

22 August 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

In May 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Bun-sgoil Srath na h-Apainne - Strath of Appin Primary School and Nursery Class and Gaelic Medium Unit. 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 and nursery's work.

- All staff have a strong focus on children's wellbeing. This is building caring, positive and trusting relationships that are supporting children to be happy, confident and more independent in school.
- The new headteacher is starting to give strategic direction to the school from her early evaluations of practice. Staff welcome this direction.
- All children in the nursery and at the primary stages learn Gaelic. Children enjoy taking part in competitions and events for Gaelic culture. The numbers in Gaelic Medium Education are increasing.
- Partners and parents are invested in the school. They share experiences, skills, knowledge, resources and funding to promote equity in a rural area. This is supporting children to be active members of the community of Strath of Appin.

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

- Increase the pace of improving key areas of the school and nursery, based on robust self-evaluation arrangements. A range of stakeholders, including staff, parents and children should have lead roles for taking forward improvements.
- Maximise total immersion education to strengthen children's progress and fluency in Gaelic. This should impact on the quality and quantity of total immersion and learning through play to meet national expectations.
- Increase planning for progression in the curriculum so that children make stronger progress in all aspects of their learning. Children should be given more opportunities to independently use their learning in meaningful and relevant situations.
- Raise children's attainment in all aspects of learning.

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 Bun-sgoil Srath na h-Apainne - Strath of Appin Primary School

Quality indicators for the primary stages	Evaluation
Leadership of change	weak
Learning, teaching and assessment	satisfactory
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	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	

Quality indicators for the nursery class	Evaluation
Leadership of change	weak
Learning, teaching and assessment	satisfactory
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	satisfactory
Securing children's progress	satisfactory
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 Argyll and Bute Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within a year of the publication of this letter. We will discuss with Argyll and Bute Council the details of this inspection. When we return to inspect the school, we will write to you as parents/carers informing you of the progress the school has made.

Joan C. Esson
HM Inspector