

Summarised inspection findings

Bun-sgoil Dhùn Bheagain - Dunvegan Primary School

The Highland Council

5 March 2024

Key contextual information

Bun-sgoil Dhùn Bheagain - Dunvegan Primary School is in a rural area on the Isle of Skye. The school offers learning through the medium of Gàidhlig (Gaelic) and English at the primary stages. There are 45 children in P1-7, almost equally divided between Gàidhlig and English Medium Education in four classes. The sgoil-àraich (nursery) offers Gàidhlig Medium Education.

The headteacher has been in post for two years. She is also the headteacher for Carbost Primary School. The two schools are 20 miles apart. The headteacher is developing common approaches between the two schools. Staff also work with schools across the Isle of Skye and beyond.

The school has had staffing issues over a few years. This includes at senior leadership level and in Gàidhlig Medium Education. The school used online learning to endeavour to maintain continuity in children's learning.

This session, the school has additional staff to raise attainment in Gàidhlig Medium Education. A principal teacher is in post for a year. An additional teacher is in post for a term.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

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

- Across the school, children learn in a nurturing, kind and caring atmosphere. Children enjoy very positive relationships with staff and each other almost all the time. Staff have made good progress in establishing supportive areas in the school to assist children who require specific help to engage in their learning. Occasionally, children's overall engagement in their learning could be higher.
- Teachers incorporate personalisation and choice effectively in children's learning. Children are motivated by choice and open-ended tasks. This increases children's keenness for tasks such as writing, while developing creativity. Children's experiences in Forest School and, for those in English Medium, Ocean School capitalises on applying learning in the outdoors. Working with all staff, a good range of partners, members of the community and volunteers add value to children's learning. They assist children get to know their local area, island and make national connections. Children enjoy specialist instrumental music lessons in pipe band drumming, recorder and strings. Children's work for Ocean School offers authentic learning and builds responsibilities in caring for the environment. This also makes links to organisations such as NatureScot. Children are members of committees to build their negotiation skills. The headteacher should continue to check the impact on immersion of whole-school learning activities, while building the togetherness of the school.
- Of late in Gàidhlig Medium Education, children experience additional high-quality total immersion approaches. Teachers' use of Gàidhlig and immersion have increased in classrooms and around the school. Children create short films and visit attractions around Skye where they

hear and use Gàidhlig to enrich their fluency. Children's gaps in fluency in Gàidhlig are starting to close. Teachers should continue using additional total immersion approaches until children are sufficiently fluent to access their curriculum through Gàidhlig. Staff should capture their use of current high-quality total immersion approaches in the planned refresh of the curriculum rationale, as well as across all policies. This will support evaluating and developing further staff's practice.

- Across the school, teachers share with children the purpose of learning. The quality and consistency of this is improving. Teachers discuss with children what they need to do to be successful. In a few lessons, children are encouraged to refer to their personal targets in lessons. A next step is to increase teachers' consistency in reviewing learning with children.
- Teachers give clear instructions and explanations for the majority of time. Children confidently ask questions to advance their learning. Teachers are increasingly using their questioning to extend children's thinking for the majority of time. Children are independent in working individually, in pairs and in small groups. They stay on task well. Children make positive use of tablet technology to enhance their learning. They are ready to be more independent in developing their digital skills.
- In some cases, a brisker pace of learning needs to underpin learning tasks. On other occasions, tasks are too easy and not matched to lesson aims. As a result, children's learning is not always progressive. Teachers should consistently plan activities at the right level for children who need more challenging learning. They should continue to share and build on the strengths in learning and teaching across the school.
- Some teachers have developed well play pedagogy and contexts for the younger children. In the most effective practice, these are linked well to curriculum areas. Children can freely access a wide range of natural and local resources. Some of these resources are linked to local employment. As children role-play in their cafe, they use local pottery. Children build an early understanding of why crafts and hospitality are important to Dunvegan. On other occasions, play pedagogy is used specifically to target additional support for learning. A majority of children experience play pedagogy that is at the right level and develops well their skills, understanding and imagination.
- Teachers give children individualised verbal feedback. They are very encouraging of children's successes. On occasion, teachers' effective feedback focuses on strengths and how to improve skills. The majority of children know the levels at which they work for literacy and numeracy. These children have general targets for improvement. Children would benefit from more individual conversations on their learning and progress. This is planned by the school as a next step.
- The headteacher has increased the leadership of raising attainment and the use of data. Teachers are beginning to use a 'quality assessment and parental engagement calendar.' This identifies dates, tasks and a range of types of assessments that will be undertaken over the year. Through time, this will increase the range of assessments used by teachers. Children undertake standardised assessments, including those required nationally. The headteacher and teachers analyse the results of standardised assessments to inform future planning and interventions. Parents/carers should continue to be informed of children's progress.
- The headteacher has introduced useful discussions with teachers to check children's learning and progress. These discussions focus on literacy and Gàidhlig and/or English, numeracy, mathematics, and health and wellbeing. Teachers' professional judgements on achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) level, and measuring individual children's progress, is beginning to improve as a result. Staff should build on this positive start, by focusing more on

the development of skills within literacy and numeracy. Teachers should continue to discuss standards with each other, as well as with others out with the school. Teachers should also extend their checking of children's progress and attainment to include other areas of the curriculum.

- Teachers' discussions on progress and attainment identify and evaluate the impact of interventions, including those from Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). Pupil support assistants take forward valuable interventions to support children. This is beginning to address essential gaps in progress. Children who need support have detailed strategies to support their learning and development needs. Parents/carers are informed of how PEF is used. The headteacher recognises that a next step is to include parents more in determining PEF spending.
- The headteacher is working well with staff to improve short-term planning of children's learning. All staff plan in a consistent way. Staff use local authority progression pathways appropriately to plan learning. Teachers in Gàidhlig Medium classes use 'Frèam Cànnain' to check progress and plan for listening and talking. This shows that children are not making expected progress. Teachers' improved planning needs to impact more effectively on medium- and long-term planning of learning.

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.

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

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- At the time of inspection, there were small cohorts of children at each stage of the school roll, across both Gàidhlig and English Medium Education. As a result, attainment and progress will be reported as overall statements, rather than for specific year groups.
- Attainment in literacy and English and numeracy is satisfactory, while literacy and Gàidhlig is weak but improving. In 2023 by the end of P7, the majority of children are achieving national expectations in CfE for literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics. During the same time period, in literacy and Gàidhlig, children by P7 were not meeting national expectations. The headteacher has put in place additional support for Gaelic Medium Education, which is beginning to accelerate progress. The headteacher and staff have begun to improve the reliability of professional judgements with regards to children's attainment this session. Prior to this, attainment data was not reliable.

Attainment in literacy and English (Children in English Medium Education)

- Children are making satisfactory progress in literacy and English.

Listening and talking

- Most children use a rich range of vocabulary and are articulate in conversations. They listen well and are keen to answer questions. Children are comfortable in asking their teachers questions to further their understanding. By the first level, children are clear of the difference between fact and opinion. Children develop their understanding well of how to ask questions to gather facts and opinions. They are motivated to do so by choosing interesting contexts. Almost all children are responsible and take their turn in paired and small group activities, and in play contexts. Children should continue to extend their skills in talking through presentations, discussion and debate.
- By P7, children are learning personal and everyday language in Gaelic (Learners). They give details such as their name and age and talk about the weather. Children are developing an understanding of the link between language and culture through engagement with the Mòd and shinty. Children should have their progress in Gaelic (Learners) monitored closely to help them achieve CfE second level by the time they leave primary school.

Reading

- Across classes, most children are confident in reading aloud. A few children should continue to build their skills in phonics. By P7, children enjoy reading novels and talk about their favourite authors. They detail a few features of a good book and should continue to add to their knowledge. Children access texts online and, in so doing, know how to stay safe.

Writing

- Children's writing is beginning to improve. By the end of the first level, most children are writing a series of connected sentences. This is because of targeted support. Across classes, for almost all the time, children make accurate use of spelling and punctuation. Children's handwriting is largely clear and legible. Children discuss well and share their views on interesting themes as a way of stimulating skills in writing. By P7, children enjoy having choice in what they write. This is helping develop children's independence and creativity in writing. Children should write for an increased range of purposes and in more detail.

Attainment in literacy and Gàidhlig, and where appropriate English (Children in Gàidhlig Medium Education)

- Children's progress in literacy and Gàidhlig is improving. Overall children's progress is weak.

Listening and talking

- At the early and first CfE levels, children in Gàidhlig Medium Education show their understanding of stories that are being read to them. This is by answering questions and making comments. They still do so in English. Children sing and take part in activities in which they are immersed in commentary through Gàidhlig. Teachers have an intentional focus on listening, understanding and talking to build children's skills to apply Gàidhlig to other contexts. Children are not yet meeting national expectations in talking Gàidhlig as part of total immersion. They need to continue to build their confidence through routines, and social and familiar contexts. By P7, children engage in pleasant conversations in Gàidhlig about their work in school. They consistently respond to questions in Gàidhlig and initiate some conversations. Children should have more opportunity to discuss in groups and present points of view in a more independent way.

Reading

- Children by P4, are beginning to focus more systematically on phonics in Gàidhlig to support their reading skills. This focus should continue until children are confident with phonics in Gàidhlig before phonics in English are introduced. Children engage in early writing activities. Children's pace of progress needs to be brisker.
- By P7, children are fluent readers in Gàidhlig and English. They enjoy reading aloud and do so in Gàidhlig for the younger children. Children talk about their favourite authors and some features of an appealing reading text. They should continue to develop further skills in analysing texts.

Writing

- By P7, children write fluently in Gàidhlig and English. In Gàidhlig, children know how to use a range of verbs. Their range of vocabulary in English is good. Children know how to use punctuation accurately. Their writing needs to be more detailed. They are not writing regularly enough in Gàidhlig and English for a full range of purposes.

Numeracy and mathematics in English and Gàidhlig Medium Education

- Children are making satisfactory progress in numeracy and mathematics. This is through the medium of English and Gàidhlig.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, children can create number stories to 10. They sequence and order numbers to 20, and identify numbers before, after and missing numbers in a sequence. At first level, a few children round numbers to the nearest 10. Children are not yet confident in rounding numbers to the nearest 100. They are not able to divide numbers by 10 and 100. At second level, the majority of children round decimals to the nearest decimal point and whole number. They

sequence, add and subtract. A few children require further consolidation on equivalent forms of common and decimal fractions. Almost all children are confident in using and sharing strategies to solve number problems. They identify multiples and factors of whole numbers confidently. Children confidently measure the perimeter of different shapes. Across the first and second levels, children need to focus on identifying coins and notes to £20 and solving problems involving money. By P7, children in Gàidhlig Medium Education use specialist terminology in Gàidhlig appropriately.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, children recognise simple two-dimensional shapes. At first level, children share some of the features of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. Children identify the points of a compass. They would benefit from further work in this area. At second level, children use mathematical language appropriately to describe angles and triangles.

Information handling

- By second level, children describe ways of gathering and displaying information using real-life contexts such as Ocean School. Children have analysed data from the recent beach clean. This was categorised by litter type and weight and displayed in the form of bar graphs and pie charts. This rich learning context provides opportunities for children to share data and information with partners out with the school.

Attainment over time

- The headteacher and teachers are beginning to build more reliable data for attainment over time in literacy and numeracy for the 2023 data collection of CfE achievement of levels. They are yet to gather evidence of children's attainment across all the curriculum areas and contexts.
- Across the school, more children are capable of making greater progress from their prior levels of attainment. There is headroom for improving children's attainment.
- The headteacher is prioritising working with staff to improve attainment in literacy and numeracy through the medium of Gàidhlig and English. The sgoil-àraich is starting to provide better total immersion as central to Gàidhlig Medium Education. Through time, this will improve attainment and close significant gaps as children move through the school.
- From year to year, it is not possible to comment on patterns and trends. However, it is clear from the school's tracking of progress that children are predicted to attain higher by the end of 2023/24. For this, additional local authority supports in total immersion and staffing need to be maintained. Children are benefitting from this intensive and effective total immersion to improve their understanding of spoken Gàidhlig and increasing their talking in Gàidhlig. In both Gàidhlig and English, children's skills in listening and talking should be tracked.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Across the school, staff and children use the house system well to promote positive behaviour, recognise the work of the children and celebrate achievements in a few areas. Achievements are recognised and celebrated at assemblies. This includes children's achievements from out with school. Staff should check thoroughly that all children are achieving a range of skills and capacities from achievements. Teachers should continue implementing online profiling to strengthen further communications between home and school.
- Children develop leadership, teamwork and life skills by being involved in a school committee. They create action plans to lead improvements at Bun-sgoil Dhùn Bheagain - Dunvegan Primary School. Children lead well on events such as Enterprise Day. This is developing their

financial and decision-making skills. Children assist those who are less fortunate than themselves by raising funds for charitable causes.

- Children contribute very well to sustainability. They develop resilience and problem-solving skills through The Ocean and Forest Schools. Through these outdoor learning experiences, children achieved the John Muir award for their conservation work at Dunvegan Castle shore.
- Children celebrate the Gàidhlig language, ethos and culture. Some children in Gàidhlig Medium Education develop film-making skills through the national competition, FilmG. Others have taken part in the local Mòd and received recognition for their òrain luaidh (waulking song). Additionally, all children may choose to develop their musical skills by being a member of the school's in-house 'Jaggy Thistles' band. Children develop knowledge and skills in performing for an audience at whole-school events.

Equity for all learners

- Staff have a broad criterion for what equity means for their context. This includes addressing disadvantage, cost of living hardships and improving outcomes for learning. PEF is used efficiently for additional staffing and resources. The school also benefits from other fundings, including from the community. This helps to close any perceived gaps from living in a rural area and to increase total immersion education. Parents have been advised of how and why PEF is used. PEF is beginning to be used to improve children's progress in Gaelic Medium Education.
- The younger children's teaching time should be increased to be the same as their peers. Currently, they have a longer interval time which reduces their entitlement to teaching time.
- Attendance has decreased slightly in the last year but is in line with the national average. The headteacher encourages parents to avoid taking holidays during the term time.

Other relevant evidence

- The school is making positive progress with a few aspects of the Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education, (2017). They offer a three to 12 service for Gàidhlig Medium Education, for which a wide catchment area has been set. This enables free transport to school for children who live a certain distance from the school. The school's website is available in Gàidhlig. A next step would be to add more information on how and why parents would access Gàidhlig Medium Education. Children in English Medium do Gaelic (Learners) as part of the curriculum.

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.