Summarised inspection findings

Beauly Primary School and Nursery Class

The Highland Council

2 July 2019

Key contextual information

Beauly Primary School is set in the heart of the village of Beauly. At the time of the inspection the roll was 116 children in the primary and 41 children in the nursery class. It is situated approximately ten miles from Inverness. Classrooms and the Nursery are situated in three different buildings. Most children attending Beauly Primary and Nursery live in the village, with a small percentage from outlying areas. There are a small number of placing requests. The headteacher has been in post since January 2017 and previous to this there had been a considerable period of instability in leadership.

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 headteacher and staff know the community very well and have engaged parents, children and the wider community in creating a shared vision and values for the school. These are displayed around the school and the children are proud of them. The vision, values and aims are increasingly becoming part of school life. The vision, values and aims should be reviewed to make them more meaningful and succinct. The school has recently started to engage with the parent council in the creation of a curriculum rationale. This will have a clear focus on skills, the attributes of the children in the school and the local area along with high aspirations for all.

■ The headteacher works hard to engage parents and the wider community and is highly regarded by the school community. She is approachable, supportive and caring. She knows every individual child and family and their unique needs well. She is clear in her plans for improving the school and is driving opportunities for leadership for all. School staff have increasing opportunities to take on leadership roles across the school. This includes the principal teacher leading on data analysis and support staff in collaboration with teaching staff developing approaches to citizenship. Children enjoy leadership opportunities in the pupil council, fundraising, events such as Beauly's Got Talent and the development of a playground rules policy. Parents are increasingly involved through opportunities in Developing the Young Workforce (DYW). Parents and the wider community support the school's garden group. Children should now be given more opportunities for a broader range of leadership including leading learning activities in class. As the school continues to develop leadership these activities should be closely linked to the school improvement priorities. Teachers should take increased account of children's interests to offer more personalisation and choice in their learning.

■ Staff involvement in self-evaluation is a recent development and is now a key activity in all collegiate sessions. The headteacher recognises the need to engage the parent council and the wider parent group more effectively in school improvement. Children are beginning to use the self-evaluation document 'How good is our school?' where they reflect on what is good about Beauly Primary School and what could be improved. Staff are beginning to use moderation effectively to evaluate impact of improvements. As their confidence in

self-evaluation grows they should use this to monitor the impact and success of developments to ensure they are improving outcomes for children.

■ The headteacher is instrumental in driving change in Beauly Primary School which she carefully manages. The time is now right to start to embed existing improvements and drive change forward at a quicker pace to better meet all children's needs. Staff engage well with moderation activities within their cluster. As a staff team they are involved in collaborative opportunities for professional dialogue. Staff need to ensure this is a regular feature of collegiate time. The school should continue to seek opportunities for professional development and look at their own practice to drive consistent improvement across the school. Staff need to be aware of current priorities and practice across Scotland. Looking to other schools' good practice in their cluster, and beyond, will increase opportunities to learn on how to ensure the best outcomes for children.

■ Through the professional review and development process the headteacher is encouraging staff to take on leadership roles and drive forward improvement. She has plans on how to support staff to engage with practitioner enquiry to promote innovation and creativity which will lead to positive change for all learners and help lead to continuous improvement. Staff have started to engage with digital technology and are proud of their learning and development of DYW and Outdoor Learning. They now need to use strategies to monitor and evaluate these improvements to ensure maximum impact on the learning outcomes for the children in Beauly Primary School.

■ The headteacher makes effective use of data to identify children facing challenge in their lives. There is a clear rationale for the use of Pupil Equity Fund. Funds have been directed to improving the attainment of children who need emotional support, and additional support in their learning. This is kept under regular review.

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

■ There is a welcoming ethos in Beauly Primary School. Children are confident and willing to express their opinions and ideas about their learning. They do this through the leadership opportunities in citizenship groups and learner conversations. A few children demonstrated skill and confidence in delivering the teaching of maths strategies to their parents and they are increasingly becoming involved with aspects of learning in the wider community.

■ The majority of children respond positively to activities in the classroom and in most areas learning is matched to the appropriate level to meet their needs. Across the school, the majority of lessons are teacher led and children have few opportunities to lead their own learning. The majority of lessons are differentiated appropriately. Teachers should consider using a variety of methods of differentiation, for example by product, content and outcome, in order to more effectively meet all children's needs. As children progress through the school staff should continue to use paired and group active and interactive ways to differentiate learning along with independent written work. A majority of children have the opportunity to express their voice in how and what they are learning. Teachers should continue to develop this so that all children are more able to offer their opinion on what they are learning, and how. Staff should strive to support children in becoming independent learners. In the majority of classes there is scope to encourage a faster pace and there needs to be real challenge integrated into learning. Children now need to be more active participants in their learning. Teachers should extend the play pedagogy in the early stages and introduce more enquiry based learning throughout the school. Children are just beginning to use digital technology in their learning and are adapting to this with confidence. There is an opportunity for children and staff to support each other in building their confidence in digital technology, and to learn together.

■ Skills for learning, life and work are beginning to promote learning about the world of work as part of the curriculum. Children are beginning to recognise the skills they are developing and how they apply to learning throughout the curriculum and in real life contexts. Children's achievements are shared through achievement leaves, Best Beauly Bairns and at assembly. The headteacher has started to track opportunities for achievement to ensure equity of achievement for all.

■ In best practice children enjoy high quality learning experiences both in class and outdoors. In the best lessons teachers use skilled questioning. This should be developed to provide more consistency across all stages. The staff team should now work together to use questioning more effectively to promote confidence and independence. This will enable all children to develop their higher order thinking skills. A shared understanding of what highly effective teaching and learning looks like should be discussed and agreed across the school.

- The use of learning intentions and success criteria is evident across almost all classes. Children should now be encouraged to reflect on the success criteria and in some cases co-construct their own. Learning intentions should make clear on what teachers want children to learn, or be able to do, by the end of the lesson. The profiles that are used across the school to help children record their targets should now feed into the overall school tracking system to ensure progress is recorded and next steps planned effectively.

- Staff use a range of formative and summative assessments to gather information on what children can do. This provides them with data regarding for example, children's reading, writing and numeracy. Teachers are developing their confidence in analysing this data. The school's assessment model supports staff's understanding of how well children are progressing within a level. As a result, teachers are becoming more confident in discussing how well children are progressing and when they have achieved a level. The newly developed key assessment tasks support children to reflect on their learning and to identify next steps. These are shared with parents and provide good opportunities for parents to discuss their child's learning with them. Teachers should now consider how assessment can be more effectively built into learning at the planning stage.

- In a few lessons children are given opportunities to identify how confident they are in their learning. Staff should now look to build on good practice by developing, and using, these strategies, more effectively across the school. Children would benefit from increased opportunities to self, and peer, assess their own work and that of their peers. This should include opportunities for children to offer feedback, and make suggestions, on how their peers could improve.

- Teachers undertake peer observations of lessons and this is supporting them to develop a greater understanding of children's learning experiences across the school. The school should consider how these observations could be developed to support staff to ensure children experience consistently high quality learning and teaching at all stages. Teachers are working with colleagues both within the school and cluster to develop their moderation skills. This is supporting them to have a better understanding of standards.

- The school is collating data from assessments, including information on children's personal achievements, into a recently developed tracking and monitoring tool. Teachers are at the early stages of using this tool to inform planning for progression in children's learning. Planning and progress meetings support teachers to discuss individual children's progress with the headteacher and to identify children who may require additional support. The school should now continue as planned to develop teacher's skills in their use of the new tracking and monitoring tool. This will support them more effectively to plan learning based on robust data on how well children are progressing. The school should now develop further their tracking and monitoring tool to more effectively identify how well groups of children are progressing. The school now needs to develop progressive pathways to support tracking and monitoring of children's progress across all curricular areas.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

■ Beauly Primary School progression pathways for literacy and numeracy are based on The Highland Council's progression frameworks. These set out a clear progression of skills, knowledge and understanding. These are linked to the benchmarks to allow assessment and reflection on professional judgement and pace of learning. The frameworks allow consistency and a shared approach to planning and delivering the experiences and outcomes across the curriculum. Staff are beginning to shape the school's curriculum rationale to the local context in interdisciplinary learning (IDL) and the shared values of the school.

■ Staff are confident in using the frameworks and plans are in place for a localised version of these. In particular IDL progression planners, relevant to the local setting, will be in place by August 2019. Staff are beginning to include children's interests and ideas to influence the context of learning. The school has developed a skills framework. Implementation of this, along with inclusion of the National Benchmarks, will ensure the skills development in all curricular areas are explicit.

■ Outdoor learning is at the early stages of development. The school are in an ideal setting to ensure that this becomes an integral part of everyday learning. The school has plans to develop this more effectively in using the Cnoc-na Rath that sits directly behind the school. The school's DYW is a recent development that is already beginning to be a tangible part of the school curriculum. The school should continue to develop this along with the planned changes to IDL. This will help children to experience their entitlement to quality experiences in learning across the broad general education.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

■ Prior to the appointment of the headteacher the school experienced a period of instability in management. Shortly after her appointment she met with parents and clearly laid out her vision for the school and asked parents what their expectations were of her. This very open style of dialogue and communication has led to her establishing very positive relationships with parents of children at the school. She has continued to promote this style of communication across the school. Parents speak very highly of the quality of communication they have with the headteacher, and other staff. The headteacher looks to involve parents in the life of the school and this is helping to create the strong sense of community.

■ The staff, and pupil council, consulted parents and children regarding current practice related to the issuing of homework. As a result of this consultation the school has now reviewed and refreshed its homework policy. This ensures children experience a consistent approach to when homework is issued and to be returned. Teachers have embraced this and developed their practice to motivate children to take greater interest in, and responsibility for, their homework. The school should continue with their plans to develop homework which provides increased opportunities for children and their family's to learn together.

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	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

- There is a clear focus in the school on developing children's wellbeing. Staff know each child, and their families, well and this helps to inform their daily interactions. Staff model positive relationships and all children are treated as individuals with their own unique needs. As a result children know they are valued and cared for. Staff are open and approachable. This supports children to feel confident to discuss issues personal to them with adults whom they trust. The headteacher has invested significant time in getting to know every child in the school. She is highly visible throughout the school. Parents speak highly of how she is open and approachable. They know when discussing issues affecting their child with her that she will listen and take appropriate action if necessary. Children are courteous and supportive of each other. They understand the importance of looking after each other. This supports the calm, friendly atmosphere across the school. Staff are undertaking a range of relevant professional learning opportunities. These are supporting them to have a better understanding of how children develop emotionally. Staff are developing their practice which encourages children to talk more openly about their feelings and how they can support each other when they are experiencing difficulties.

- Staff are becoming more familiar with the wellbeing indicators. These are being used to assess the needs of children experiencing difficulties. The wellbeing indicators are a visual feature of displays around the school. Children are aware of the wellbeing indicators. A few can discuss what these are and their importance to them. Staff should continue with their plans to embed the language of the wellbeing indicators more fully throughout the work of the school. Linking these more explicitly to the school's vision, values and aims will provide children with a deeper understanding of what staff's aspirations are for them. The school should continue with their plans to develop children's understanding of their rights as described in the United Nations Charter on the Rights of the Child. The school's work on developing nurturing approaches is supporting a number of children to feel more included in the life of the school. They are becoming more confident in their abilities to understand their feelings and express themselves.

- Staff developed an informative overview of children's needs across the school. This provides information regarding any challenges children may be facing and any associated barriers to their learning. Staff are becoming more skilled at identifying children for whom they may have concerns. They seek advice and guidance, as appropriate. They act on this and take responsibility for planning learning which seeks to best meet children's needs. Where children experience more complex, or continuing, difficulties, staff liaise with other professionals. They identify any further appropriate support which may assist children in their learning. The needs of a very few children are supported through the creation of an individualised education plan (IEP). Associated personal targets are recorded in IEPs and children's progress is measured over time. The school should consider how they could develop their pupil profiles to include personalised targets. This would allow for the progress of children requiring additional support to be more regularly reviewed against any identified targets.

■ The school collaborates well with a range of staff from partner agencies who work with children requiring additional support. This support is targeted appropriately and ensures those children's needs are met well.

■ The school is inclusive and all children and their families are made to feel welcome. Children have opportunities to experience learning about diversity and equalities through religious and moral education and school assemblies. Staff have recently developed an equalities and diversity policy. They should now continue with their plans to embed this into the work of the school. This should support children to have increased opportunities to explore issues relating to equalities and diversity more progressively through the curriculum.

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 the majority of children across the school are making satisfactory progress in literacy and numeracy with a few making good or better progress. Teachers are becoming more confident in assessing children's progress accurately. Children transition from nursery to P1 with an interest in learning and with developing literacy and numeracy skills.

- The school's data shows that a majority of children are on track to achieve expected levels in literacy and numeracy by the end of the session. There is significant scope for more children to achieve expected levels with a few children capable of exceeding this, particularly in reading and writing.

- Staff confidence on reporting children's skills in listening and talking is improving. Listening and talking is a key feature of learning and the features of listening and talking are discussed and taught across the school.

Literacy and English language
Reading
- Across the school, the majority of children are making good progress in reading. At all stages, children enjoy reading, and are confident in recognising different genres and in discussing their favourite authors. Most children also read extensively outwith school. Throughout the school children are given the opportunity to read books matched to their level and for enjoyment. Children report that they enjoy being read to.

- Children at early level are gaining confidence in developing tools for reading and engage in teacher led activities to consolidate their knowledge of phonics. Across first level children are developing their skills in reading using a variety of strategies to promote understanding and fluency. They have opportunities to read different genres and are learning how to use dictionaries and thesaurus to support their understanding of vocabulary. Children use tablets to add value to their reading and the majority of children are becoming fluent readers. Children working towards second level enjoy reading a range of texts, including fiction and non-fiction. Children have had the benefit of additional focus on reading and analysis of text and characterisation through a novel study that included a visit by the author. At second level children engage with activities to support progress in their reading for information, supporting them to recognise features of text beyond the written word. They talk enthusiastically about books they are reading and can explain why they have chosen a certain book and the author. A few children across the school are accessing challenging texts of their own choice, including well-known classics. Children told HM Inspectors they would prefer books in class to be more challenging, and feel limited by the number of pages they are asked to read. Children express an interest in having more plays as reading material. Teachers read to children beyond the early stages.

Writing

■ Across the school, a majority of children are making good progress in writing. Children across the school use dictionaries and thesaurus to improve their writing. Children use the criteria from 'Big Writing' to check their progress and were skilled at using the Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers and Punctuation (VCOP) support. They use simple punctuation well and their use of vocabulary enhances their writing. Children write for a variety of purposes.

■ At early level, children enjoy regular practice developing tools for writing. Most children at early level are confident in exploring sounds and words, and know the features of a sentence. Most can create a simple sentence using capital letters and full stops. A few are also beginning to use simple conjunctions to make their sentences more interesting and the majority are beginning to understand how grammar relates to their writing.

■ Children at the first level use poetry to write about themselves. Children have been introduced to the writers craft using biography and autobiography. They use reading into writing to look at features of text that will help them in their writing. Children are motivated by writing diary entries and other opportunities for personal writing.

■ Children at the second level used letter writing to personify a crayon as a context. They are writing a personal piece about the village of Beauly and what it means to them. Their writing is of a good standard and children are motivated by the personal context. Children working towards second level can articulate their understanding of why they have to practise writing for a range of genre however a few found it difficult to articulate their thoughts in imaginative writing having more of a preference for other more factual genres of writing.

Listening and talking

■ Children at Beauly Primary School are confident and articulate. When given the opportunity they are able to express their own views and enjoy talking to their peers and adults in school. Children are making good progress in this area of their work.

■ Children at first and second level ask and respond to a range of questions, including literal and inferential through their reading. A recent whole school event in the production of 'Porridge' was highly motivating for the children and in the upper school children could describe what they learnt through this context. They understood the importance of listening for a cue to their lines and for maximum audience enjoyment. They could also articulate the importance of fluency and projection when speaking their lines. To enhance their skills further children should continue to work in pairs and groups throughout the curriculum and participate effectively in group discussions. There is scope for staff to ensure children experience well planned and assessed learning across listening and talking skills development. With the introduction of digital technology children should be given the opportunity to use this to enhance their listening and talking skills in for example production of a film on the village or in a blog for tourists.

Numeracy and mathematics

■ Teachers are now building opportunities for children to practice their mental maths skills into lessons. They should now develop these further to offer greater opportunities for children to develop a wider range of mental agility skills.

Number, money and measure

■ At the early level children are developing their understanding of basic number and shapes.

■ By the end of first level most children can add and subtract two and three digit numbers. They can calculate simple multiplications and divisions. Most children can round to the nearest ten and 100. Most children can calculate a simple fraction of an amount with a

majority able to write more complex fractions. At the first level children can use coins to show an amount of money. Most know the days of the week and months in a calendar with a few able to tell the time from a clock face in 12 hour form. Most can use the correct units to estimate and measure lengths with a few able to convert between units of length. Most children can find the area of simple shapes by counting squares.

- By the end of the second level most children can perform calculations using decimals. They can round numbers to the nearest 1,000 and can calculate percentages of an amount. Most children can use fractions to calculate an amount. Most children can tell the time in 12 and 24 hour time. They can calculate change from a purchase involving pounds and pence. Most children at the second level can use units of measure to find length, weight and volume.

Shape, position and movement
- By the end of first level most children can name simple 2D shapes and 3D objects. They can identify obtuse and acute angles. Most children can identify and draw lines of symmetry and name the cardinal points on a compass.

- At the second level most children can calculate identify and name a range of 2D shapes and 3D objects. They can identify the properties of a range of 2D shapes and 3D objects. Most can find the area of a range of 2D shapes including complex composite shapes. Most can continue the number in a sequence with a few doing so in more complex patterns including fractions. Most children can use scale to measure from distances on a map or to enlarge or reduce a shape. A few children can use Pythagoras' Theorem to calculate the length of the hypotenuse in a right angled triangle. A few children can convert money between different currencies.

Information Handling
- At the end of the first level a majority of children can gather data and express this in a bar graph. Most can interpret information presented in a pictograph. At the second level most children can say how probable an event is using fractions. Most can gather information in a tally table and then present this in a pie chart. Children working at the second level would benefit from increased challenge in the development of their data handling skills.

- A few children at the second level are able to describe how likely an event is. They can describe probability of events using simple ratios.

Attainment over time
- The school's data shows a variable picture of children's progress over the last three years. HM Inspectors agree with the headteacher's lack of confidence in how well the data accurately reflects children's progress from previous years. The headteacher is aware of the need to continue to develop teacher's understanding of standards and their skills in moderation.

Overall quality of learners' achievement
- Children's achievements are celebrated at assemblies, displayed around the school, on an achievement tree and in class and school blogs. Children respond positively to the headteacher awards which are given for a variety of reasons, for example showing courage or good organisational skills when organising and managing a book fair.

- Across the school children are involved in a variety of citizenship groups for example, Eco Warriors and Entertainment. The groups allow children to develop new skills, which they record against skills needed in the world of work. They should now consider how these skills help them in learning across the curriculum as well as their application in their future lives. Children are encouraged and supported to attend a residential trip to Lagganlea outdoor education centre in P7. There are systems in place to ensure children's experiences are not

limited due to location or financial situations. Children raise money for different charities including a local foodbank, Highland Hospice and Children in Need.

■ Children have recently been given increased opportunities to work with partners in the local community. The school are currently in negotiation with Beauly and Ness Fisheries Trust, the Lovat Estate and Adult Beauly Eco group to clean up the local stream in the 'Cnoc' wood. This will enable the area to be used for effective outdoor learning. Through a grant from the Scottish Book Trust, children organised an author visit to the school to talk about Scot's Poetry. The school works with a parent volunteer to maintain the school garden, have formed a digital leaders group and are registering with digital schools. They are engaging with the local business community in a world of work fair to learn the different skills needed in different areas of employment and the Career Education Standard is a focus at assembly.

Choice of QI: 3.3 Developing creativity and skills for life and learning

- Creativity skills
- Digital innovation
- Digital literacy
- Increasing employability skills

- The school has recently undertaken an audit of parents and staff's understanding of creativity skills. Staff have attended relevant professional learning related to creativity. This is supporting them to develop a deeper awareness of creativity skills and how schools can develop these. Developing the Young Workforce is a key feature on the school improvement plan. Children in P7 are developing their understanding of the world of work through a cluster transition project. Teachers are supporting children to develop their understanding of skills for learning, life and work through regular discussions and in their pupil profiles. The school has developed a number of very positive partnerships with local employers. This is supporting children to develop their understanding of the skills required for a range of jobs. The school should continue to develop the range of partnerships with employers to provide children with a rich range of future job opportunities about which they can learn. Teachers should look to develop their classroom practice to provide children with increased opportunities to develop their confidence in taking increased leadership of their learning. Children should be encouraged, and supported, to be imaginative risk-takers to support them to develop an understanding of how to identify the skills they want to learn and how to learn them.

- The school ran a science and technology week with children in P4 to P7 participating in a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics project. This involved them developing their coding skills, through the University of Highlands and Islands. Children have opportunities to use computers in classes. Teachers are at the early stages of using laptops to develop children's IT skills. Staff now need to develop their confidence and skills in using a range of digital resources. This will support them to help children to develop their digital skills. The staff should seek to use the children's existing knowledge and skills to allow them to lead their learning. Children should be given increased opportunities to transfer their skills across a range of areas of the curriculum. Teachers should continue to discuss with children which skills they are learning and where else they might be applied. Encouraging pupils to offer their opinion will support them to develop solutions to problems in constructive and helpful ways. Children are developing their awareness of how to keep themselves safe when online. Teachers should encourage children to continue to develop and share these skills. Children should be encouraged to identify when digital solutions are appropriate and how these might prove preferable to other solutions.

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.