Summarised inspection findings

Edinbane Primary School

The Highland Council

3 December 2024

Key contextual information

Edinbane Primary School is a rural school in the North West of Skye, situated 14 miles from the main town of Portree. The school services the catchment of Edinbane village and the surrounding areas of Greshornish and Kildonan. At the time of inspection, there were nine children across P1 to P6 on the school roll. Currently, there are no children at P5 or P7 attending the school. Children across all stages are taught together in a single multi-stage class. The school benefits from a playground, football pitch, shelter and access to a community garden. This academic year, the local authority has agreed with the Care Inspectorate that the nursery class will be treated as inactive and is currently not operational.

The headteacher has overall leadership responsibility for Edinbane Primary School and has a shared headship with another school and nursery class within the Associated School Group (ASG). The headteacher is supported by an acting principal teacher one day a week. Staff and children from both schools work together regularly.

There has been considerable instability with many changes to staffing and the senior leadership team over the last five years. The school has experienced a high number of supply teachers on short-term temporary contracts. The headteacher has been in post in an acting capacity from January 2024 and appointed permanently in May 2024.

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	

■ Staff, children and families have established highly-positive relationships which contribute to the caring, happy and inclusive ethos across the school. Children are proud to be part of the Edinbane family and are very supportive of each other. Children and parents have a strong understanding of the school values of 'friendliness, respect, independence, kindness, gentleness and enjoyment'. All children feel safe and valued. They welcome visitors enthusiastically to the school. The headteacher leads by example and values the partnerships and support across the community. She is involving all stakeholders in reviewing the school's vision and aims to ensure they are ambitious and reflect well the current school context.

■ The newly formed staff team are developing a robust understanding of children's strengths and next steps in learning. They work closely together, drawing upon the expertise of a peripatetic additional support teacher. Together, they look at children's progress and identify and address any gaps in learning. This detailed overview of each child should support the new team well to plan learning at the right level of difficulty for all children. Through the effective leadership of the headteacher, staff have already evaluated accurately the strengths and gaps in learning children have. They are a strong team and in good position to continue to improve children's experiences and accelerate children's progress in learning.

- The headteacher is using the local authority draft learning and teaching guidance to support staff to develop a bespoke policy for the school. The class teacher uses best practice from the document to structure lessons which is significantly improving the quality and consistency of children's experiences. Support staff also provide valued and effective support to individuals and groups. In all lessons, teachers provide clear explanations and instructions when introducing new learning. They use visual displays well on the interactive board to provide new information. Children listen well to lesson introductions and adult instructions. They are responsible learners, sustaining their concentration well.

- In all lessons, teachers plan opportunities for children to work in groups. The class teacher uses group expectations and roles to ensure all children have the opportunity to contribute purposefully to tasks. This provides children of different ages and stages with increased responsibilities appropriate to their abilities. As a result, children develop skills in communication and teamwork. Staff have rightly identified the need for all children to have regular opportunities to work independently. This will support children to experience increased challenge and demonstrate their learning across the curriculum. This would also support children to apply their skills in reading and writing to a wider range of contexts.

- In all lessons, teachers share the purpose of learning with children. Where appropriate, they link learning to real-life contexts and share the relevance of learning. Children confidently express their ideas and opinions during lessons. In all lessons, teachers use questioning well to check children's understanding, providing additional information or instruction for those who require it. They are developing the use of open-ended questions to encourage children to explain their thinking. Teachers use 'talk partners' effectively to help children identify how they will be successful. This group and class discussion is improving children's ability to talk knowledgably about their learning. Building upon the introduction of personal learning targets, teachers should continue to help children articulate the skills they develop as a result of tasks.

- With changes to staffing in recent years, the quality of written feedback has been variable. In effective examples, teachers provide clear and direct feedback based on the key learning points. They highlight where children have been successful and where improvement is required. As a team, staff should agree the approach to feedback to ensure this is consistently high-quality for all children.

- Teachers use very well interactive boards and laptop devices to enhance learning and teaching. In all lessons, they create stimulating and engaging visual supports to help children develop subject specific language. Children use laptop devices confidently to research subjects as part of their learning. They experience personalisation and choice when selecting the context of their research. Staff could increase the use of digital devices to support independent learning and ensure all experiences are fully accessible.

- Children have regular opportunities to investigate, explore and use the outdoor spaces and loose parts. Children are highly-motivated during these experiences and demonstrate their skills in teamwork, communication, problem solving and decision making. As staff develop the school's learning and teaching policy for their context, it will be important to identify clearly which approaches should be used for different learning experiences and stages. For example, to further build in opportunities for younger children to engage in planned and purposeful play to practise skills in different contexts.

- The headteacher has introduced progressive planning tools for all curricular areas. Teachers now use the local authority progression pathways to plan longer term teaching and learning. They develop medium term plans and use the views of children to shape learning contexts.

Helpfully, teachers share this information with parents through issuing a termly overview. This supports parents to understand the key skills children should develop as part of their learning. Teachers use short term planning to identify the key skills they want children to learn as a result of experiences. This coordinated approach now supports teachers very well to plan learning that is progressive and appropriately challenging. As approaches to planning are embedded, this should support continuity of learning and help teachers increase the pace of learning for children. This will also provide a stronger evidence base from which to evaluate the progress children are making.

■ Staff are at the early stages of using a range of formal and standardised assessments to support professional judgements, including engaging with national Benchmarks. The headteacher and teachers meet termly to discuss planning and the progress children are making, primarily in literacy and numeracy. Through these robust discussions, staff have a very accurate picture of children's strengths, next steps and where there are important gaps in learning. The headteacher has a very clear plan to address children's gaps in learning to support accelerated progress in literacy and numeracy. This is based on a range of valuable data and evidence including agreed baseline assessments.

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. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

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

Attainment in literacy and numeracy
- At the time of inspection, the school roll comprised children at P1, P2, P3, P4 and P6 with no children at the P5 or P7 stages. As the school roll comprises a small number of children at these stages, attainment and progress will be expressed in 'overall' statements, rather than specific year groups or Curriculum for Excellence levels. This is to ensure the identity of individuals is not disclosed.

- Overall, attainment across the school in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is satisfactory. Children have gaps in core skills in literacy and numeracy which slows their progress. Children who face barriers to learning are making steady progress towards meeting their individual targets.

Attainment in literacy and English
- Overall, children's progress in reading and listening and talking is satisfactory. Children's progress in writing is weak. Children have not had opportunities to write regularly for a range of genres. The newly formed staff team are highly-trained in the teaching of writing and have developed plans to address this area as a priority.

Listening and talking
- All children listen attentively during lessons most of the time. They are respectful, giving time and space for peers to share their opinions. Younger children are developing their ability to contribute to class discussions. Older children follow instructions and provide considered guidance and instruction to younger children to support their learning. All children would benefit from planned, progressive and increasingly challenging experiences to allow them to transfer these skills to a range of contexts.

Reading
- Children enjoy reading together and sharing stories with their peers. Younger children use sounds and blends to read simple words and sentences. They talk about key events within a story and find information from a simple text. Older children use evidence from the text to answer literal and inferential questions. Children now need access to more challenging texts and regular opportunities to read aloud to develop their fluency.

Writing
- Younger children use sounds and blends to attempt to write unfamiliar words. They write simple sentences, a capital letter and full stop. Older children write most sentences with capitals and full stops included accurately. They use paragraphs to structure their work although this is not consistently applied. All children now need daily opportunities to write for a variety of purposes. They need time and space to write extended pieces and learn about

the features of different genres. Children should also apply a consistent standard to written work across the curriculum to practise and apply learning in a range of contexts.

Numeracy and mathematics

■ Overall, children's progress in numeracy and mathematics is satisfactory. Children at all stages have gaps in their learning. Children would benefit from more regular opportunities to revisit taught mathematical concepts. This will help to deepen and consolidate their learning. They should also experience daily mental agility sessions to develop a sharp recall of number concepts.

Number, money and measure

■ Younger children develop well their understanding of numbers and the value of each digit appropriate to their stage of development. They order numbers accurately and use a number line to add and subtract appropriately challenging numbers. Older children use known times tables and understand the link between multiplication and division. Younger children tell the time in o'clock and half-past using digital and analogue clocks. Older children read quarter past and to using analogue and digital clocks but require support to work out time durations. Older children require regular and more challenging calculations. All children would benefit from revisiting concepts more often to build a secure understanding of the strategies required to solve different types of problems.

Shape, position and movement

■ Younger children name a few two-dimensional (2D) shapes and three-dimensional (3D) objects. They sort objects based on their properties, for example, those that roll and those that do not. They recognise items in their environment that match regular 3D objects. Older children state simple properties of 3D objects such as edges, vertices and corners. Older children would benefit from investigating and building nets to develop a deeper understanding of the properties of more complex objects.

Information handling

■ Younger children use tally marks accurately to sort, organise and count different groups of objects. They display information using pictographs and bar graphs. Children answer questions through reading information from these charts. Older children are beginning to display information on graphs with different scales. They would benefit from access to a wider range of data, using more challenging scales. In addition, children should learn how technology can support them to display data using different charts and graphs.

Attainment over time

■ The headteacher recognises that previous professional judgment about children's attainment was not reliable or robust. Previously, children's progress and attainment were not tracked and monitored regularly. Therefore, the school cannot yet accurately demonstrate children's progress over time.

■ The headteacher has introduced a robust toolkit to track children's progress in literacy and numeracy. She uses strong partnership working with staff and educational partners to build a reliable overview of children's attainment and progress through the use of diagnostic assessments. The staff team have identified accurately that the pace of learning and challenge provided to children needs to be increased. Teachers now use effective evidence to plan interventions and address gaps in learning.

■ Attendance in recent years is in line with or above national averages. The attendance average for session 23-24 was 91.2% which is in line with national averages. The small numbers of children attending the school can result in significant fluctuation of figures year on year. There

are robust procedures in place to ensure children's safety if they are absent from school. Persistent absence of 10% or more by individual children is not an issue in the school. Senior leaders work with parents to develop clear plans to improve the attendance or late coming of children when required.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Staff encourage all children to share their views on the life and work of the school. For example, children confidently identify where resources or improvements to the playground need to be made. They take responsibility for identifying ways they can fundraise or link with community partners to address any needs. This helps children develop skills in finance and communication.

- Children and staff have a strong sense of belonging to the wider community. They contribute well to sustainability through their role as part of the school ECO group. In addition, they look after the local environment through regular litter picks and development of spaces in the local community garden. The Parent Council are highly supportive of events which support children and enhance their role in the community. They link well with local partners to source grants and funding to widen children's experiences and achievements. For example, the Parent Council fund weekly music lessons for all children in P2 to P7 which enhances children's musical skills.

- There are a wide range of activities in and out of school for children to engage in, such annual swimming lessons and high-quality expressive art events through dance and music initiatives. This is helping children to develop their confidence and life skills in a range of contexts outside the classroom. The headteacher has developed a tracking tool to capture the wide range of experiences children take part in. Staff encourage children to share their achievements from home and celebrate them at weekly Star of the Week assemblies and during termly cluster assemblies.

Equity for all learners

- Staff have a shared aim to ensure that all children are provided with a wide range of engaging learning experiences. This includes a clear focus on social inclusion. As part of this, staff have established an effective partnership with their cluster school. Parents are highly supportive of this approach and see the benefit for children in mixing with a wider peer group. Staff seek as many opportunities as possible to involve children in a wide range of activities and projects, drawing upon the expertise of visiting specialists for events and blocks of learning.

- All staff have a good understanding of the socio-economic circumstances of their children and families. Senior leaders use Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) to enhance staffing to support children who require support with their learning. Through the effective leadership of the headteacher, staff now have a clear plan to address gaps in attainment between specific cohorts of children. They need to closely track how effectively they are closing gaps and accelerating the progress of children in literacy and numeracy.

- The Parent Council are proactive in sourcing funding to support all children to access and take part fully in experiences beyond the school. Where transportation and locality provide additional challenge, they provide transportation at no cost to the school or families. This valuable support ensures all children can access experiences that peers from across the island do. This also ensures that no child misses out due to individual circumstances.

Other relevant evidence

■ The headteacher works closely with parents to plan the spend of PEF. With changes to staffing, she should continue to involve all stakeholders in determining and evaluating the use of PEF to close attainment gaps.

■ Staff plan two hours of physical education (PE) weekly. Staff and children walk twice a week to the village hall and benefit from access to this resource to provide appropriate space for learning PE. Teachers plan using the newly introduced local authority progression pathways. They benefit from clear guidance and context specific information to plan high-quality PE sessions. The headteacher should continue to monitor the quality of children's experiences in PE to ensure they are of a consistently high quality.

■ Children have regular access to texts for personal reading through the school library and visiting mobile library. This helps to build a culture of reading in the school. Children, staff and parents have plans to develop the reading culture further through investing sourced funding in enhancing texts to read for pleasure. They also have plans to develop the library space to provide cosy nooks and spaces for a relaxing reading experience.

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.