Summarised inspection findings

Portree Primary School

The Highland Council

23 January 2024

Key contextual information

Portree Primary School is a non-denominational school located in Portree on the Isle of Skye. It predominately serves children who live within the town. The headteacher, who was appointed in 2018, had a twelve-month career break in 2021. During this time, the school was led by an acting headteacher. The headteacher is supported by a principal teacher who has also been in post since 2018. The principal teacher is class committed apart from one morning per week. At the time of inspection, the school roll was 134. The school building is shared with a partner nursery provider. There are currently six classes. Most children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) areas 4-6. However, the school recognises the diverse socio-economic circumstances of their community is not fully represented by the SIMD profile.

1.3 Leadership of change	good
This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are: ■ developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community ■ strategic planning for continuous improvement ■ implementing improvement and change	

■ The school values of kindness, respect, determination, friendship and enjoyment were agreed in 2018 and are understood by all. All staff model these values enthusiastically to develop children's understanding and application of them. Children receive recognition of demonstration of their values through weekly Values Awards, House Points and WOW certificates. Senior leaders should continue as planned, to review and refresh their vision, values and aims with all stakeholders.

■ The headteacher provides effective leadership. Staff and parents value her friendly, open approach. She is supported very well by the principal teacher. Together with staff, they have created a positive, supportive and collaborative ethos for improvement. All staff find it rewarding to be a member of the school and staff, pupils and parents feel a strong sense of community. Almost all staff feel a valued part of the school community and there are strong working relationships between support staff and class teachers.

■ The majority of parents feel their views are taken into account. Most parents feel comfortable approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem. Most parents feel the school is well led and managed and senior leaders use information from parents well to make improvements. For example, staff created termly overviews of planned learning to inform parents of activity planned for their children. Almost all parents state their child likes being at school.

■ Staff are committed to building and maintaining effective partnership working with their associated schools. In addition, a broad range of partners and community groups are contributing to positive outcomes for children. For example, the local radio station, hotel and a community dance group. These meaningful and interesting partnerships are enhancing children's skills for learning, life and work.

- Senior leaders and staff work effectively together. Senior leaders listen to staff and support their professional learning needs well. Staff have a positive attitude to addressing areas for improvement and feel fully involved in improvement activity. A few staff undertake leadership roles. For example, planning outdoor learning activities using their local allotment, developing their eco status and creating opportunities for children to learn about sustainability. Senior leaders should now look at ways they can increase opportunities for all staff to undertake leadership roles to support aspects of improvement across the school.

- Senior leaders value children's participation in school improvements and opportunities for this are increasing. The Pupil Voice Committee (PVC) have recently evaluated the learning and teaching policy. The Eco Group are working towards reinstating the school's Green Flag status. Senior leaders have worked effectively with the PVC using How Good is OUR School? (2018) to evaluate various aspects of school life. Children on the PVC share regularly findings with their peers at assembly and through informal feedback in classes. Children in P4 act as reading buddies to children in their partner nursery which supports transition and early literacy skills. All P7 children are proud to hold the role of prefect on a rotational basis throughout the year. Staff should now ensure that all children across the school have the opportunity to develop leadership skills. This would help to make further improvements across the school and increase further children's skills for learning, life and work.

- Senior leaders use all self-evaluation evidence effectively to guide and direct school improvement. Senior leaders have developed a helpful, comprehensive quality assurance calendar that identifies clearly activity planned. Staff use this evidence alongside evaluations using How Good is our School? 4 (HGIOS4) well to support identification of their next steps. In addition, senior leaders survey the views of staff, children and parents to gather feedback. Staff have taken forward areas for development identified through the professional review process. This is having a positive impact in a few areas of the school's work, such as approaches to the teaching of writing. There is now a need to ensure that the pace of change is increased.

- Staff have a sound understanding of the social, economic and cultural context of their community. This knowledge has been used well to identify children who would benefit from additional support to improve their outcomes. Senior leaders make use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) to resource targeted support for children to help address the poverty-related attainment gap. Additional staff, funded through PEF, support this targeted group well using a variety of interventions with a strong focus on improving learners' engagement. Senior leaders should ensure clear measures are identified to allow them to evaluate more effectively all interventions planned to support raising attainment further.

<table>
<tr><td>**2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment**</td><td>**good**</td></tr>
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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 very positive, nurturing ethos across the school, underpinned by the school's values. All children are polite and friendly and there are positive interactions between staff and children, and between children and their peers.

■ Most children engage well with learning experiences. In most lessons, children benefit from the range of individual and group approaches teachers take. In most lessons, teachers share the purpose of learning well with children and explanations and instructions are clear. A few teachers effectively refer to prior learning helping children to make links between individual lessons. Most teachers provide both oral and written feedback effectively to support children to make progress in their learning. In the majority of classes, children engage well in peer and self-assessment activities. Teachers should now build on this to ensure all children across all classes are offered similar opportunities. This would support children to become more effective in leading their own learning and having a greater awareness of their successes and next steps.

■ All classes have well established routines and structures. Children confidently access resources in class to support their learning. All classroom displays provide helpful information to assist children as they learn. Staff should review their use of displays to include more examples of children's work to demonstrate the learning journey that has taken place. In the majority of classes, learning is appropriately differentiated. Staff now need to ensure learning is delivered at a brisk pace and is appropriately challenging for all learners.

■ All teachers use questioning well to check children's understanding of tasks and activities set. A few teachers are using questioning more effectively to develop children's higher order thinking skills. Teachers should now extend this good practice across all classes to ensure all teachers develop their use of open-ended questioning. This will extend children's learning and provide additional challenge.

■ Staff and children have recently reviewed the school's learning and teaching policy. It helpfully describes how children learn best, which exemplifies effective practice for staff and children. Senior leaders and staff reflect on this regularly as part of self-evaluation activity and children are involved in evaluating their learning experiences. Senior leaders should continue to develop further opportunities to evaluate effective teaching and learning through more regular classroom visits and learning walks. This will ensure a continued shared understanding of high-quality learning and teaching for children at Portree Primary.

■ All children have access to digital technology in the form of tablets and laptops. Children in the upper stages have daily access to a device and use these for homework and class-based tasks regularly. For example, in P7 children use an online platform to record, research and present their learning. Digital collaboration tools are used to gather views and opinions and

word documents and PowerPoints allow children to demonstrate their learning. Staff should continue to develop the use of other digital technology to develop children's skills further such as coding and other programmable equipment. They should also continue to re-introduce children as Digital Leaders to support digital literacy further within classrooms and across the school. This should include the development of a skills pathway to ensure continuity and progression across all stages.

■ Senior leaders are at the initial stages of introducing play pedagogy for children at early level. They are beginning to consider how this can be taken forward and have made initial steps to engage with the national practice guidance. Staff should also look outwards to other establishments to support their own professional learning in this area.

■ All teachers use assessments regularly to check children's understanding and identify next steps. Senior leaders and staff use results from assessments at termly discussions to identify effectively any gaps in children's learning and target interventions where appropriate. Senior leaders have created a helpful 'Assessment Model' that details whole school, class and pupil led approaches to assessment. The model also states the approaches used with parents to share learning and gather views. Termly key assessment tasks are identified which are linked to experiences and outcomes from Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). Teachers should now ensure termly evaluations refer to the National Benchmarks.

■ Pupil profile folders contain examples of key assessments tasks undertaken and include pupil and parent voice in response to these. Assessments undertaken for the profiles identify clearly the intended learning. Teachers should now develop approaches to ensure children reflect on how successful they have been with these assessments. This will improve the purpose and effectiveness of the profiles as part of the child's learning journey. Teachers should now use high-quality assessments to ensure that children have opportunities to apply daily learning in new and unfamiliar contexts.

■ Peer attainment conversations between teachers prior to and following the summer break supports effective transition across stages well. Teachers' engagement with moderation activity in writing is supporting a greater understanding of standards and expectations. As a result, teachers are increasing the robustness of the data gathered for attainment in writing. Teachers should continue to engage in other aspects of moderation such as planning and include all curricular areas over time. This will support a stronger awareness of the links between planning, assessment and moderation.

■ Senior leaders and staff track and monitor children's attainment through termly attainment meetings. Senior leaders discuss results from Scottish National Standardised Assessments which is supporting teachers' understanding of national standards. All assessment information is gathered in a variety of ways. Senior leaders should now ensure all assessment evidence is held centrally as part of the whole school tracker. This would support discussions of children's progress and attainment more robustly over time.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

■ Teachers use a combination of local authority pathways and school devised pathways for all curricular areas. Most of these make reference to National Benchmarks. Senior leaders must now ensure all pathways refer to the National Benchmarks. Teachers should make full reference to these as they plan for assessment of learning.

■ Learning for sustainability is developing well across the curriculum. Children are building an understanding of their environmental responsibilities through eco activities. For example, using their new allotment and growing produce. Staff should build on existing activities to develop a progressive skills framework for outdoor learning.

■ Staff have successfully established strong community partnerships. Children have regular opportunities to learn from their partners which is developing their confidence well and allowing them to develop new skills. For example, the local radio station has embraced 'Kid Experts' where children create presentations on areas they are passionate about and present these live on the radio. Parents and partners support the school's Community Café, well. Partners include, a local hotel, shops and radio station. As a result, children are afforded opportunities to apply literacy and numeracy skills in real-life contexts.

■ Children enjoy their visits to their school library. They regularly select books of their choice and engage in reading for pleasure. Staff should look for opportunities to allow children to develop the library further. They should seek out new and relevant reading material and develop further children's love of reading across the school.

■ In all classes, children receive their full entitlement to two hours of high-quality physical education per week.

■ The school is meeting its statutory requirements in respect of religious observance. There are strong partnerships with local clergy from a variety of religious establishments across their community. These partners support services at key Christian festival times. Staff should continue to seek out opportunities to ensure the full religious and moral education curriculum is delivered across the school. For example, learning about other faiths, beliefs and protected characteristics.

■ The headteacher and staff are committed to taking forward well the local authority's Gaelic Language Plan. Staff use their skills well to teach Gaelic as an additional language. A few staff are fluent speakers and others are committed to learning the language. They continue to offer Gaelic (Learners) as children's first additional language from P1-P7. The headteacher should continue to improve strategic approaches to Gaelic Learner Education. This should maximise opportunities for all children to learn Gaelic to meet statutory guidance.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

■ Almost all parents report their children are safe and treated with respect by staff in school. Almost all parents find staff approachable and are comfortable contacting staff with issues. Parents' evenings and other open events are well attended. Most parents feel the school is well led and managed.

■ Senior leaders and staff communicate with parents regularly and effectively to update them on school life and school improvement. Various channels are used to share information such a newsletters, school website, emails and parents' evenings. A few parents would like a quicker response to concerns about possible additional support needs.

■ The Parent Council (PC) successfully engage in fundraising activity to support all children. For example, purchasing Christmas gifts, leavers hoodies for all P7 children, supplementing school trip expenses, and vouchers at Christmas for families in need. Senior leaders should continue as planned to look for ways to increase the role and remit of the PC.

2.1 Safeguarding

■ 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.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	good

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

■ wellbeing
■ fulfilment of statutory duties
■ inclusion and equality

■ All staff work well together to provide a safe, nurturing and inclusive environment. Collectively, they have created a climate of mutual respect and built a strong sense of community. Children benefit from strong and supportive relationships with staff who understand the needs of children well. As a result, staff are improving outcomes for children's wellbeing. Almost all children are happy, confident and friendly. Almost all parents shared that their child likes being at school. All staff work together effectively to identify and support children requiring additional support across the school. Senior leaders and staff regularly celebrate children's successes and achievements in classes and at weekly assemblies. Parents contribute by sharing out with school achievements. All children benefit from the use of a variety of approaches to support effective communication such as signs, symbols, and visuals.

■ Promoting and ensuring children's wellbeing sits at the heart of the work of Portree Primary School. All staff are sensitive and responsive to the needs of children and work closely with partners to support children's wellbeing effectively. Almost all parents feel that their child is safe at school and know their child as an individual. Children are not familiar with the language of the wellbeing indicators. Senior leaders are beginning to support this through discussions at assemblies. Staff should increase children's awareness of the wellbeing indicators, ensuring they are an integral feature of school life. This will support children to understand how the wellbeing indicators link closely to their lives. Children also need to be supported to develop their understanding of their rights as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

■ Teachers effectively plan health and wellbeing learning activities based on the health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes. Staff have recently revisited aspects of the health and wellbeing curriculum, in particular focusing on relationships. All children have plentiful opportunities to take part in both creative and sports-based clubs and groups which are enhancing children's skills in a variety of ways such as teamwork and co-operation. For example, through a local dance group, safety activities run by the local secondary school and outdoor experiences at the community allotment. Teachers gather information regularly to gauge the range of experiences undertaken by children and look for opportunities to support gaps for identified individuals. Senior leaders should now work with teaching staff to develop a progressive framework of skills for learning, life and work. This will ensure that all children understand the skills they are developing and building upon as a result of all experiences offered.

■ All staff have a strong understanding of their responsibilities in fulfilling statutory duties in relation to child protection and safeguarding. Senior leaders have put in place robust systems to support child protection procedures to ensure children are safe.

■ Senior leaders have effective systems to identify and support children who require additional support with their wellbeing and learning. Teachers regularly discuss information relating to

children's wellbeing needs during termly attainment meetings with senior leaders. Following this, targeted support is identified and actioned where appropriate. Senior leaders ensure that child's plans and individual educational plans are in place when needed. All staff work together effectively to identify clear targets and senior leaders ensure these are reviewed three times a year. Parents, children and staff are involved in the setting of appropriate targets and evaluation of progress made. As a result, most children's needs are well met. In line with statutory guidance, senior leaders ensure that children who have additional support needs are considered for a co-ordinated support plan. Children with caring responsibilities are supported well. Senior leaders ensure the wellbeing of this group of children have strong links to local networks to support their young carers.

- The school submitted information relating to compliance with the revised Nutritional Regulations 2020 and key duties as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007. The Health and Nutrition Inspector (HNI) discussed this information with relevant staff and children. In addition, the HNI examined documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole school approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of children through food in school. A few areas for improvement have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.

- The headteacher monitors incidents of bullying carefully and effectively involves families to help resolve any issues. All staff are effective in using solution focused, restorative approaches to dealing with conflict. Most parents feel that bullying is well managed in school and almost all feel that their children are safe in school. Children effectively discuss reasons why others may be bullied such as race or culture. Senior leaders should continue to ensure all children are aware of all protected factors that could lead to bullying incidents. This will support children to identify, manage and respond to any incidents confidently.

- Pupil attendance is in line with the national average. The headteacher carefully monitors attendance and lateness on a regular basis. She tracks individuals and considers carefully how to support their needs. She works with families and partners such as social work effectively to find ways to reduce any issues around attendance and lateness.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	satisfactory

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

■ Overall attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is satisfactory across the school. School data shows that most children at early level are achieving expected levels in reading, writing and numeracy and almost all in listening and talking. A majority at first level and most at second level are achieving expected attainment across all organisers. Across the school there are a minority of children who could be achieving more, in particular, at first level.

■ Most children with additional support needs are making good progress.

Attainment in literacy and English

■ Most children at early level are making good progress and children at first and second level are making satisfactory progress in all aspects of literacy and English.

Listening and talking

■ Younger children listen well to stories. Most children can hear and say single sounds and they enjoy developing their skills using songs and rhymes. They would benefit from developing an awareness of appropriate body language when listening to others. At first level, a majority of children can articulate their views and opinions well. A minority of children need further opportunities to learn how to take turns and listen to the views of other children during discussions. At second level, almost all children listen well and build on the responses of their peers during discussions. They enjoy engaging with a programme run with the local radio station to present their views on different topics and taking part in debates. They should now build on these skills by presenting to a wider range of audiences.

Reading

■ Younger children use their knowledge of sounds and letters to read well. In addition, they are making good progress in identifying effective oral reading skills such as pace and volume. At first level, they can talk confidently about their favourite books and the key features of a book. They would benefit from work to develop further their awareness of the key features of fiction and non-fiction texts. Most children at second level read new and unfamiliar texts confidently and fluently. They can talk confidently about different authors and their styles of writing. Across first and second level, children would benefit from more support to help them to ask and answer inferential and evaluative questions.

Writing

■ Across the school, teachers are effectively implementing new approaches to teaching writing. As a result, children's engagement in writing and level of vocabulary used in texts is improving. Younger children can write using basic punctuation and form simple sentences to create a text.

Children who have achieved first level are beginning to write more extended texts and building their vocabulary well. They are beginning to use planning well to support writing extended pieces and using useful strategies such as effective openers to engage the reader. At both first and second level, children should continue to be offered opportunities to write through different genres.

Numeracy and mathematics

■ Most children at early and second level are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Children at first level are making satisfactory progress in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure

■ Younger children write and order numbers to 100. They can use doubles when adding and add and subtract within 20. At first level, children read, write and order whole numbers to 1,000. Most can solve two step problems involving money and apply mental agility to calculate totals. Children at second level apply knowledge of rounding to give an estimate to a calculation appropriate to the context. They carry out money calculations and explain the different ways items can be paid for. Almost all children at both first and second level should continue to develop their understanding of fractions.

Shape, position and movement

■ Younger children recognise, describe and sort common two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. At first level, children can estimate lengths and heights. A minority use mathematical language to describe the properties of a range of shapes such as, side, face and edge. They would benefit from revisiting directional language such as clockwise and anticlockwise. Children at second level use appropriate vocabulary to describe a variety of shapes and objects. They would benefit from further consolidation of how to calculate the area of shapes.

Information handling

■ Younger children can collect and organise data into groups and answer simple questions about this. They should now develop skills in interpreting simple graphs. At first level, children use tally marks to gather information and can extract key information from bar graphs. They would benefit from learning more about different methods of displaying data such as Caroll and Venn diagrams. Children at second level use mathematical vocabulary appropriately to describe the likelihood of events occurring. They should be given opportunities to develop their understanding of scales when creating graphs.

Attainment over time

■ Attainment information has been gathered for a number of years. Senior leaders are aware that historic data is not robust. Senior leaders have now introduced attainment meetings. These are providing opportunities to look more closely at assessment information to inform better teacher judgements on attainment. Teachers engage well in moderation activity. As a result, this is beginning to lead to more reliable information being gathered. Senior leaders are at the very early stages of trialling a new tracking system. Once embedded, these approaches will increase the robustness of children's attainment leading to evaluations of attainment over time becoming more effective.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

■ Children benefit from an extensive range of opportunities in both sporting and creative activities. For example, Skye Dance, Radio Skye, a running club, the school allotment and a range of other activities including badminton, hockey and football. As a result, children's

opportunities for achievement are improving. These activities are building children's confidence and resilience and developing well skills such as teamwork and co-operation.

■ Teachers gather information of children's achievements. Senior leaders should now develop a more robust system to record children's achievements centrally as part of their new tracking system. This will allow them to track children's participation over time and identify more accurately those at risk of missing out from opportunities.

Equity for all learners

■ Staff are aware of the challenges that may face their families. They have taken steps to ensure that children should not be disadvantaged by the cost of the school day. The school provides a range of supports. For example, snacks, a monthly uniform swap, subsidising residential experiences, providing Christmas hampers, and referrals to the Skye Community Food Bank.

■ Class teachers discuss targeted interventions to support children with senior leaders and additional support staff. Interventions by additional staffing funded through PEF is leading to improvements in engagement and attainment for a targeted group of children. Senior leaders should now ensure that they monitor and gather robust evidence about the impact of all interventions. This will help better inform their awareness of how they are reducing the poverty related attainment gap and accelerating progress.

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.