

Summarised inspection findings

Tiree High School and Primary School

Argyll and Bute Council

4 February 2020

School Name Tiree High School and Tiree Primary School
Council: Argyll & Bute
SEED number: 8110131
Roll (Sep 2018): 110

Attendance is generally in line with the national average.

In February 2019 24.1% per cent of pupils were registered for free school meals

In September 2018, no pupils lived in the 20% most deprived datazones in Scotland

In September 2018, the school reported that 59 per cent of pupils had additional support needs

Key contextual information

Tiree High School and Tiree Primary School is an all-through school serving the island of Tiree providing Gaelic and English Medium Education (GME and EME). At the time of inspection, there were 109 children and young people on the school roll. The school has undergone a significant period of staff change very recently, with the appointment of an 'interim executive headteacher'. He is the substantive headteacher of Oban High School. He is supported by a substantive senior depute headteacher who has operational responsibilities. In addition, the headteacher is supported by the substantive depute headteacher at Oban High School and the substantive headteacher of St Columba's Primary. In addition, there are three principal teachers (PTs), some of whom are relatively new in post. Principal teachers and subject teachers are being supported by substantive post holders at Oban High School.

1.3 Leadership of change

satisfactory

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

- Senior leaders are building an ambitious vision for Tiree High School and Tiree Primary School that places an important emphasis on preparing young people for life after school, including the world of work. The vision also centres on providing young people with qualifications, skills and attributes of the four capacities of curriculum for excellence. Consultation with the school community has resulted in a separate vision and set of values for each stage in the school. This vision is beginning to inform important aspects of the school's work such as the design of the curriculum. The vision has been effectively shared with the school community and is beginning to provide a clear direction to the leadership of change. As a next step, senior leaders plan to capture more prominently the unique social, economic and cultural aspects of Tiree including Gaelic, in the vision.
- The interim executive headteacher has been in post for just under one year and is gaining the trust of all stakeholders. There is a consensus that his strong leadership is supporting a positive culture change in the school. He has a clear vision for leading improvements and demonstrates strong decision-making skills when prioritising actions. Together with his senior leadership team, he is creating a culture of increased expectations and empowerment of stakeholders. The present senior leadership team, having worked together for a relatively short period of time, are working very well as a team to drive forward much needed improvement across the school. As a result, staff demonstrate a renewed confidence and sense of purpose in their work.
- The recent local authority review of practice and provision identified clear areas for improvement while recognising strengths. The school's most recent improvement plan captures the findings of this review while also identifying further priorities from the school's own internal self-evaluation activities. Senior leaders should identify the expected outcomes from these priorities to enable them to demonstrate clear evidence of success. Further refinement of quality assurance and its links to strategic planning for improvement is required to ensure greater coherence. Senior leaders are making a positive start to engaging a wider range of stakeholders in agreeing priorities for school improvement. Through this wider engagement in planning for improvement, the headteacher is developing a culture of authentic collaboration. While the pace of change has been extensive, it has been well led and managed by the current interim senior leadership team.
- School leaders have made steady progress in implementing national priorities in Developing the Young Workforce (DYW), particularly around promoting vocational pathways. However, they recognise the need to increase the pace of implementation, particularly around the Career Education Standard (CES) and partnership working with a wider range of employer partners.
- The school has an effective partnership with the Tiree Community Development Trust. The trust responds well to the needs of the school and the local community. This includes financial

support for a range of activities such as school trips and providing structured youth work activities during lunchtimes and after school. A few other community learning and development partners also work with the school on an occasional basis. A strategic approach to working with partners, as part of ongoing school improvement planning, would help to enhance further the impact on young people's experiences and achievements.

- The interim senior leadership team have been key influencers of change and bringing about positive improvements. These include beginning to increase the range of learner pathways for young people in the senior phase through collaborative work with Oban High School. This has resulted in greater choice of courses that now allow young people to undertake learning linked to their career aspirations and interests. Other key improvements include clear expectations on effective learning and teaching, and introducing a school wide system for monitoring and tracking progress across the broad general education. The physical conditions for learning, the introduction of digital technology in every classroom across the school, and vibrant learning displays have made a positive difference to the ethos and culture. The introduction of a new school uniform has further instilled a renewed sense of pride for children and young people in their school.
- Most staff have accepted and welcomed the strategic direction provided by senior and middle leaders from Oban High School. Staff in Tiree are benefiting from shared working with colleagues from Oban High School. These links have provided well-received professional learning and mentoring for Tiree staff to support them in implementing priorities such as DYW. An important area for improvement continues to be building the confidence and capacity of staff, including middle leaders, to evaluate their own practice against national standards and expectations. Teachers across the school are beginning to take greater responsibility for improving the quality of their teaching and driving forward improvements within their own classes and across the school.
- The headteacher has introduced a greater emphasis on seeking the views of children and young people. Learner participation, albeit at early stages of development, is beginning to result in children and young people taking a lead in school improvement. The pupil council at primary stages of the school, and the use of 'How good is OUR school?', is allowing children and young people to discuss important aspects of school life such as relationships.
- Many of the school's current initiatives are at an early stage of implementation and therefore, it is too early to assess the impact of these changes. In addition, senior leaders are continuing with efforts to resolve on-going constraints and challenges in staffing. There are promising signs of improvement which have been driven by the current interim senior leadership team. Capacity for continued improvement will benefit from having stability at this level.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

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

- The physical environment and use of learning displays has improved considerably over the last year. This is contributing to the positive atmosphere for learning at Tiree. A range of displays support children in GME's writing in Gaelic. Almost all children and young people across the school participate well in learning tasks. In a few lessons, children and young people are required to think for themselves. In a minority of lessons, children and young people undertake activities set at the right level. Too often, adult directed teaching approaches are resulting in passive learning and a lack of engagement for children and young people. Teachers need to have higher expectations of children and young people.
- The recently introduced 'learning and teaching' framework has a focus on providing active learning. In a minority of classes, children and young people are well motivated by being actively involved in learning activities that are relevant to real life contexts. In the early stages of the school, children would benefit from learning through play, either in play chosen or initiated by the child or in play activities or experiences planned by staff.
- The purpose and outcomes of learning are clear in the majority of classes. In a minority of classes across the school, children and young people know what they need to do to be successful and when they have been successful. In a few classes, children help to identify the criteria they will use to judge success in their learning.
- Teachers provide clear explanations and instructions. However, in many cases these can be overly detailed and result in limited opportunities for children and young people to lead their own learning. A minority of teachers make effective use of questions to promote and support higher-order thinking. Teachers could usefully reflect on how far their approaches to learning and teaching allow children appropriate opportunities to develop higher order thinking skills.
- Children and young people are using digital technology very well to save and collate their work, communicate with teachers, and undertake research. New applications, recently introduced, are enhancing learning and teaching, and equipping young people with vital digital skills. Teachers at Oban High deliver many lessons in the senior phase. These are of high quality and highly valued by young people. In addition, young people participate in reciprocal visits to Oban to allow them to work collaboratively with peers within the same setting.
- Teachers adopt a range of assessment strategies to support children and young people to make progress with their learning. This includes written and verbal feedback to individuals. Senior leaders recognise the need to continue to improve practice in this area so that all children and young people receive effective feedback. Teachers should engage children and young people in high quality conversations and set specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound, (SMART) individual targets.

- There are a few individual teachers who plan assessments as part of their planning for learning and teaching. This effective practice should be shared and extended so that planning for assessment is integral to planning learning and teaching across all departments. The local authority's assessment and moderation policy has the potential to support these efforts.
- Work with partner schools is supporting teachers to participate in a range of moderation activities. This work is at an early stage of building teachers' confidence and professional capacity to make more informed judgements about children's progress in their learning. As planned, the school should proceed to further develop the validity and reliability of teachers' judgements about children's achievement of a level. At secondary stages, teachers need to seek opportunities to engage in systematic approaches to moderation and understanding of standards in the broad general education (BGE).
- In the senior phase, teachers have a much stronger understanding of standards in national qualifications. They plan a range of assessment activities to provide evidence of progress and inform future learning and teaching. In a few departments, such as History and English, young people receive good quality feedback linked to assessment standards. This provides a strong model to build on.
- The development of a learning and teaching framework has been a useful starting point in developing a shared understanding of effective learning and teaching. Opening-up learning through classroom observations and joint working with partner schools is supporting efforts to improve the quality of learning and teaching.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Senior leaders have recently reviewed the curriculum framework. The headteacher, following consultation with stakeholders, has developed a curriculum rationale for Tiree High School and Tiree Primary School which reflects national and local advice, while taking account of some aspects of the school's context. For example, curricular areas are exploring the islands crofts, sea and lochs as part of social studies.
- Across the school, there is good evidence of children and young people experiencing learning across the four contexts. For example, teachers collaborating to deliver inter-disciplinary learning experiences through projects such as Geodome. Children and young people also have access to a range of opportunities for personal achievement in and out of school where they can develop their skills.
- Senior and middle leaders are aware that there needs to be better continuity and progression in children and young people's learning across the BGE. Teachers should build more effectively on what young people have learned and achieved at the primary stages by tracking their progress. There is variability in how well departments at secondary stages plan for progression in the BGE. There are a few departments who are planning for progression effectively through second, third and fourth Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. This allows learners to progress in different ways and at different rates. The implementation of a new monitoring and tracking system is beginning to provide staff with information about children and young people's progress in achieving CfE levels in all curricular areas. This will enable teachers to plan for progression more effectively. An early start has been made to developing a BGE profile for each learner. This includes their best pieces of work and notes their skills in initiative, planning, teamwork, communication, and problem solving.
- The headteacher, through effective partnership working with Oban High School, is aiming to ensure that young people receive their entitlement to the full range of experiences and outcomes at third curriculum level by the end of S3. Difficulties in staffing and the rurality of the school presents significant challenges for the school. However, digital solutions are helping to overcome these barriers.
- The common timetable in Oban and Tiree enables a shared curriculum framework for the senior phase. This arrangement allows greater flexibility in course choices for young people in Tiree. Staffing constraints in key areas such as science and physical education (PE) have had an impact on the senior phase curriculum offer and delivery in recent years. These challenges are creatively tackled through partnership working with Oban. The alignment of timetables has allowed young people to undertake courses such as Computer Games Design and Art in Tiree delivered by Oban staff using interactive digital technology. Across the senior phase, almost twenty courses are now on offer to young people that provide greater flexible pathways. Young people recognise the wider range of options, and benefit in a variety of ways from this partnership. In addition, young people from both Oban and Tiree take part in a reciprocal arrangement to learn in both schools.
- Staff awareness of local and national labour market intelligence is not developed sufficiently and is not used routinely to inform curriculum planning and pupil aspirations for employment. However, some staff use local knowledge and contacts to engage effectively with some employers. Across the curriculum, there are a few employer links which supports well the school's partnership working with local industries. These partnerships have provided useful vocational experience for some young people and enhanced their learning journeys. For example, the local veterinary practice has delivered workshops on careers in veterinary

medicine and nursing to both primary and secondary pupils in addition to providing work placements for a few young people.

- The school is supported well by their Skills Development Scotland Careers Adviser who plans activities in line the School Partnership Agreement. This is reviewed regularly to ensure it meets the needs of the young people. Careers staff visit the school three times each year and provide helpful career advice to young people. This includes group work and individual consultations with all pupils. Visits are scheduled to coincide with times when year groups are making subject choices and associated parents' events.
- The development of the CES and Career Management Skills (CMS) is not yet incorporated fully within subject delivery. This is resulting in missed opportunities for reinforcing and consolidating CMS of young people. School leaders recognise this is an improvement priority and are considering actions to address the issue.
- Work placements are not developed sufficiently for senior phase pupils. A revised model for work placements is underway which targets a work experience opportunity for young people at a time that provides greatest benefit to them. A productive partnership with the Tiree Community Development Trust provides funds to support young people with travel and accommodation for work placements off the island.
- The promotion and uptake of Foundation Apprenticeships (FAs) (SCQF level 6) is at an early stage with no young people involved in the current year. However, the school, working in partnership with Oban High School, is offering three FA frameworks for young people in 2020/21. The will broaden the senior phase curriculum offer and introduce a wider range of vocational options.
- The school is at the early stages of developing literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing across the curriculum, through Gaelic and English, as a responsibility of all.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Parents are increasingly positive about the direction of the school and welcome the recent changes. While parents are positive about the interim executive headteacher, they would welcome longer-term stability at senior leadership team level through securing a substantive headteacher.
- Parents are increasingly involved in the work and life of the school. They now have a better understanding of strategic planning and are involved in helping to shape improvement priorities. Their views are sought on several important school matters including the vision, values and aims of the school. They would welcome better quality information provided by teachers on how well their children and young people are progressing in their learning.
- The Parent Council is supportive of the school and the direction of travel communicated by the interim senior leadership team. Meetings are well attended and actions communicated to the wider parent body. There have been several workshops offered for parents that have been well received such as digital technology and positive parenting programmes.

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

satisfactory

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

- The school is at the early stages of developing its approaches to improving outcomes for children's and young people's wellbeing. Initial progress is raising all staff's awareness of their responsibilities and is creating a more positive ethos. Despite initial awareness raising, children and young people do not yet have a good understanding of the wellbeing indicators or their relevance. Senior leaders should continue to develop approaches to support children and young people to understand and take responsibility for their wellbeing.
- Senior leaders are creating a culture of increased respect across the school, linked to the recently developed shared values. Relationships between the majority of staff and children and young people are positive, and most learners feel that the school teaches them to treat others with respect. The majority of children and young people have someone in school they can talk to about worries or concerns, and have regular opportunities to talk to an adult who knows them well. Buddies at the primary stages support their peers in a variety of ways which helps children to feel respected and to make friends. Senior leaders should continue to develop and implement the new relationships policy, linked with the school's values. This includes continuing to develop the daily 'My Time' period in secondary, and approaches to strengthen relationships across the school community.
- The majority of children and young people in primary, and most in secondary, feel safe. A number of children and young people and their parents however, feel that the school does not deal well with bullying. The school is aware of this perception and in response has selected 'respect' to be one of its core values and has a strong focus on promoting positive relationships throughout the whole school. The school's bullying policy should be reviewed to reflect national guidance better. In addition, all bullying incidents should be logged correctly, including any protected characteristics and actions taken. Senior leaders should regularly review this log and take appropriate action as required. All staff should continue to ensure that children and young people develop resilience, emotional wellbeing and skills in conflict resolution.
- Most children at the primary stages feel that the school teaches them to be healthy. Children at the early stages are able to talk about how to keep themselves safe on the roads in Tiree and on the mainland. They understand how to keep their teeth healthy, know the names of body parts, and understand the meaning of privacy. In the upper stages, children can talk about different forms of abuse, and what to do if they have concerns about safety. Young people from S1 to S3 in the BGE understand the dangers of drugs and how to stay safe online. In the senior phase, learners are planning for choices and changes beyond school. Senior leaders need to ensure that children and young people's learning about all aspects of health and wellbeing is progressive, relevant and cohesive as learners move through the school. Children and young people need to be more actively involved in shaping the programme to develop their sense of responsibility and awareness of rights.

- Despite not having a permanent teacher, children and young people all receive their entitlement to physical education, supported by teachers from Oban High School. The majority of primary children feel that they have regular opportunities to be active and to take part in clubs beyond the school day. Secondary learners are less positive about the chances they have to be active; however the majority are positive about the impressive range of clubs that they attend. This includes water-sports, surfing, horse club, golf and hockey. Breakfast club is helping children and young people to develop friendships and be ready for school.
- Children and young people develop a sense of responsibility and feel their views are heard through the school's work to improve learner participation. For example, children and young people helped to choose the new school uniform, and more recently are influencing changes to the food on offer in the school canteen. The relaunch of the house system is supporting a few young people across the school to develop leadership skills. Fundraising for the chosen charity of each house is developing children's and young people's compassion for others less fortunate than themselves.
- Senior leaders have a good understanding of statutory duties and effective processes are in place to comply with codes of practice. Helpful learner profiles and relevant plans show evidence of most children and young people with additional support needs making good progress. Commendably, exclusions have reduced significantly. Senior leaders should continue to work in close partnership with parents and other professionals to ensure that all barriers to children's and young people's learning are addressed. This includes continuing to take action to improve attendance.
- Senior leaders are working hard to promote a culture of fairness, tolerance and inclusion. They are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all learners at the school. At the secondary stages, learners demonstrate a good understanding of religious and moral issues, including expressing views about using animals in experiments and capital punishment. Children at the primary stages are able to talk about the impact of deforestation on local tribes, however they have limited understanding of different world religions. There are a few examples of children and young people learning about disability. Senior leaders should continue to support all children to understand, value and celebrate diversity in 21st century Scotland, and to challenge discrimination.

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

Primary stages

Attainment in literacy and numeracy in English Medium classes

- Attainment data needs to be interpreted with a level of caution as the number of children at each of the primary stages is small. Based on the most recent data provided by the school, almost all children in English Medium (EM) classes are achieving the expected levels in listening and talking and numeracy, most are achieving expected levels in reading and the majority are achieving expected levels in writing. The data provided by the school is not fully reliable.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, most children are making satisfactory progress in literacy. Across the primary stages, a few children are making good progress.

Listening and talking

- Across the primary stages, most children pay good attention to their teachers in whole class lessons and in social conversations with their peers. The majority of children working within early level can follow and respond appropriately to teachers' explanations and instructions. When given the opportunity to talk to each other in small groups or in pairs, the majority of younger children can take turns, and respect their audience. However, a few find it difficult to not interrupt. Children, especially those in the younger EM class, need more open-ended challenges to deepen their thinking. They also need time to engage in playful conversations where they have opportunities to explore new ideas and to solve problems through collaborative discussions and inquiry. Older children working within first and second levels, focus well on set tasks, they interact well with each other and almost all are respectful of each other's opinions. A few children now need to make better eye contact when speaking in less familiar situations and project their voices more clearly.

Reading

- When reading aloud, children at the early level, attempt to sound out tricky words. A few children need support to make sense of vocabulary. It will be important to extend contexts for reading for information that are linked to other areas of the curriculum beyond literacy and social subjects, that build progressively on children's previous skills and knowledge. Children who are working in first level can identify key features of the content of a newspaper article. Children in the P1-3 class are able to identify the main character in a story they listen to and to discuss some of the key aspects of the storyline. The choice of fiction and non-fiction texts will be of greater interest to children if linked to prior knowledge and real-life contexts. Children in the P4-7 class can read with fluency and understanding. They can explain why they prefer particular authors.

Writing

- Across the primary stages, there is significant scope to improve the majority of children's writing skills. Children's attainment in writing is inconsistent across the stages. Children working within first level are learning about the features of a newspaper and applying their knowledge appropriately in their writing tasks. By P3 around a half of children who are still working at early level can confidently sequence when writing to convey information, for example, when writing a set of instructions for planting hyacinth bulbs. At early and first level, a few children refer to their targets in their personal learning plans to improve their use of tricky words in a piece of writing. A few apply what they know about the use of correct punctuation in a worksheet activity. Children do not yet write often enough for a wide range of purposes and higher achieving children are not sufficiently challenged to write at length. Teachers' feedback is beginning to focus children's attention on aiming for higher-quality presentation, accuracy and application of skills in other areas of the curriculum.

Mathematics and numeracy

- Across the school, children's attainment in numeracy is satisfactory.

Number, money, and measurement

- The majority of children working at the early level can count orally to 100. A few are very confident and accurate in mental computation. The majority know the place value of a number - units, tens and hundreds. They are familiar with the hour and half hour and can work out simple time problems using digital formation. Children working at the early level are beginning to partition numbers and can offer a solution about how they arrive at an answer. Children need regular focussed opportunities to develop speed and accuracy in mental agility. Contexts for such work should form the basis of playful activities and in meaningful and creative contexts.
- At first level, children are less confident in mental agility and a few rely on using their fingers to work out the addition of three numbers and also to provide answers to simple calculations. Daily practice of multiplication facts, using a variety of interactive approaches and not a reliance on paper-based resources, are needed to improve children's confidence, competence and pace of learning.
- At first level, children need to revisit concepts of measure in weight and capacity. This is more secure at second level.

Shape position and movement

- Children working at early level can name and describe the properties of two-dimensional shapes. They can name the different types of triangle, but are less confident at explaining the properties. At first level, children know the properties of two-dimensional and three-dimensional objects, and created a video outlining the properties of a circle, a rectangle and a square.

Information handling

- Children across the school have regular opportunities to gain skills in gathering, displaying and interpreting information. They make limited use of technology to develop and reinforce numeracy skills.

Attainment over time

- A varied and inconsistent pattern of attainment exists across the primary stages. In part, this is due to the small numbers at each stage. The school is at the early stages of tracking effectively the progress children are making in their learning. A recent focus on improving staff's understanding of achieving a level and moderation activities has yet to impact on the reliability of teachers' judgement.

Secondary Stages

- As the number of young people in each of the secondary years is small, care has to be taken when interpreting and analysing data. In order not to identify any of the small number of young people taking qualifications, HM Inspectors have not used the usual qualitative terms.

BGE

- In 2019, data based on teacher professional judgement indicates that a greater proportion of young people achieve third level or better in numeracy than in literacy by the end of S3. Data over the last three years indicates that a greater proportion of young people achieve third level or better in literacy than in numeracy. Senior leaders report that the current judgement of achievement of CfE levels are not reliable and that further moderation is required to ensure this information on attainment in the BGE is reliable. The work with Oban High School is supporting staff with their understanding of standards.

Attainment over time

BGE

- The introduction of a local authority monitoring and tracking tool is beginning to collate young people's progress from S1 to S3. There is an agreed, consistent approach to using definitions of progress within and across CfE levels. This is beginning to support an improved approach to analysing the progress of young people. Prior to the local authority tool, individual teachers created their own approach to monitoring and tracking progress, although such approaches were variable in quality and inconsistent.

Literacy and numeracy

- All young people leaving school over the past five years attained literacy at SCQF level 4 or better. With the exception of 2017-18, all young people attained literacy at SCQF level 5 or better. All young people leaving school over the past five years attained numeracy at SCQF level 4 or better.

Breadth and depth

- As part of the raising attainment strategy, senior leaders are addressing a pattern of young people dropping subjects in the middle of an academic year and being presented for fewer qualifications as a result. The appointment of a principal teacher of guidance is also supporting young people to make more informed choices. Although it is too early to assess the impact of this strategy, the school is confident that this will raise attainment as young people are being presented for courses at the SCQF level at which they are likely to succeed. In addition, senior leaders have sought to establish equity across all subject areas by allocating a consistent number of hours of learning for courses.
- Senior leaders have sought to improve the curriculum offer for the lowest attaining young people. In addition, the strategy for improving attainment has also centred on improving the quality of learning, teaching and assessment.
- Senior leaders have also taken action to address the number of young people repeating courses, in particular, mathematics courses leading to a qualification at SCQF level 5 and SCQF level 6.
- Not all subjects have provision for young people who achieve well at SCQF level 5 to progress to SCQF level 6. The increased availability of courses in the senior phase is now providing young people with progression routes to obtain Highers in for example, French and Biology.

- As a result of the small numbers of young people and the context of the school, senior leaders have developed packages of more diverse and vocational, bespoke courses and pathways. This is allowing young people to progress onto courses in the senior phase more suited to their needs, aspirations and interests.
- Issues of attendance for young people has also had an adverse impact on young people's attainment.

Positive destinations

- All young people leaving Tiree High school from the senior stages move to an initial positive destination. Destinations include higher education, further education and employment.

Overall quality of achievement

- A majority of children and young people are developing skills and attributes within and beyond the school. Music is a strength connected to the local culture. For example, the school choir has had some recent successes locally and in the national Mòd. Young people in the choir also contribute to their local community by performing at the local care home. Children and young people are developing their team working skills through a few different sports and their sporting achievements are recognised regularly through 'player of the day'. Young people enjoy the opportunity to extend their skills and experiences and to build their confidence through school trips.
- Children's and young people's achievements are recognised well through social media, at assemblies and on school displays. They are beginning to engage well with the new house points system although this is at an early stage of implementation. There are currently few opportunities for children and young people to develop their leadership skills, with the exception of house and vice captains following the recent reintroduction of the house system. Young people are beginning to build their confidence as a result of speaking at school assemblies. A few young people have had the opportunity to gain a bronze Duke of Edinburgh's award. However, senior leaders recognise that opportunities for progression and accrediting wider achievement needs to be developed further.
- The school is beginning to track children's and young people's participation in wider achievement. School leaders recognise that they have further work to do to track participation, engagement, skills development and the impact of children's and young people's achievements.

Equity for all learners

- The approach taken to ensuring equity, focuses on removing barriers to learning associated with the rural isolation of the school. The partnership working with other Argyll and Bute schools has reduced the professional isolation felt by staff and widened opportunities for children and young people. The school is using its PEF allocation for the provision of a new breakfast club and interventions aimed at improving study skills and literacy.

School Empowerment

■ Improvement

- The interim executive headteacher acknowledges the careful balance between appropriate accountability and autonomy. Staff value the flexibility and autonomy afforded to them to meet the needs of children and young people. The headteacher, supported ably by his senior leadership team, is creating conditions for effective empowerment of staff to improve learning, teaching and assessment. Staff feel much better placed to undertake roles which focus on leading improvements to practice and provision. They are benefiting from strategic direction in a number of important areas. High quality professional learning has been central to developing leadership at all levels.

Context

Tiree High School offers Gaelic Medium Education (GME) from Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) through to the senior phase. The Gaelic Medium provision has a separate SEED number. Across the school, at certain stages of primary more learn through Gaelic than in English. This will soon be the case at the secondary stages.

The ELC is delivering the extended free hours. This is being implemented with parents choosing a session where children learn through English in the morning, with Gaelic (Learners) as part of the curriculum. The afternoon session is total immersion. Between sessions, children have their lunch in the nursery. Some children attend for the whole day, while others opt for one of the two sessions.

The school has experienced challenges for staffing in GME, during which there was an impact on young people's continuation with GME.

Leadership of change

- Staff in both GME and EME are able to talk about effective change and improvement for Gaelic. One of their commendable successes is the increase in uptake for GME at primary stages. This will soon be reflected in the roll at the secondary stages. Staff appreciate that this requires them to deliver more of the secondary curriculum through the medium of Gaelic.
- A depute headteacher (DHT) has made a very positive start in using The Advice on Gaelic Education to improve approaches to immersion at the primary stages. Since then, a school policy has been developed to guide change. The implementation of this policy should now be captured in the school improvement plan (SIP) to support well-paced continuous improvement. There should be a continuous focus on Tiree High School being a school with two mediums of learning. Stakeholder engagement for the refresh of the school vision, values and aims reinforced parents' interest in Gaelic language and culture as part of the island's identity. Senior leaders should continue to embed this in the curriculum, along with national expectations.
- The Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) priorities should continue to have a focus on GME. An important aspect of this is to be promoting former pupil successes from GME. The implementation of the Career Education Standard (CES) and development of pupils' Career Management Skills (CMS) have yet to be fully developed within a Gaelic context.
- A number of staff have undertaken career-long professional learning (CLPL) to develop their fluency in the Gaelic language. Progression should be provided in this CLPL to assist with acquiring further fluency to impact on GME. Specialist staff for GME are accessing Gaelic-related professional learning. Teachers have requested more CLPL to improve their pedagogical practice. The opportunity to use digital technologies should be explored further to encourage collaboration with other schools delivering GME. Some of the collegiate activity time should be dedicated to the development of GME to enable all interested staff's involvement.

Learning, teaching and assessment

- Young people in GME are happy, settled and enjoy warm and nurturing relationships with staff. As a result, adult and child interactions are consistently respectful. Children, particularly at the primary stages, are hearing and absorbing Gaelic, and using their Gaelic language with increasing confidence and enjoyment.

- Teaching in GME and for Gaelic (Learners) across the primary and secondary stages is very good on most occasions. A range of teaching approaches is used, including whole-class lessons, group and paired activities. Teachers and children use digital technologies in motivating ways. Teachers should ensure that all learners' experiences are consistently of a high-quality. Staff in GME have a very good understanding of the approaches to immersion, which they apply well in learning. This should be captured in a clear statement, as part of the school's learning, teaching and assessment policy.
- In numeracy and mathematics, lessons are differentiated appropriately to ensure that all learners are working at the right level. There is scope to further develop this, particularly at the early stages, to ensure learners experience activities which provide effective support and challenge. Problem-solving activities need to be planned more carefully across all stages to ensure that all children have the necessary numeracy skills to be successful at these.
- Young people articulate well how their use of digital technology supports their learning. Teachers and young people are using electronic tablets and laptops in developing children's skills and knowledge of technology. Children are also utilising software programmes to increase their independence in writing. Staff should continue to make effective use of digital technologies to underpin learning across the curriculum.
- Teachers in GME give clear explanations and engage children in their learning through questioning strategies. On most occasions, they are developing children's higher-order thinking skills. There are occasions when higher-attaining children could be challenged further in their learning. This includes in classes delivered through English at the secondary stages where recognised benefits of bilingualism are not being well met. There is scope for the younger children to be more involved in leading their learning. In a majority of lessons, children and young people are challenged appropriately with differentiated activities. This could be further improved by increasing the pace and challenge of learning.
- Staff in GME need to continue to build their skills in assessment and moderation so that it is integral to planning learning and teaching. Formative, ongoing use of assessment requires to be embedded further at the primary stages. Teachers should continue to build their skills in interpreting data and identifying with young people their next steps in learning. Staff would benefit from further planning of assessment using National Benchmarks and considering a range of evidence.
- Senior leaders should continue to support teachers in reviewing approaches to planning. Staff would benefit from having progression pathways in all curriculum areas to assist them with short and medium-term planning. As planning is developed, it should reflect the distinctive elements of GME.

Learning Pathways

- The rationale at each stage needs to have a statement on immersion and total immersion, which is shared and understood by all stakeholders.
- Children across the broad general education in EM study Gaelic (Learners) as their first additional language (L2). There are opportunities make more use of Gaelic in the daily life of the school.
- In both GME and EME, children learn French as their second additional language (L3). Between 2015 and 2019, a few young people have completed a National Qualification in Gaelic. Senior leaders should ensure that young people have a strong awareness of the benefits of having a National Qualification in Gàidhlig/Gaelic (Learners).

- The school has a Gaelic Language policy which is a statement of their current and intended provision. Senior leaders should continue with their plans to implement this policy, including in providing a subject through Gaelic at the secondary stages. Stakeholders' consultation on the curriculum identified the importance of Tìree as an island, and the Gaelic language, as important to young people's learning. In taking this forward, the role of Gaelic as a responsibility of all and a context of learning should be considered.
- Young people's curriculum offers a number of opportunities through Gaelic for personal and wider achievement, including by working with partners. Senior leaders should continue to build an understanding of the rationale for these additional immersion experiences for those in GME and in GLE. The purpose of immersion experiences needs to be clearly understood, as well as how these have been put in place to promote equity in the GME curriculum. Immersion experiences need to be of high quality across the four contexts of learning and result in increased fluency. The school's link to Oban High School should be used to widen all young people's experiences through trips and excursions, and promote a sense of equity.
- Senior leaders should continue to develop the curriculum for GME, including through digital platforms that widen the availability of choice.

Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

- Young people in GME have a positive experience in school. Staff and children enjoy supportive relationships, which is helping them be confident in their use of language.
- Children in GME are involved in the life of the school. They are represented on the pupil council, participate in whole school assemblies and wider achievement opportunities. It would be beneficial to ensure that young people are discussing how to improve GME and experiences in Gaelic (Learners). A 'Còfaidh 's Craic' lunchtime club is providing young people with increased opportunities to use Gaelic with their peers.
- Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities for statutory duties. There are effective procedures in place to identify and support children with additional support needs. Support is being provided through the medium of Gaelic using a range of strategies. Children are supported very effectively by a full-time Gaelic-speaking language auxiliary. The language auxiliary's further involvement in planning of learning would help maximise her deployment in taking forward interventions.
- In 2017, the school's review and improvements to the primary curriculum was an important step in their compliance with the statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education, 2017. They should continue with their plans to unpack further Curriculum for Excellence through the medium of Gaelic. As a first step, they should ensure that children have daily, progressive learning through Gaelic at the secondary stages.

Raising attainment and achievement

Primary

- The roll in GME is small, with cohorts of ten or fewer children. Therefore, statements about progress which have been made ensure the anonymity of individuals.
- In GME, most children are on track with listening and talking, reading and writing through the medium of Gaelic. Attainment in literacy and Gàidhlig is good. Attainment in literacy and English language, and numeracy and mathematics is good. Teachers should continue to develop their approaches to learning, teaching and assessment to ensure that they are able to continue to make robust and reliable judgements about children's progress.

- To raise attainment further, teachers need to make continued use of data to track the progress of groups and individual children in their learning. They should continue to use differentiation and targeted interventions as part of learning and teaching.
- Staff's understanding of national standards is developing. They are beginning to work collaboratively to moderate standards with other practitioners of GME. Staff would benefit from increased opportunities to work with other practitioners of GME to ensure accurate and timely professional judgements of achievement of levels.

Numeracy and mathematics

GME

- Overall, most children are making good progress in numeracy. Teachers are setting targets for improvement within numeracy and mathematics. These are shared with parents. Teachers should ensure children have an accurate understanding of their progress in learning.
- At the early level, children are gaining confidence in working with numbers up to 20. They can count forwards and backwards, and identify numbers before and after. Some are able to identify numbers between. When writing numbers, they are aware of the importance of having them the correct way round and are confident in forming their numbers. Children are able to identify a number of two-dimensional shapes and demonstrate knowledge of using one-to-one correspondence to count a given number of objects to 10. At first level, the children can use their knowledge to estimate and round numbers up and down to the nearest ten and 100. They are gaining confidence in using group tallies to gather and sort data. Children should continue to develop their skills in problem solving and mathematical reasoning. By second level, children are able to demonstrate an understanding of fractions and percentages. They are able to use different strategies to carry out money calculations and confidently used specific mathematical language when describing two-dimensional shapes. Some children are able to apply their knowledge of number facts to solve simple algebraic equations. Teachers should give further consideration to pace and challenge of learning.
- As they progress through the school, children are developing their understanding of data handling. For example, the majority of children use tally marks to gather information. Children at second level are analysing, interpreting and drawing conclusions from data within pie charts and bar graphs. Increased opportunities to gather and use a wider range of data more regularly will strengthen their confidence in using mathematical vocabulary.

Literacy and Gàidhlig, and as appropriate English

GME

- The school's own GME data for the last two sessions shows that most of the children are achieving expected levels in literacy through Gaelic and English at the primary stages. Overall, children are making good progress in literacy however there is scope for better-paced, challenging learning.

Listening and talking

- At the early level, children demonstrate a good understanding of Gaelic used through total immersion. They enjoy using Gaelic, particularly in daily listening and talking activities. In this, they are learning Gaelic, and developing their skills in taking turns and respecting the contributions of others. It would be useful to have a regular focus on retelling of simple stories and rhymes to develop further their oral skills. At the first level, almost all children use Gaelic confidently and are developing their fluency in Gaelic. A few need support in using features of Gaelic correctly. Staff model good use of grammar to improve children's spoken language. Children at the second level have experience of using Gaelic language in a range of settings and can discuss the benefits of bilingualism. They can make links between their learning and

Gaelic-related career options. Across GME, teachers have developed approaches to improve further children's skills in listening and talking. Their participation in 'Gaelvember', a strategy to promote the use of Gaelic, is encouraging children to engage with new words, phrases and Gaelic idiom in an appealing context.

Reading

- At early and first levels, children enjoy listening to stories. They are able to share likes and dislikes. They confidently identify and explain the purpose of a book's title and can give some information relating to characters in the text. Most are able to use appropriate vocabulary to explain content, characters and predict what may happen. Older children are able to talk about their favourite books and authors, and read with fluency and expression. Across GME, children are able to find and use information from fiction and non-fiction texts for specific purposes. They regularly select texts for enjoyment or to find information for a specific purpose.

Writing

- At the early level, children's writing skills are supported through modelling and scribing. They are encouraged to use drawing to develop their writing. There is scope to ensure their knowledge and understanding of Gaelic is developed further through well-planned play and total immersion. This is especially so given that some have not experienced total immersion in nursery. Children working towards and at the first level are writing independently, accessing dictionaries and class displays to assist with their vocabulary and spelling. Children enjoy writing in Gaelic. They are making good use of their knowledge of phonics to spell familiar words and are beginning to write at length. Children are applying some grammatical structures they are learning in their writing. Their presentation of work is almost always legible and attractive. Across second level, children's skills in writing Gaelic and English are good and encompass a range of genres. There is some evidence of effective use of tone and vocabulary. Most children use a range of accurate punctuation and effective use of paragraphs. Spelling, in English and Gaelic, is improving. Teachers should continue to review and develop the criterion against which writing is assessed to ensure they better reflect the level of challenge expected. This should also be used to give more purposeful feedback so that the children have a clearer picture of what success looks like.

Secondary

- The numbers in GME at the secondary stages are very small. As such, patterns of improvement cannot be ascertained. From sampling young people's language skills, we noted confident speakers of Gaelic whose fluency is developing very well within the curriculum area through which they learn. Most young people in literacy and Gàidhlig are reported to be achieving the third CfE level by the end of S3.
- Young people are building an awareness of the skills that they develop by taking part in opportunities for achievement. Young people gain much from representing their school in national competitions such as Film-G. There is potential to develop young people's leadership skills through supporting their peers in GME and Gaelic (Learners).

Quality of learners' achievements

- Across GME stages, staff are developing the use of the wider Gaelic community to support and enhance learners' Gaelic language and learning experiences. For example, Spòrs Gàidhlig ski trip, Fèisean nan Gàidheal performances, participation at the Mull provincial Mòd and the Royal National Mòd. The choir's achievements were recognised at the Royal National Mòd 2019. The link with Taigh a Rudha and the Harvest Hampers has been particularly successful in promoting GME within the local community. Staff should continue to actively pursue links with other GME schools and their local community.

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.