

Summarised inspection findings

Glenelg Primary School

The Highland Council

27 June 2023

Key contextual information

Glenelg Primary School is located in a rural setting serving the local community of Glenelg and the villages of Moyle and Corran on the coast of Wester Ross. There are nine children attending the school, ranging from P1-P5. They are taught together in a single multi-stage class. At the time of the inspection there was no nursery class in operation. The headteacher has overall responsibility for both Glenelg Primary School and Loch Duich Primary School. A class teacher and a few support staff work closely with the headteacher. Children and staff from both schools work together regularly.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very good

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

- A shared aspirational school vision and commitment to children's rights underpin deeply the daily life and work of Glenelg Primary. Staff, partners and parents work together successfully to ensure a nurturing and inclusive ethos. Children thrive in a positive, highly creative environment where all adults support them very well. They enjoy learning together and are encouraging of one another. All children are motivated, attentive and engage fully in their lessons and activities. They are actively involved in decisions and instigate changes which impact positively on school life. Children are eager and confident to share their learning, opinions and ideas with their school community and visitors.
- Outdoor learning is an essential context in the school community's approach to learning and teaching. Partnerships are used very effectively to deliver and support highly engaging learning experiences. Adults make very good, creative use of the school grounds, the village, surrounding farmland, the beach and forest environments. This supports children to develop skills and capabilities for life and work very well. Children are deeply knowledgeable about their local area, environmental issues and learning for sustainability. They demonstrate well-developed understanding and vocabulary relating to the natural world around them. Children regularly learn through real-life and challenging contexts linked to their local community. For example, the recent 'Wester Ross dark skies' project, celebrating the 10th anniversary of the village twinning with Glenelg on Mars, enabled children to develop their inquiry and scientific analytical thinking skills.
- Teachers use highly effective approaches to differentiate teaching to meet the varying learning needs of all children. Their instructions are clear and children understand well the purpose of their learning. Children often respond to instructions and questions using Gaelic as part of their daily interactions. Teachers make regular links between curricular learning and the world of work. This supports children very well to make and understand links across their learning. Staff use questioning well to check children's understanding and encourage their thinking. As planned, they should continue to develop and plan questioning to provide opportunities for children to extend their higher order thinking skills.

- Support staff use their skills and experiences to support all children very well both with learning and wellbeing. They provide a range of valuable interventions which help children to revisit and practise literacy and numeracy skills. This is supporting children to engage fully and progress in their learning.
- Teachers and partners embed learning through play approaches across the curriculum. Working with children, they use the classroom and outdoor environment well to support play-based learning experiences and encourage curiosity for all children. Multi-sensory play and challenging open-ended activities, such as 'monster bikes', engage children's curiosity and support extended periods of interest. Staff develop their understanding and approaches to play, taking account of national guidance 'Realising the Ambition: Being Me'. This supports children to receive progressive learning experiences across Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. Staff use these principles very well when supporting children to engage and play with peers in other schools and the local playgroup as part of high-quality transition arrangements.
- Children enjoy regular opportunities to peer and self-assess their work which they find helpful. Staff provide supportive and encouraging verbal and written feedback on children's learning. They should now help children to use these comments to support further their next steps in learning. Teachers make very good use of a wide range of assessment types and skilfully assess children's knowledge and skills in different contexts and across the curriculum. The headteacher and staff make very good use of assessment information to check and evaluate children's progress in learning. They also use data from Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA) and other standardised assessments well to support their professional judgements of children's progress and attainment.
- Teachers help children to set targets for literacy, numeracy, and other key areas of learning. This provides children with opportunities to discuss their strengths and what they need to do to improve. Children would benefit from revisiting and setting their individual targets more regularly. This will support them to take on increasing responsibility for aspects of their learning.
- The headteacher and teachers have clear processes in place for moderation that are well established at school level and within the Plockton High associated schools group (ASG). Teachers meet and discuss standards and expectations across a number of curricular areas, including writing and mathematics. This supports teachers to make confident and reliable professional judgements on children's progress and achievement of CfE levels.
- Staff regularly involve children well in planning processes where they identify what and how they would like to learn. Teachers plan effectively over different timescales and are responsive to children's needs and interests. They use CfE contexts for learning very effectively to plan learning across curriculum areas and to ensure opportunities for achievement. Staff also make very good use of local authority pathways to support progressive planning.
- The headteacher has established regular useful tracking meetings with teachers. Together, they track and record children's progress and attainment effectively using local authority approaches. This supports teachers to identify any children who require further support or intervention. The headteacher takes a very effective and proportionate approach to monitoring and analysing children's progress and attainment. She regularly engages in robust professional dialogue with staff focused on improving outcomes for all children.

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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

very good

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 the inspection, the school roll comprised of a small number of children in P1-P5. As a result, attainment and progress will be expressed in 'overall' statements, rather than for specific year groups or CfE levels.
- Overall, attainment across the school in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is very good. Children achieve appropriate CfE levels at key milestones and, across the school, a few children are exceeding nationally expected levels.

Attainment in literacy and English

Listening and talking

- Overall, children are making very good progress with their listening and talking skills. They demonstrate core skills through meaningful and engaging planned activities. For example, children use active listening and presenting skills very well during assembly with community visitors. Children listen very well and confidently share their thoughts and opinions appropriate to their age and stage. They particularly enjoy hearing and speaking different languages including Gaelic, French and Spanish. They will benefit from continuing to practise techniques to engage listeners in larger audiences.

Reading

- Overall, children are making very good progress in reading. They are enthusiastic about stories and enjoy extending their comprehension skills whilst reading for enjoyment. As appropriate to their age and stage, children read well with fluency and expression. Older children use and discuss features of non-fiction books confidently, such as the index and glossary. All children accurately identify the main ideas, setting and characters from their texts. They will benefit from continuing to develop skills in creating and answering inferential questions.

Writing

- Staff identified writing as a whole school area for improvement. They are applying professional learning well to develop further the teaching of writing. Across all stages, children's writing shows clear signs of improvement and overall, children are making good progress. Children now write longer texts of higher quality more consistently. Their ideas for writing are stimulated by the local environment, learning across the curriculum and real-life events. They write regularly across genres for a range of meaningful purposes, such as letter writing to other schools, poetry and creating information texts for tourists. Younger children form their handwriting increasingly well. Older children include a range of features within their writing, such as alliteration, and they use paragraphs well to separate ideas. Children require further help to apply spelling and punctuation skills more consistently. They would also benefit from further support with presentation and layout skills across other curricular areas.

Numeracy and mathematics

Number, money and measure

- Overall, children are making very good progress across numeracy and mathematics. They show confidence when applying their understanding of concepts, such as fractions and division. They demonstrate mental agility appropriate for their age and carry out calculations with growing speed and accuracy. Children can apply their skills to problem solving and are familiar with a growing range of strategies to solve challenges. Practical, real-life experiences, such as budgeting and baking, regularly reinforce children's learning about money. Children estimate and measure different lengths and weights using standard measurements in meaningful contexts, such as the school's vegetable garden. Children will benefit from further practice in applying their numeracy skills to multi-step calculations.

Shape, position and movement

- Through outdoor learning, children are developing a very good understanding of the vocabulary of position and movement when describing the location of items in relation to one another. They confidently name and discuss features of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects appropriate to their stage of learning.

Information handling

- Children benefit from regularly applying their skills in information handling across a wide range of real-life and rich contexts, for example tackling food waste. They understand how to create and use Venn diagrams and use tally marks accurately to count responses. They interpret information on a range of charts and graphs and clearly share their thinking. Older children should now develop further their skills in using digital technology to organise and display information, such as electronic spreadsheets or pie charts.

Attainment over time

- Overall, children are supported well to make very good, consistent progress over time, in literacy, numeracy and across the curriculum. The headteacher has established well-developed and effective approaches to predicting and monitoring children's individual and overall progress over time. Staff identify the most appropriate interventions which support children to make continued progress. The headteacher can evidence that when children face barriers to learning, they make good progress in their targeted areas of support and meet nationally expected CfE levels in almost all areas.

Overall quality of learner's achievements

- Children speak enthusiastically about developing their leadership through leading activities for peers or younger children. They enjoy a variety of school responsibilities, such as recycling and Junior Road Safety. They develop independence, teamwork skills and learn to take considered risks during a wide range of outings and experiences. Healthy lifestyles are promoted very well through work with Active Schools partners, school bike club and swimming. Staff track children's participation in school clubs and wider activities. This allows them to identify and support children to participate in a breadth of experiences.
- All staff and children celebrate achievements in class and with families and the community at assemblies. Children enjoy the celebration of their personal achievements and those of their peers. This supports their sense of progress and self-esteem. Staff make very good use of certificates and awards, and display the children's achievements around the school building. Teachers support children well to embrace challenge and ensure they have opportunities to take part in local and national competitions, such as Young Engineers and ASG shinty tournaments. As a result, children's skills and achievements are enhanced. Working together as a school community Glenelg have achieved recognition through national awards, in areas including the environment and developing children's rights. Staff support children to identify the

attributes and skills they develop through participation in wider achievement activities. This information should now be used to support children further when they set and evaluate their own individual targets.

Equity for all learners

- The school's Pupil Equity Fund allocation is used very well by the headteacher to support the raising attainment strategy for literacy and numeracy and to support wellbeing. Funding is discussed as a community and is used for additional staffing hours and to purchase resources to support children in their learning. The headteacher identifies attainment gaps using a comprehensive range of information and plans appropriate interventions to support children who may face barriers to their learning. She can demonstrate with clear evidence how school staff have been successful in narrowing and closing gaps in learning. Staff also provide targeted health and wellbeing support for children when needed. They use a range of tools and evaluations which measure the positive impact of this work. As a result, it is clear targeted supports are accelerating progress and improving outcomes for children.

- The headteacher has arrangements in place to ensure that financial constraints do not prevent any children from taking part in opportunities for achievement. Staff make very effective use of shared equipment and arrangements for transport to ensure all children are included. The Parent Council and school community work closely together to tackle the cost of the school day for families.

Practice worth sharing more widely

Approaches to planning learning and assessment across curriculum areas.

Teachers engage highly effectively with partners and the community when planning and providing learning linked across curricular areas, known as interdisciplinary or project-based learning. Staff and children plan together by setting questions to explore. They consider opportunities across each of CfE contexts for learning. Teachers use the local community and environment very well as opportunities to catch and sustain children's interest. They regularly organise intergenerational activities which are mutually beneficial. Teachers plan assessments in which children demonstrate their skills and capabilities in and across curricular areas. This information is shared regularly with parents through 'snapshot' summaries. The school's recent successful food festival included learning across science, literacy, maths and health and wellbeing. Working together, staff, children and partners planned, planted and harvested a wide range of fruit and vegetables. Children worked with the school cook and local residents to cook, bake and share their homegrown produce and recipes with the community and visitors.

Enterprise and Employability

Partnerships are used very effectively to deliver engaging and meaningful enterprise and employability learning through relevant contexts. Staff develop well-considered and embedded approaches to learning about the world of work and enterprise. They support children to speak to partners and visitors about their skills and how they use learning from school in their lives and jobs, such as a brewer, an artist and a fire-fighter. As a result, children have a strong understanding of how skills are important to their future lives and the local economy. One recent example is the 'toadstool trail'. Children planned, researched and created an outdoor orienteering trail which included important historical and biodiversity points of interest. Through partnership with the local businesses and ferry port, they produced and sold activity packs to the community and tourists.

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.