Summarised inspection findings

Bun-sgoil Chnoc na Creige - Craighill Primary School

The Highland Council

19 September 2023

Key contextual information

Bun-sgoil Chnoc na Creige - Craighill Primary School, is located in the Royal Burgh of Tain in the Scottish Highlands. Two-hundred and nine children currently attend the school. One hundred and fifty-three children learn through the medium of English and 56 children learn through the medium of Gaelic. At the time of the inspection, children in Primary 7 were attending transition days at Tain Royal Academy.

A new 3-18 campus is currently being built on the school grounds. Craighill Primary School, Knockbreck Primary School and Tain Royal Academy will close when the new school opens in early 2025. All children and young people will move to the new 3-18 campus.

The headteacher of Craighill Primary has been in post for eight years. She is supported by a depute headteacher (DHT) and principal teacher (PT). The DHT and PT have teaching commitments across the school.

Attendance levels have been impacted by the pandemic. Current attendance levels are below the national average. Almost half of children attending the school require additional support with their learning. The school received £35,525 in Pupil Equity Funding this session.

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	

■ All staff establish and maintain caring relationships with all children. Children learn in a school where they know staff have high aspirations for them. Staff ensure children know and understand their rights. They are working towards embedding children's rights in all aspects of the school's work. This supports the positive culture of learning across the school.

■ All children are keen and eager to learn. Almost all engage well in their learning activities. Staff are skilled at reengaging children in their learning in any instances where they become distracted or disengaged. Most children are respectful of each other and work well individually, in pairs or in groups. Most children's learning experiences are appropriately challenging and capture children's interest.

■ In a few lessons, children are able to make choices in their learning. For example, when deciding the layout of a garden design or which play activity to do first. Children in P7 undertook leaders of learning roles when teaching children in P1 how to make stop motion animation films. Teachers should build on this practice, giving children increased opportunities to lead their own learning across the curriculum. This will support children to develop their independent learning skills more effectively.

- The school values are evident in all staff's interactions with children. They underpin the school's vision well. This supports children to understand the importance of learning as best they can. Staff use spaces both within and outwith the school building to enrich children's learning. Children enjoy the variety of learning experiences this provides them. For example, staff use the school playground to support children's learning about how to gather data on litter. Teacher's use digital technologies effectively to support children's engagement in their learning. They use interactive whiteboards well to help children visualise what they are learning. Speech to text and other digital literacy applications are used particularly well to help children develop their writing skills.

- In most lessons teachers explain the purpose of children's learning well. They use questioning effectively to check for children's understanding. This supports children to know what they are being asked to do and how successful they have been. Teachers should now develop this practice further so that children are clearer on what skills they are learning. Teachers use a range of oral feedback to help understand how well they have completed a task. Detailed termly feedback helps children understand how much their learning has progressed over the school term. In a majority of lessons, teachers differentiate children's learning well. This supports children to access learning at an appropriate level. A few children are capable of greater levels of challenge. Teachers need to continue to develop how they differentiate children's learning to ensure these children make improved progress in their learning.

- Play pedagogy is being implemented well in P1. Teaching staff support children's learning through exploration and investigation. Space is used well to encourage play and interactions. Teachers planning for play based learning take good account of children's interests. Staff engage well with professional development on how children learn through play. They are developing their knowledge and understanding of the principles of Realising the Ambition: Being Me. Children are motivated and interact well during teacher-led and child-led activities. Children take increasing responsibility as they become more independent in their learning. Teachers and senior leaders should continue with their plans to develop play-based learning further in the early stages.

- Teachers use a range of assessments, primarily focused on literacy skills, to inform planned learning well. Assessments provide teachers with reliable information on each child's knowledge, skills, abilities and aptitudes. Teachers use assessment evidence effectively to support their professional judgements throughout the school year. Children's progress is discussed at regular attainment meetings. Teachers and senior leaders use these discussions to identify how well each child is progressing. Teachers and senior leaders use assessment evidence effectively to identify any interventions required to help children who are not making expected progress. Teachers undertake a range of moderation activities, which supports their abilities to make accurate professional judgements in literacy and numeracy. Working with colleagues from across their associated school group helps them to make accurate professional judgements on children's progress. As planned, teachers should continue to develop their plans for assessing children's work more effectively across all curricular areas.

- Children's individual assessment profiles support children well to review their own progress four times per year. Teachers support them to identify how well they have progressed against their individualised learning targets. Children reflect on their personal achievements and ongoing pieces of work. These help children to recognise how well they are developing their skills. Identifying their 'latest and best' pieces of work supports children well to evaluate and write about their own progress against their previous levels of attainment. Teachers should now build on this strong practice to give children increased opportunities to evaluate their work

more frequently. This should include giving children opportunities to peer assess each other's work.

■ Teachers plan learning termly across all curricular areas. This ensures senior leaders have a clear overview of planned learning across all stages. Processes for planning learning, support teachers well to ensure planning is not overly bureaucratic. In a few classes, children are involved in planning learning. Teachers should now develop a more consistent approach across the school for all children to be more involved in planning learning. Teachers monitor children's learning in literacy and numeracy closely. This ensures they have a good understanding of whether children are on track to achieve a level. Children experiencing additional challenges are monitored more closely. This supports senior leaders to identify appropriate interventions and evaluate their effectiveness. Teachers should consider how monitoring and tracking children's progress can inform planning for children's next steps more effectively.

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

■ The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	good

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

■ attainment in literacy and numeracy
■ attainment over time
■ overall quality of learners' achievement
■ equity for all learners

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

■ Overall, children's attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is good. At early level, most children have achieved expected Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels in reading, listening and talking, writing and numeracy and mathematics. At first level, a majority of children have achieved expected CfE levels in reading and writing. Most children have achieved expected levels in numeracy and mathematics. At second level, most children have achieved expected CfE levels in reading, writing and numeracy and mathematics. School data shows that all children at first level and almost all children at second level have achieved expected CfE levels in listening and talking. Senior leaders have rightly identified the need to strengthen approaches to gathering evidence on children's progress in listening and talking. This should support staff to make more accurate judgements about children's progress in listening and talking as they move through the school.

■ Most children with additional support needs are making good progress from prior levels of attainment. A few children are capable of achieving more in literacy and numeracy. They would benefit from further challenge in their learning to enable them to make the best possible progress.

Attainment in literacy and English

■ Overall, children make good progress in literacy and English. Teachers have developed approaches to reading and writing. This is impacting positively on attainment across the school.

Listening and talking

■ Most children across the school engage in conversations with staff and peers. They listen well during paired and group activities. Most children use appropriate non-verbal techniques including eye-contact and gesture when talking to adults. As children move through the school, they need to develop skill and confidence in presenting information in a range of ways and for different audiences. Children working at second level are ready to develop further their skills in a range of contexts, for example, debating.

Reading

■ Most children at early level read simple words in their reading book. They enjoy listening to stories at the class listening centre and give simple reasons to support their choice of book. A majority of children at first level read words linked to their topic and use decoding skills to read new vocabulary. They answer simple questions about texts they have read. Most children at second level answer increasingly challenging questions about their class novel. They summarise well texts they have read. Children at second level, would like to read a

wider range of texts. This should help to develop further their vocabulary and understanding of author's techniques.

Writing
■ Most children at early level, write a sentence using capital letters and full stops accurately. They use their knowledge of phonics to spell tricky words. A few children at early level are capable of writing more than one sentence. Children at first level write across a range of genres. A majority of children use a range of punctuation including speech marks and question marks accurately. Children at second level make appropriate choices when writing across a range of genres. They use headings, sub-headings and pictures to engage the reader and organise information. They are being supported to extend the range of vocabulary they use in their writing. A few children need to be encouraged to read their work to check spelling and punctuation.

Numeracy and mathematics
■ Overall, children make good progress in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure
■ Most children at early level add within 20. They identify the number before or after. A few children are ready to add three amounts. Most children at early level compare the size of objects using appropriate vocabulary, for example heavier and lighter, taller and shorter. Most children at first level solve addition and subtraction calculations using three-digit numbers. Most children at second level use the four operations to solve calculations. Most children at second level use their number skills to explore budgeting including calculation profit and loss. Children are not yet confident in applying their number skills to solve word-based problems.

Shape, position and movement
■ Most children at early level recognise and name basic two-dimensional shapes. Most children at first level, recognise and name an increasing range of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. They identify lines of symmetry in regular shapes. Most children at second level, recognise and name different types of triangles. They describe and classify angles using terms such as acute, obtuse and straight.

Information handling
■ Most children at early level display information using a pictogram. They use their counting skills to answer questions about their pictogram. At first level, children explain how to organise and carry out a simple survey. They use tally marks well and display data by creating simple bar graphs. At second level, children discuss how to display data in a range of ways, including line graphs, bar charts and pie charts. Overall, children across the school need to develop further their skills in collecting, organising and displaying data in range of ways including through the use of technology.

Attainment over time
■ The headteacher tracks children's progress in literacy and numeracy. She has a very clear overview of attainment over time for cohorts of children as they move through the school. The headteacher supports teachers well in using data to plan appropriate support and interventions for individual children. This has led to improved outcomes overtime for children who require support with their learning. The headteacher should build on this positive approach to ensure this leads to improved outcomes for all children.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

■ The headteacher monitors children's participation in a range of activities within the school and local community. She noted a decline in children's confidence and levels of participation following the pandemic. Staff are proactive in planning a range of opportunities to broaden children's experiences across different activities. Children talk positively about their involvement in a range of experiences including fundraising events, county sports competitions, music tuition and school trips. They make clear links with their health and wellbeing, improved self-esteem and the positive impact they have on their local community through their involvement in these activities and events.

■ Children in Primary 6 value their roles as Junior Leaders. They articulate well the planning and leadership skills they develop through leading physical activities for their class. Children in P4 to P7 are able to join a range of groups including the choir, Junior Journalists, Tech Gurus and Sports Committee. The headteacher and staff should build on this approach to help all children recognise the skills they are developing through their involvement in the groups and committees.

Equity for all learners

■ All staff have a strong understanding of the range of barriers to learning children may face. They are particularly aware of the socio-economic challenges within the community. The headteacher has taken significant steps to reducing the cost of the school day. She receives support from local businesses to provide toast for all children at the start of the school day. The Pupil Council set up and promote a well-used pre-loved school uniform bank. All children in Primary 7 were able to attend their residential trip with no costs. Children in Primary 4 are offered free swimming lessons. This ensures all children and families are supported to overcome potential barriers to participation and learning.

■ The headteacher tracks closely the progress and attainment of all children with potential barriers to their learning. She works well with teachers to analyse data and identify specific gaps in children's learning and achievement. Staff plan and implement a range of supports to address the identified gaps. As a result, children receiving targeted support make good progress against their individual targets. There are positive signs of the attainment gap narrowing.

Context

Bun-sgoil Chnoc na Creige - Craighill Primary School has an established Gaelic Medium provision for children at the primary stages. It opened in 1987. There are three classes. All teaching and non-teaching staff are fluent speakers. The headteacher is the lead for Gaelic. She is supported by a principal teacher. Teachers' non-contact time is available for younger children through Gaelic. It is not available for children in P5-7. Moving forward, the local authority and senior leaders should put arrangements in place that will ensure older children continue to learn through the medium of Gaelic. This could be further supported by working with the secondary school, accessing learning through digital platforms and other primary Gaelic Medium Education schools.

Gaelic (Learners) is offered in P5-7 English Medium classes within the 1+2 languages provision. This is as the third additional language.

QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

■ Children enjoy positive and nurturing relationships with school staff and each other. Learning environments are welcoming and purposeful and as a result almost all children are motivated and engage well in their learning. Almost all children are keen learners in Gaelic Medium Education. Children have opportunities to lead learning in Gaelic in the classroom, in the Sgoil-Àraich and at whole school assemblies. Staff integrate culture, sport, the local area and language to develop children's strong sense of identity with Gaelic.

■ Most children are developing independence in their learning and stay on task well when working individually or in small groups in a multi-composite class. Children at the early level have a few opportunities to learn through play. Staff have rightly identified the need to develop a policy to develop further total immersion learning through play. This should help children's fluency and raise attainment further.

■ The principal teacher and staff use bespoke self-evaluation materials for the Gaelic sector, including The Advice on Gaelic Education (2022). This supports them well to review practice and inform the strategic planning of Gaelic Medium Education within the school. Staff use appropriate strategies to support children's understanding and developing fluency of the language. Staff continue to consider how they can encourage all children to talk more consistently and unprompted in Gaelic with each other as they develop their fluency. They have introduced an oral Gaelic language framework to teach, reinforce and consolidate Gàidhlig language structures, idioms and grammar. This is helping children at second level to converse orally and in writing with an increasing range of Gaelic vocabulary and idiom.

■ In all lessons, teachers give clear explanations and instructions. In a majority of classes, teachers support and challenge children to develop and share their thinking through very effective use of questioning. In most lessons, staff share the purpose of the learning and how to be successful with children. Teachers should continue to support children to understand the skills they are learning and take ownership of improving their learning and fluency.

■ Staff make effective use of digital technologies across most areas of the curriculum to enrich children's learning experiences. In a majority of classes, children use technology programmes well to support their writing. Older children create and edit voice recordings to evidence and share their learning with home.

- Teachers plan lessons and tasks appropriately to provide differentiation, support and challenge for most children. Most children who require further support in their learning are supported well in class and through targeted interventions. There are a few children who would benefit from additional targeted support and challenge in their learning. Teachers need continued guidance and access to agencies to support children with additional support needs in Gaelic Medium Education.

- Teachers' planning is informed by a range of assessment information. This includes standardised assessment activity and teachers' professional judgement. Teachers have reintroduced national standardised assessments for literacy and Gàidhlig (MCNG), following a two-year gap in their availability. They are building their skills in using assessment data to gauge the progress that children are making and to identify next steps. Staff should continue to extend further moderation across a wider network of schools for Gaelic Medium. They should continue to develop bespoke progression pathways for Gaelic. This will ensure that Benchmarks bespoke to literacy and Gàidhlig are achieved.

- Staff use a range of oral and written feedback well to support improvement in children's learning. Teachers support children to set personal targets in literacy and numeracy. These targets help children to understand their progress and how to improve their own learning. Teachers now need to ensure greater consistency in their further use to assess how well children have learned.

- Senior leaders have developed a whole school tracking system for literacy and Gàidhlig, literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics. They monitor the quality of children's experiences as well as the progress learners are making. As planned, senior leaders should continue to ensure that targets, interventions and data inform next steps for all learners more effectively.

- Across the school, children learn Gaelic (Learners) in line with the Scottish Government's 1+2 language policy and the Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education, 2017. Senior leaders and staff should continue to embed Gaelic (Learners) within the curriculum for all children. This will ensure that Gaelic is increasingly heard and visible beyond the classroom.

QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

Attainment in literacy and Gàidhlig

- As there are small numbers of children at each stage, broad statements about progress have been made to ensure anonymity.

- Overall, children are making good progress in literacy and Gàidhlig. A few children at first and second level are making very good progress.

- Children's levels of attainment in reading, writing and listening and talking dropped during the COVID-19 pandemic. Targeted interventions and the wide range of strategies staff have implemented are reducing identified gaps. Senior leaders should ensure that the grouping of older children for teachers' non class contact time is not diluting immersion. Senior leaders, working with the local authority, should explore alternative delivery models to ensure continuity of learning and fluency in Gaelic.

Listening and talking

■ Overall, children are developing good fluency and are increasingly confident in using Gaelic. At first and second level, children use Gaelic in a range of contexts, including adult-led situations, and when working in pairs and groups and in out of class activities. Across all levels, children listen well to others and take turns. Children in the younger classes need support and encouragement to talk more consistently and unprompted in Gaelic with each other as they develop their fluency.

Reading

■ Across all stages, children retell stories very well from picture prompts. At the early and first levels, children are developing well their skills in reading. They read with growing fluency and expression. At second level children have an understanding of the features of different types of text and share views on structure, character and the writer's use of language.

Writing

■ Staff have introduced new approaches to the teaching of writing. This is helping children to write successfully within a range of genres using increasingly accurate spelling and a wider range of Gaelic vocabulary. Staff should now, increase the pace of learning at early level to ensure children are more appropriately challenged in Gaelic writing.

■ By the end of early level, children are able to use capital letters, full stops and a variety of sentence starters. At first level, children are correctly using a range of verbs, including irregular. At second level, children write well-structured sentences using accurate punctuation, spelling and idiom. All children have increased opportunities to apply their writing skills across the curriculum. Children at second level would benefit from more regular opportunities for developing their writing skills in both languages.

Numeracy and mathematics

■ Overall, children make good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Children evidence their progress and attainment in numeracy and mathematics using accurate Gaelic terminology.

Number, money and measure

■ At early level, children order and sequence numbers within 20. They add and subtract numbers within 10 and accurately share out a group of items equally into smaller groups. At first level, children know and use an increasing range of strategies to complete calculations in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They tell the time using 12-hour clocks and are confident in working with money. At second level, children identify equivalent fractions and explain fractions of concrete materials. They have a good understanding of profit and loss.

Shape, position and movement

■ Children at the early level identify two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. At first level, children describe well the properties of simple two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. Children at second level identify and describe a range of angles.

Information handling

■ At early level, children use knowledge of colour, shape and size to match and sort items. At first level, children display data in bar graphs and tables and can extract key information. At second level, children collect and display a range of information using digital technology. They analyse and interpret information from graphs to draw conclusions about information. At second level, children apply their information handling skills well across different contexts for learning.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

■ Children participate in a wide range of achievements both in school and out with. Staff and children are proud of their successes in their work in Gaelic and these are celebrated on a regular basis through profiles, Duais na Gàidhlig (Gaelic award), certificates, school displays, newsletters, house points and at assemblies. Staff provide a range of clubs that take place after school such as football and shinty. These provide opportunities for children to use Gaelic outside of the school environment.

■ Partnerships with Fèis Rois, Tain Royal Academy, Gaelic speaking community members and FilmG are very valuable and productive. Children's participation in FilmG develops their skills in script writing, film making, editing and the relevance to the world of work. The school has achieved recognition and prizes for their entries in the Gaelic short film competition. Children's participation in Mòd Inbhir Nis and Inverness Music Festival develops their musical skills, confidence and appreciation of the Gaelic language. The school choir and music group successfully achieved an award at the Mòd.

■ Children contribute to the work of promoting and celebrating Gaelic in the local community through a range of projects and initiatives including links with Innis Mhòr House care home. This promotes Gaelic in the wider community and across generations.

Other relevant evidence

■ The Sgoil Àraich and school have experienced staffing challenges this session. Senior leaders and The Highland Council need to explore alternative delivery models to ensure older children learn through the medium of Gaelic all of the time. They should explore opportunities to work with the secondary school, access learning through digital platforms and other Gaelic Medium Education primary schools. There is a need for a continued focus on securing and recruiting staff for Gaelic Medium classes.

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.