

Dear Parent/Carer

In October 2017, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Gairloch High School. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and young people and worked closely with the acting headteacher and staff.

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

- The positive start the acting headteacher has made to improving the school. She is setting a long-term vision which involves staff, young people and parents in securing better outcomes for their school.
- The flexibility and commitment of teachers in providing a range of subjects so that young people benefit from an increasingly broad education.
- Young people's enthusiasm and engagement in a range of planned experiences that support their wellbeing. This is resulting in young people feeling cared for, safe, happy and respected. Their sense of responsibility is contributing to strong and courteous relationships which enhance school life.

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

- Continue to establish an effective system of self-evaluation in which staff, young people, parents and partners have clear expectations of their role for improvement and change. This should be informed by professional learning, and the rigorous use of data, to ensure high-quality standards.
- Build on the most effective practice within the school, and research findings, to develop a shared understanding of what high-quality learning, teaching and assessment means for Gairloch High School. This should guide improvements in attainment across all curriculum areas.
- Continue to design a range of learning pathways, through the medium of Gaelic and English, to meet the needs of each individual young person, as well as national and local priorities.
- Define a strategic overview to wellbeing. This should detail the school's current approaches to wellbeing, while taking more account of the local context of the school.
- Ensure that monitoring and tracking of progress, achievement and attainment, for individuals and groups of young people, is systematic and based on reliable evidence across all curriculum areas. From this, teachers and young people should know what they are doing well and how they align effort and activity to impact further on progress.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate some quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, education 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 evaluations of quality indicators to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Gairloch High School

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

A more detailed document called summarised inspection findings will be available on the Education Scotland website at <https://education.gov.scot/inspection-reports/highland/5119030>.

What happens next?

Due to the interim arrangements that are in place for the acting headteacher, our Area Lead Officer will work with The Highland Council. This will involve monitoring the school's progress with the agreed areas for improvement. Within a year of the publication of this letter, we will ask The Highland Council for a report on the school's progress. We will then decide whether further engagement with the school is required. This may involve another inspection visit. We will ask The Highland Council to write to you detailing the improvements the school has made and outlining any further action that we intend to take.

Joan C. Esson
HM Inspector