

Summarised inspection findings

Sgoil Bhaile a' Mhanaich

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

25 June 2024

Key contextual information

Sgoil Bhaile a' Mhanaich is on the island of Benbecula. It is a Gàidhlig (Gaelic) status sgoil (school), offering learning through Gàidhlig and English. Children in English Medium learn Gaelic (Learners) from P1. The sgoil roll is 114, broadly equally divided between Gàidhlig and English Medium. There are three classes for Gàidhlig Medium and three classes for English Medium. The classes for English Medium are known as Gaelic (Learners).

The sgoil builds on the work of the sgoil-àraich (nursery). They take forward the Comhairle nan Eilean Siar's Gaelic First Policy through total immersion for almost all children. There is a waiting list for Gàidhlig Medium Education in the sgoil-àraich due to space restrictions.

The head of sgoil has been in post since 2021. She is supported by a principal teacher, whose remit includes covering teachers' non-contact teaching time. There is also an executive headteacher assigned to the sgoil. She has responsibility for strategic overview of the sgoil.

At the time of the inspection, the sgoil's attendance was 96 per cent, which is above the national average. No children are excluded from the sgoil over time.

In January 2024, 33 per cent of the children attending the sgoil were recorded as having additional support needs.

Most of the children attending the sgoil live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation six.

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 staff team, led by the head of sgoil, create an inviting, calm and caring atmosphere for taking forward continuous improvement. Children, parents/carers and staff have collaborated very well to agree refreshed values for the sgoil. Partners initiated a new value on community to drive change connected to the sgoil's unique island and Gàidhlig status setting. Senior leaders are continuing to increase the relevance of the vision, values and aims to align with what is significant in their local context. This should reflect the needs of all children in the sgoil. The sgoil's Gàidhlig status, immersion and learning of Gaelic needs to be more strategically placed in the vision of the sgoil.
- The improvement plan links well to local and national priorities. The plan generally sets accurate short- and long-term priorities. Senior leaders use data gathered through self-evaluation activities well to identify relevant key priorities for improvement. They ask parents/carers regularly about their views on key aspects of the life and work of the sgoil. Most parents/carers and partners say that the sgoil takes their views into account when making improvements. Staff have correctly identified improving children's experiences in Gaelic (Learners), refreshing the curriculum and raising attainment as key areas for improvement.

Almost all teachers engage very well, individually and collaboratively, in taking forward these areas of improvement and projects.

- The current improvement plan has priorities for 2024-2027. It is not clear when a progressive curriculum in Gaelic (Learners), and related pedagogy, will be accelerated. Senior leaders and staff should consistently plan for all aspects of their unique and rich context. There are a few areas of national policy, for example play-based pedagogy, Gaelic (Learners) and digital technology where the pace of implementing change needs to be brisker.
- All staff have a clear understanding of the social, economic and cultural context of the sgoil. Senior leaders have developed a clear plan for the use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). They have prioritised funding to increase children's access to clubs to help all children socialise following the pandemic. This has built children's confidence in engaging with the sgoil. Senior leaders should actively seek the views of staff, children and parents to help identify future priorities for the use of PEF. As a staff team, they need to continue monitoring that interventions are having the greatest impact on children's progress.
- Senior leaders meet regularly with teachers to evaluate and share how they are making progress towards meeting improvement priorities. They also discuss children's attainment to identify and reduce gaps. As a result, teachers embed consistently many improvements across the sgoil. This includes features of strong immersion, and learning and teaching. Teachers fully engage in cluster improvement work to develop consistent approaches to refresh aspects of the curriculum. This has led to improvements in numeracy and mathematics, and religious and moral education. Most children are now making good progress from prior levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy through the medium of Gàidhlig and English. More support staff should be involved in sharing their views on sgoil improvement.
- Senior leaders use recruitment processes very effectively to have skilled staff who are fluent speakers of Gàidhlig. Staff have a range of roles and responsibilities to contribute to their Gàidhlig sgoil status. A proportion of staff in English Medium take forward priorities towards the sgoil's Gàidhlig status. Senior leaders and staff use digital technologies and e-Sgoil, to meet children's individual needs and deliver aspects of the curriculum through Gàidhlig. Senior leaders should continue to increase their explicit planning for the sgoil-àraich and Gàidhlig.
- Senior leaders use a range of activities for monitoring the work of the sgoil across the year. Teachers link quality assurance work well to national quality indicators in How good is our school? 4th edition and the Advice on Gaelic Education. Staff have identified priorities to increase total immersion from the sgoil-àraich to the end of P7. They should now refresh their policy for Gàidhlig. In doing so, staff should capitalise on their own practice, while consulting the strong advocates for Gàidhlig in their stakeholder groups. This would provide an effective means of celebrating the sgoil's successes in Gàidhlig and assist with promoting the language. Children use age-appropriate national quality indicators. They are not yet able to talk about these national indicators or the difference their use made. Senior leaders and teachers monitor learning, teaching and standards of children's work. They set a range of action points across evaluative activities. These need to be followed through to ensure that progress is being made, with all activities connecting to the strategic direction of the sgoil.
- A minority of children have leadership roles in comataidh stiùireadh – the leadership committee. Other children are leaders within eco and sports committees. Children have contributed to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar's refresh of the positive relationships policy. Children in Gàidhlig Medium Education work with Pàrant is Pàiste – the Parent and Baby Group - to promote Gàidhlig language and culture. Older children understand their duties for sustaining the future of the language. Children articulate how these leadership opportunities develop their

confidence. Senior leaders should continue to increase meaningful leadership responsibilities for all children.

- Teachers and support staff engage in annual professional review and development meetings with senior leaders. Staff identify professional learning that they would like to lead, or in which to take part. This should continue to include professional learning specific to Gàidhlig. Senior leaders should retain an overview of these meetings to know what progress is being made. Senior leaders should continue to make detailed use of the General Teaching Council for Scotland professional standards to effectively identify leadership roles for all teachers in the sgoil.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

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

- Across the sgoil, all staff work very well together to create a safe and supportive environment for learning. They work collaboratively to achieve a culture of inclusion, based on shared values. As a result, children show respect towards their peers and adults. Gàidhlig is increasingly visible in the sgoil's environment as a result of staff's specific self-evaluation activity using the Advice on Gaelic Education. Gàidhlig can be heard throughout the sgoil. Teachers should continue using the community's skills to increase even further the visibility of Gàidhlig.
- Across the sgoil, all teachers place a high importance on developing positive relationships and promoting children's rights. Almost all children display consistent and high standards of positive behaviour. All staff have clear expectations of children's behaviour. They make effective use of class and playground charters to reinforce standards and expectations. Children in Gàidhlig Medium Education are not yet familiar with specific rights connected to indigenous languages and the Gàidhlig vocabulary associated with rights. Across the sgoil, staff respond quickly to support any children who present low level disruptive behaviours. Staff use positive approaches to resolving difficulties. This includes building strong relationships with children and using 'teacher talk' time to reassure children. Staff follow the sgoil's promoting positive behaviour policy which sets out aims, roles, responsibilities and actions.
- Almost all children respond well to teachers' enthusiasm in delivering lessons. Most children concentrate well for extended periods of time. They engage readily with their learning. At all stages, children work very effectively individually, in pairs and in groups. Children enjoy frequent active learning activities. These opportunities support children to take increased responsibility for leading their own learning.
- Most lessons are appropriately matched to children's abilities. Teachers should now ensure that all learning activities are suitably paced, appropriately differentiated and offer sufficient challenge. This will help to create a greater range of opportunities for all children to lead, apply and develop their learning in different contexts. In a few lessons, teachers should also ensure that they maximise all available learning time throughout the day, with timely transitions between activities.
- In Gàidhlig Medium Education, staff use total immersion pedagogy and strategies very effectively. At the total immersion stages, they devote ample time to developing children's oral fluency. They have an explicit and thorough approach to phonics before moving to writing. When children require corrections to language, most teachers do so sensitively. Teachers should continue to share this practice to have a consistent approach. A next step would be to develop consistent approaches to teaching literacy and grammar across the curriculum.

- Across the sgoil, teachers make regular and effective use of the outdoor area as a learning space, including the local beach. With staff support, children use the grounds to encourage wildlife by growing vegetables and plants in the garden. All children experience valuable learning through these varied learning environments.
- Across the sgoil, most teachers make effective use of questioning to check for understanding and support learning. In a few lessons, teachers extend questioning techniques to support and challenge children's thinking. Teachers are beginning to develop children's refreshed skills for learning, life and work into the curriculum. Most children recognise the skills they are using and reflect on their learning using termly target posters.
- Across the sgoil, pupil support assistants' help for children is effective. Pupil support assistants use a variety of approaches and strategies, including visual timetables and sensory profiles to support children with barriers to learning. Senior leaders should review support staff timetables to ensure children are not missing important class teaching. In Gàidhlig Medium Education, pupil support assistants very effectively support children's Gaelic language development and learning across the curriculum. Children's own independent skills in knowing how and where to access support needs developed further.
- Teachers share consistently clear learning aims and how children will be successful. In a few lessons, teachers co-construct success criteria with children. This is supporting children to develop as self-motivated and reflective learners. Senior leaders should support all teachers to involve children in identifying next steps more consistently. For Gàidhlig Medium Education, teachers could be integrating next steps for Gàidhlig language to support children apply Gàidhlig across the curriculum.
- Across the sgoil, staff and children use digital technologies well to enhance learning and teaching. Children use digital devices confidently to play games to reinforce learning, undertake research and for word processing. They use an online platform to share examples of work with their parents. In addition, children experiencing barriers use digital assistive technology to access a wide range of learning experiences.
- Staff in English Medium Education are at the early stages of implementing approaches to play-based learning. They should continue to make use of national practice guidance. This will support them to make further links between practice, theory and policy guidance and developing key literacy and numeracy skills. Staff would benefit from developing their current practice around the role of the adult in play and continue to evaluate their practice.
- In Gàidhlig Medium Education, staff use play well to support total immersion. Children choose what to play. Teachers play alongside children to ensure that children receive regular commentary and questions. As a result, children's continuous conversations and specialist vocabulary is extending. As a next step, children would benefit from additional adult-led immersion, so they hear Gàidhlig on a very regular basis. Teachers, in both Gàidhlig and English Medium Education, should integrate more played-based methodology across the curriculum.
- Across the sgoil, most children engage regularly in peer- and self-assessment. In most lessons, teachers use a range of formative assessment strategies to provide children with helpful verbal feedback. This supports children to understand better their next steps in learning. Teachers' written feedback does not always focus on supporting children to make progress. They should continue to refine their approaches to providing feedback to ensure children are clear on progress towards their next steps in learning. Senior leaders should continue to monitor this to ensure feedback is consistent and purposeful.

- Senior leaders use an assessment calendar to coordinate the timing of assessments across the sgoil. Teachers plan a range of assessments in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. They recognise how these assessments support professional judgements on children's attainment and progress. Teachers should continue to develop their understanding of how to make best use of assessment information to influence directly teaching and learning. This will help ensure that all children experience appropriate challenge in their learning.
- All teachers work well together to engage in helpful moderation activities within and beyond the sgoil. Their moderation activities have a focus on the children's progress in writing and numeracy. Teachers in Gàidhlig Medium Education need to moderate listening and talking as an important feature of immersion. They should work closely with staff at the secondary stages to support the continuity of immersion in the secondary curriculum. Senior leaders ensure that sufficient time is provided for teachers to moderate teaching plans. As planned, teachers should continue to develop moderation activities across all curricular areas.
- Across the sgoil, teachers create an annual overview of key learning, which is then planned in more detail on a termly and weekly basis. Teachers plan to meet the needs of most children well, and to build on prior knowledge and skills. They make effective use of visual planning displays in all classes. Children contribute to planning of learning that links across different subjects by sharing their interests and preferences using a 'five big questions' approach. As a result, children have an increasing understanding of both what and why they are learning. Teachers' plans currently do not detail learning for different groups and individuals within the class.
- The head of sgoil developed a tracking system to carefully monitor children's progress and attainment in literacy and numeracy across CFE levels. Staff use this data with increasing confidence to support their termly discussions about the progress of children. It would be good to be clearer on how cohorts of children are being tracked. This includes children who are fluent in Gàidhlig from home and need suitably paced learning. All children who are supported with interventions should have their progress tracked. Children in Gàidhlig Medium Education's attainment in literacy and numeracy should be tracked separately in Gàidhlig and English, as appropriate to immersion. Teachers need to be clear that children are attaining equally well or better in Gàidhlig Medium Education by the end of P7.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Across the sgoil, staff worked with children and stakeholders to review their curriculum rationale. This incorporates the entitlements and contexts for learning from CfE. Staff have recognised the sgoil's uniqueness, what they want children to learn and how they will work together to achieve this. The rationale needs to reflect immersion more as a driver in the curriculum across all four contexts.
- Across stages, teachers are increasing their use of curriculum frameworks across all subject areas. They use these to ensure children build on prior learning and provide children with appropriate progression. In addition, teachers use a three-year rolling programme of CfE experiences and outcomes. This helps teachers ensure that children experience a breadth of learning opportunities. As a result, children across the sgoil receive a flexible, adaptable and balanced curriculum.
- Teachers should maximise further their autonomy in designing pathways to ensure that what matters for Gàidhlig language, culture and heritage is core learning. This is as an identity in itself but also as contexts for learning.
- Teachers in Gàidhlig Medium Education have reviewed how effectively pathways are delivered through Gàidhlig. They used the Advice on Gaelic Education to look at where immersion standards were diluted. As a result, they made impactful changes, such as having the 'Blàs' programme replacing a programme delivered in English. This signals to children the importance of their education through Gàidhlig.
- Across the sgoil, teachers plan and deliver a progressive and balanced programme of religious and moral education. Children learn about Christianity and other world religions and cultures. Partners support aspects of teachers' delivery of this area of the curriculum. For example, the sgoil chaplains visit classes and attend regular assemblies.
- As planned, the headteacher should support teachers to develop a pathway for outdoor learning. This should ensure children develop skills progressively and build on prior learning and experiences.
- Children in English Medium learn Gàidhlig from P1 as a second additional language. All children at second level learn French. Teachers use a progression framework to support their teaching of French.
- Parents and partners support Developing the Young Workforce programme by presenting to children on their career experiences for Gàidhlig. Older children gain experiences by helping in the sgoil-àraich. Former pupils are in the sgoil as part of Children and Young People Foundation Apprenticeship Awards. Children have tangible experiences of Gàidhlig in the work place. As a result, children are ambassadors promoting Gàidhlig. Other partner-led activities include Gaelic singing, science, technology, engineering and mathematics, sports, gardening and creativity through Taigh Chearsabhagh and Fèisean nan Gàidheal. These all impact positively on learning pathways.
- Children benefit from a well-stocked library. All classes are timetabled weekly to use the library. Teachers make effective use of the library to develop children's literacy skills, and support the development and progression of reading across all classes. This includes a small range of texts to support Gàidhlig language and literacy.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Parents/carers are very positive about the sgoil. They welcome regular communication through newsletters, progress reports, digital platforms and the opportunity to use the sgoil's 'open door' policy. Parents/carers appreciate family engagement events. They enjoy watching their children developing performance skills in events such as the Christmas pantomime and cèilidhs. Parents/carers would appreciate more information on Gàidhlig, with more use of Gàidhlig. Parents'/carers' strong advocacy for Gàidhlig should be harnessed further by senior leaders for strategic and practical support.
- Senior leaders, staff and the Comhairle promote Gàidhlig well with parents/carers. They organise interesting events to promote Gàidhlig. The new mobile play bus, 'Splaoid aig Deas' travels around Uist offering play sessions for young children through the medium of Gàidhlig. The Comhairle are committed to securing parents'/carers' interest in Gàidhlig as early as possible to maximise the benefits of bilingualism. Parents/carers are also supported with children's use of Gàidhlig beyond the sgoil.
- Parents/carers are positive about the sgoil. Most agree that their views are taken into account for important improvement priorities and developing new approaches. The Parent Council support the sgoil well. Senior leaders monitor that the Parent Council is representative of parents, including Gàidhlig speakers. A few parents would like more information about the work of the Parent Council.

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

very 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

- Children experience very nurturing and positive relationships with staff and between each other. Most children feel able to discuss sensitive aspects of their lives with at least one trusted adult in the sgoil. They feel the adults in the sgoil listen to and act on their views. Children are comfortable to approach staff with questions or suggestions.
- Most children are developing very well their knowledge, understanding and the language of children's rights in English through the sgoil and classroom charters. As a result of children's efforts, the sgoil has achieved a gold national accreditation. Children have a firm awareness of their rights and responsibilities. Almost all children talk confidently about their rights and what these mean for themselves and others.
- Most children are developing well their understanding of factors that impact on their own wellbeing. Children describe what it means to be safe, including how to keep safe online. They explain how staff, such as playground supervisors, help them to be safe at the sgoil. As a result, almost all children feel safe in the sgoil. Children complete health and wellbeing booklets termly to provide staff with information about children's wellbeing. The head of sgoil tracks and monitors this information. Children should continue to strengthen their understanding of all the wellbeing indicators to help them to reflect, talk about their needs and address their own wellbeing more independently.
- Children develop well their understanding of emotional and physical health as a result of the sgoil's health and wellbeing (HWB) curriculum. Children have many opportunities to recognise and respond appropriately in a range of social situations. For example, children in P1 recognise and demonstrate kindness to others. Teachers make very effective use of the updated HWB pathway, including national guidance on relationships, sexual health and parenthood. This ensures coverage of all HWB experiences and outcomes. Children's learning and wellbeing needs are being met successfully in HWB.
- All children receive their entitlement to two hours of high-quality physical education each week. Teachers make effective use of outdoor spaces to support aspects of the curriculum. Teachers recognise the benefit to children's mental and emotional wellbeing to spend time in the outdoor environment. Children engage successfully in a range of physical activities. Partners and volunteers support the delivery of a range of activities including athletics, football, basketball and dancing. As a result, almost all children feel that staff help them to lead a healthy lifestyle.
- Staff have worked together to develop a promoting positive behaviour policy. This helps to promote consistency of approaches to reinforce good standards in behaviour. Staff know that appropriate behaviour is an important factor in ensuring the wellbeing of children and staff. They have engaged in professional learning in approaches to meet children's social and

emotional needs. This includes restorative approaches and trauma. Children are supportive and inclusive of each other when outdoors during break and lunchtime.

- All staff contribute to the safeguarding of children and undertake mandatory training. All staff have regular professional learning on statutory duties. This includes annual child protection training, that linked to Getting it Right for every child (GIRFEC) and meeting children's needs. Staff are confident about their role and responsibility for child protection and keeping children safe.
- Teachers use the sgoil's effective procedures for identifying and supporting children who may require additional support. This includes the use of individual education plans for a few children. Staff engage well with partners, including educational psychology services, social work and allied health professionals. As a result, staff plan effectively to address barriers to learning. Staff involve parents in planning meetings. The head of sgoil should continue to gather consistently parents' and children's voice in planning and setting targets for progress.
- Teachers provide personalised and targeted support for children who have more significant additional support needs. They have developed a range of strategies to address barriers to learning. These include the use of 'now and next' boards, communication cards and daily literacy interventions. These approaches are helping to make the curriculum and learning more accessible to children, particularly for children who have limited communication skills. Staff should continue to monitor and evaluate the impact of these interventions to clearly evidence the progress individual children make.
- Senior leaders monitor children's attendance carefully. They are proactive when attendance levels give cause for concern. Staff follow local and national policy guidance. Senior leaders liaise closely with parents to offer support to improve attendance and be proactive in addressing concerns. While overall attendance levels are above the national average, there are a few children whose low attendance levels have a negative impact on their progress in learning and attainment. Staff work with partners from social work's Children and Families Team and school nursing colleagues to provide targeted support to reduce this barrier to learning. This is leading to improved attendance for identified children.
- Staff know all children very well. They review children's progress as a class and as individuals. Staff can clearly evidence the positive progress most children are making. They now need to review any gaps in learning for cohorts and individuals, including those affected by the poverty-related attainment gap. This will ensure PEF is helping identified children to close gaps in learning and accelerate progress towards outcomes.
- Children are developing well their awareness, understanding and appreciation of diversity, and different religious and cultural events. Staff promote and develop this understanding through class work and assemblies. Resources, including toys and the library, promote a range of diversity and cultures. Children celebrate various cultural occasions throughout the year such as Chinese New Year, Christmas and Burns' Day. Staff should continue to develop children's knowledge about equalities and inclusion through well-planned and progressive opportunities. This will support children feel able to recognise, and challenge confidently and knowledgeably, discrimination and intolerance.
- Senior leaders and practitioners are making positive progress with areas of the Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education (2017). Children benefit from high-quality total immersion through Gàidhlig. Senior leaders and staff use self-evaluation to know what to improve. Their progress with Gaelic (Learners) is too slow.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

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 Gaelic and as appropriate English

- Children's attainment in literacy and Gàidhlig is good. In 2022/23, the majority of children achieved listening, talking and reading at the early level. During the same time period, most children achieved writing. By P4 and P7, most children achieved reading and writing, with all children achieving listening and talking. Most children are on track to achieve appropriate CfE levels by the end of June. Children make good progress, with a few children exceeding expected levels of attainment.

Listening and talking

- Across stages, almost all children have high levels of fluency in a range of learning and social occasions. They understand Gaelic used in total immersion for their learning. Children have a high level of accuracy in grammar on completing the total immersion phase. Thereafter, they require a sharper focus on extending their knowledge of how grammar works and have errors corrected sensitively. Most children sustain conversations in Gàidhlig when working more independently of the teacher, for example in paired activities. Children listen well for information and correctly identify items of detail. In independent discussions, a few children are still developing skills in taking turns. On a few occasions, children in P1 still embed English words in aspects of their communication. By P4, most children create oral texts confidently to share in role plays, without using scripts. By P7, almost all children sustain audience interest effectively throughout their delivery of presentations. Children should develop further their skills in expressing their ideas and opinions persuasively in debates.

Reading

- Most children in P1 increase their knowledge of sounds and letter patterns effectively. They identify readily words, texts and songs connected to phonics. Across stages, most children read aloud fluently in Gàidhlig and, as appropriate, English. Children need to use more expression to sustain listeners' interest. By P4, most children have a good understanding of phonics and decoding unfamiliar text in Gàidhlig. Children are beginning to engage with phonics in English, building well on prior skills in Gàidhlig. Children share the purpose of key features of books, such as titles, illustrations, characters and plot. Children justify simple predictions about characters and plot. By second level, most children work well with literacy in Gàidhlig and English. Most children explain good use of punctuation and authors' techniques in composing text. By second level, children read confidently a fiction text in Gàidhlig as their core reader. They enjoy detailed novels in English. Children give limited explanations on what constitutes a range of types of texts. They are clear on how internet research extends their knowledge. Children would benefit from being clearer on how to access online support for reading and writing.

Writing

- Across stages, most children author Gàidhlig capably. The majority of children need higher expectations of their handwriting and how they present their work. At P1, a few children are close to accurately constructing a sentence in Gaelic. Children miss opportunities to develop writing in play-based pedagogy. Children in P4 improve their writing through targeted support. A few children are ready for a faster pace of independent writing and to be more creative. By P7, most children's writing is fluent, with children's writing ranging from personal experiences, instructions and tasks across learning, for example in science. Children use different verbs effectively to begin sentences. In both Gaelic and English, children are confident in enriching text with similes, adjectives, punctuation and paragraphs.

Gaelic (Learners) in English Medium

- Children use greetings in Gaelic. They embed some Gaelic phrases in routines. Children make very limited progress in Gaelic (Learners). Children are yet to maximise the opportunities that living in Uist offers them in sustaining the language and culture unique to their island.

Attainment in literacy and English of children in English Medium Education

- Overall, attainment in literacy is good. Attainment data for 2023-24 indicates that, overall, most children across the sgoil are on track to achieve expected CfE levels in literacy. There are a few children who exceed expected levels of attainment. Most children who have identified additional learning needs are making satisfactory progress in their individual learning targets.
- Overall, most children make good progress from prior levels of attainment in literacy and English at early and second level. At first level, a minority of children make good progress. There is a need to raise attainment in reading and writing at first level.

Listening and talking

- At all stages, most children listen well and speak with confidence. Children at early level listen carefully to stories, recalling information and responding appropriately. They participate in discussions with enthusiasm. At first level, children take turns and contribute relevant ideas to group discussions. Most children share their views and opinions with respect. At second level, children listen to and build on others' ideas and opinions, while respecting their differences. At all stages, a few children need support to participate more fully in listening and talking activities.

Reading

- At early level, most children use their knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns to read words. They are less confident of simple features of fiction and non-fiction texts. A minority of children working towards first level read aloud well from their core reading texts. They use punctuation in the text to read with expression. They recognise the difference between fact and opinion. They should develop further their ability to answer inferential questions about texts. At second level, children apply a range of reading skills and strategies to read and understand texts. They would benefit from developing further their ability to respond to evaluative questions about texts.

Writing

- At early level, most children explore and use sounds, letters, and words to help them write independently. They form letters correctly. Children attempt to use capital letters and full stops accurately. They would benefit from further consolidation in writing to reflect their own experiences and feelings. Children should continue to practice formation of lower-case letters. At first level, a minority of children have regular opportunities to write short and extended pieces of text. They begin sentences in a variety of ways, using interesting vocabulary to engage the reader. Children need further practise to apply spelling and punctuation rules. At second level, a majority of children are motivated to write regularly for a range of purposes.

They attempt to use techniques to engage or influence the reader, such as persuasive language. They should now develop their knowledge and use of figurative language.

Numeracy and mathematics through Gàidhlig and English

- Overall, attainment in numeracy is good. In 2023-24, attainment data indicates that, overall, most children across the sgoil are on track to achieve expected CfE levels in numeracy. There are a few children who are exceeding expected levels of attainment. Most children who have identified additional learning needs make satisfactory progress in their individual learning targets.
- Overall, across the sgoil, most children make good progress from prior levels of attainment in numeracy at early and second level. At first level, a minority of children in English Medium make good progress. In Gàidhlig Medium, most children make good progress at first level. Staff should work together to improve attainment in numeracy at first level.

Number, money and measure

- At early level across stages, most children identify and order numbers confidently from 0–20. They use different strategies to complete addition within 10, with a few children able to demonstrate strategies for addition within 20. They are less confident sharing items into smaller groups or reading analogue times from a clock face. At first level, a minority of children are confident in solving simple problems involving addition, subtraction and multiplication. They require more opportunities to develop their knowledge of division and to calculate change from a given amount. At second level, almost all children have a developed understanding of number and number processes. They order and round numbers, and have a strong knowledge of multiples, factors and prime numbers. Teachers should support them to strengthen their understanding of the relationship between decimals, fractions and percentages. Children in Gaelic Medium Education need more opportunities to apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, most children recognise and describe common two-dimensional and three-dimensional objects. At first level, a minority of children identify and classify a range of simple two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects according to various criteria accurately. At second level, almost all children use mathematical language confidently to classify different angles. They are less confident in their use of mathematical language to describe the properties of triangles and circles. In Gaelic Medium Education, children are confident with most terminology in Gaelic. There are a few areas where they require support to use terms in Gaelic.

Information handling

- At early level, most children use knowledge of colour, shape and size well to match and sort different items. They use early counting skills to answer questions about information they have gathered, or from a simple display. At first level, a minority of children can extract key information and answer questions from a range of bar graphs and tables. Children would benefit from regular practice collecting, displaying and discussing meaningful, real-life data in a variety of ways. At second level, almost all children read and interpret data accurately from a range of bar graphs and tables. Children should develop further their understanding of the ideas of uncertainty and chance and use this to make reasoned predictions.

Attainment over time

- Attainment in literacy and numeracy has been in line or above national averages at P1, P4 and P7 in most measures in recent years. Predicted data for 2023/24 shows that children's attainment continues to improve in most measures.

- The headteacher and staff monitor the progress of individual children in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing over time. Overall, data shows that most children maintain their good progress as they move through the sgoil. The head of sgoil's analysis of data needs to be clearer on literacy and numeracy through Gàidhlig and English. This should include tracking accelerated progress with literacy and English from P4, while maintaining reporting nationally only at P7.
- Teachers and support staff provide a range of targeted interventions that raised individual children's attainment across first and second level. Senior leaders identified correctly writing as an area for improvement.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Staff and children share and celebrate well children's achievements in and out of sgoil. They do so in assemblies, through community performances, on achievement boards and in online learning journals. Older children maintain presentation slides to illustrate their achievements and resulting skills, of which they are very proud. Children's successes are recognised very effectively through national accreditation. Children in Gàidhlig Medium participate in national events designed to promote Gàidhlig, networking and competition in sports. Senior leaders track children's participation in activities to promote achievements, including beyond sgoil. Staff ensure that no children miss out on opportunities to develop their skills and capacities in a wider range of contexts.
- Most children develop well a range of skills. They develop teamwork, collaboration and competition through sports. They compete in language and cultural events, which enhances their fluency and sustain local traditions. Senior leaders are at an early stage of supporting children to identify how they are developing skills for life, learning, work and sustaining language.

Equity for all learners

- Children build confidence and emotional wellbeing through projects funded by PEF. These enhance children's engagement with sgoil. Children close gaps in fluency in Gàidhlig from the impact of the pandemic. Staff maintain contact with children over holiday periods to maintain progress and fluency. Staff have focused well on closing gaps in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics. Senior leaders and staff should continue to take account of the different ways that hardship and disadvantage can cause barriers and gaps in attainment. They should focus further on interventions that have the greatest impact of accelerating children's progress and closing poverty-related gaps in learning.
- All staff are committed to addressing the costs of the day and ensuring children are not disadvantaged in any way. This includes in attainment. Senior leaders work very well with partners to signpost families to financial support. Families may access a local food bank. Staff provide children with pre-loved uniforms, and formal and special event clothing. Senior leaders should continue to review the cost of a learning day at Sgoil Bhaile a' Mhanaich.

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.