bun-sgoil agus Sgoil-Àraich Bhail' Ùr an t-Sleibh - Newtonmore Primary School and Nursery Class. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

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

- In the nursery, children are settled and happy as they play and learn. Children in the school are well-mannered and keen to learn. Across the school and nursery, children are respectful and welcome visitors warmly to their school.
- Younger children in learning through the medium of Gàidhlig – Gaelic in the school are developing their skills in literacy and Gàidhlig well through immersion approaches such as singing and interacting with others in Gàidhlig.

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

- The local authority needs to take urgent action to improve the leadership and staffing of the school and nursery, through the medium of Gàidhlig and English. All staff, supported by the local authority, need to develop thorough approaches to evaluate, improve, monitor and track the work of the school. Local authority officers need to support staff to lead and take forward areas for improvement.
- The local authority needs to take urgent action to re-instate the sgoil-àraich and progressive total immersion for children learning in the medium of Gàidhlig. Local authority officers need to support practitioners to help children in the sgoil-àraich to develop much stronger fluency in Gàidhlig.
- Across the school and nursery, the local authority needs to support staff to improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment in Gàidhlig and English medium. This includes developing thorough approaches to planning, assessing, tracking and monitoring children's learning to improve children's progress in literacy and numeracy.
- With support from the local authority, staff must improve approaches to planning and supporting children who require additional support through the medium of Gàidhlig and English. This includes those children with reduced attendance in the school and nursery. They must ensure that children's needs are identified clearly and planned for effectively. In addition, children's progress should be monitored closely, tracked appropriately and evaluated regularly. Senior leaders must ensure that all approaches result in improved progress for children who require additional support.

- The local authority needs to support staff in the school to improve approaches to ensuring equity for all children learning through the medium of Gàidhlig and English. They must plan carefully for and use additional funding appropriately to close gaps in children's learning and improve the progress of all children.
- In the school, the local authority must support all staff to use consistently high-quality approaches to help children to understand their emotions and wellbeing. Staff should continue to develop approaches to assessing children's wellbeing to help all children to make the best possible progress.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school \(4th edition\)](#) and [How good is our early learning and childcare?](#). 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 Newtonmore Primary School and Nursery Class

Quality indicators for the primary stages	Evaluation
Leadership of change	unsatisfactory
Learning, teaching and assessment	weak
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	unsatisfactory
Raising attainment and achievement	unsatisfactory
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school? (4th edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale	

Quality indicators for the nursery class	Evaluation
Leadership of change	unsatisfactory
Learning, teaching and assessment	unsatisfactory
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	weak
Securing children's progress	unsatisfactory
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our early learning and childcare? Appendix 1: The six-point scale	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at: [Reports page | Inspection reports | Education Scotland](#)

What happens next?

As a result of our inspection findings we think that the school needs additional support and more time to make necessary improvements. We will liaise with The Highland Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within six months of the publication of this letter. We will discuss with The Highland Council the details of this inspection and how they will support school improvement. When we return to inspect the school, we will write to you as parents/carers informing you of the progress the school has made.

Katharine Crombie
HM Inspector