

Standards and Quality Report

2021/22

APPLECROSS PRIMARY & NURSERY



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HIGHLAND COUNCIL | APPLECROSS PRIMARY SCHOOL & NURSERY

This report is provided to families and partners to identify our achievements this session. The next steps in our improvement journey are also outlined.

Throughout the year we continuously evaluate what we do and how it makes a difference to our learners. We want to know what is working well for our school community and what needs further improvement.

Our children and young people are actively consulted and involved in this process. We also give staff, parents/carers, and other partners the opportunity to participate in discussions and activities in order to shape our improvement journey.

When we develop our improvement projects, we use key questions at planned review times throughout the session in order to know how well we are progressing towards achieving these positive outcomes and changes.

Our School and Nursery

Applecross Primary and Nursery is located on the beautiful west coast of Scotland. The school catchments cover rural areas of the Highlands, so many children arrive via bus or car. The associated school's group (ASG) is Plockton High, based in Plockton. Children in Plockton High from Applecross, travel every Monday and stay in the hostel until Friday. Applecross Primary and Nursery is clustered with Lochcarron Primary, which is located approximately 50 minutes' drive away, over the famous Bealach na Bà mountain road.

Applecross Primary has an EM P1-7 class of 12 pupils. It was granted the opportunity to have a new Gaelic Medium class start for session 22/23. Unfortunately, we were not successful in recruiting a GM teacher at the end of session 21/22, so this has led to a delay in this provision being started. We are hopeful that the position will be successfully recruited for, before October 2022. The nursery is a predominantly outdoor nursery with 4 children.

The nursery is virtually fully outdoors; the only exception being the indoor lunch, which is provided in the school. There is a Polycrub which was erected by parental volunteers, which provides shelter, an area to read, listen to stories and engage in floor-based games and activities. There is an outdoor toilet, a variety of climbing apparatus and a hen coop! The outdoor area has been developed by the early years staff, with help from parent volunteers, and is continually morphing according to what the children wish to do.

Over the past year Applecross and Lochcarron Cluster has worked together to try to recover from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The HWB of children has been a priority, along with targeted focus on literacy and numeracy. However, Covid 19 was still very much around and caused difficulties during session 21/22, with high staff and child absences during several periods of the year, which impacted on teaching and learning, and attendance. The nursery did not have the management teacher support to help with the curriculum support, which impacted on the early years staff. There has also been a change in management as a new head teacher was appointed in January 2022.

Applecross Primary benefits from having a very supportive parent council, who actively fundraise to enhance the children's experiences of school. The parent council assisted with funding to allow the P6-7 children to take part in the first residential trip for 3 years, which was a resounding success.

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Kind, Confident, Caring, Supporting, Positive

Our Schools Vision, Values and Aims

Applecross

School Vision, Values and Aims

Our collective nursery and school vision is:

'To create a secure, happy and friendly environment where all children are encouraged to develop academically, socially, emotionally and creatively to the best of their ability'

Our collective aims are:

We want our pupils to enjoy challenge, to cope with change, to be confident and to be able to contribute.

We want them to think for themselves, put others first, and develop an understanding of local, national and global issues.

Our school values are:

Perseverance

Self-control

Thoughtfulness

Honesty

Friendship

Pupil Voice: what is working well in our school?

Our children and young people identified the following strengths for our school this session:

Nursery

- "Climbing frame because I get to climb and play on it."
- "I like going on the swing."
- "I like bringing my dolls"

P1-7

- "Working together" (P2)
- "Helping each other" (P2)
- "Showing kindness" (P4)
- "Good fun!" (P2)
- "The Knowledge" (P4)
- "I like the food!" (P7)

World Book Day



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Outdoor Literacy Day



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Pupil Voice: what changes would you like to see made?

Our children and young people identified the following changes they would like to see and the difference these changes could make.

Nursery

- "I don't like midges"
- "I don't like monster stories."

P1-7

- "School should be made of chocolate" (P2)
- "Do more things outside – learning outside." (P7)
- "Outdoor activities e.g. tree planting, pond making" (P7)
- "More maths at school" (P1)
- "Forest school" (P1)
- "Decorating the outside of the school." (P3)
- "Organising more class trips." (P7)

Our Improvement Journey Headlines Session 2021/22

These projects are linked to the vision and priorities for Scottish Education based on delivering excellence and equity. Parent/Carer information is available [here](#).

Improvement Project 1: Recovery of Health and Wellbeing

Primary focus: School and ELC improvement

Year of Project: 2

Purpose: To rebuild children's confidence and resilience after the disruption of the Covid 19 pandemic, providing opportunities for children to express themselves, talk about their feelings and develop social skills and interactions.

Progress:

Link to NIF – Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing

- Screening took place using HWB wheel. Discussions were held and feelings were discussed. This enabled children to have open communication with peers and teachers. The children expressed how they had felt lonely and isolated at home during the pandemic; they had missed friends, structure and school in general. The open discussions gave them a voice. The Leuven Scale was used as a guide to emotional wellbeing.
- An extra support worker was employed in nursery to support the EYPs, to help with the legacy left by Covid 19 isolations. Routines have been established and will be embedded in session 22/23
- Individual HWB targets were part of the termly targets set by each pupil. These were evaluated termly and discussed with class teachers, which informed planning of HWB focussed lessons.
- The outdoor 'Shieling' provides a perfect location for the nursery children to learn. The learning is child led and continually changes according to the individual child.

Good progress was made in this area, which built upon work which started as soon as the children returned to school after the lockdowns. A school and nursery focus for the new session will be embedding SHANARRI and looking at the whole school ethos – starting with a new vision, aims and values for the future.

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Impact:

- Most pupils are starting to talk about their feelings and how they impact on their school life.
- HWB wheel introduced as a tool for children and staff to use as an indicator of vulnerable aspects
- Most pupils demonstrate more confidence when working with their peers
- Almost all pupils excited to be able to come together and share their learning with parents
- Almost all pupils happy to be involved in trips outside of school with their peers – social skills being developed again, and strong friendships being formed

Next steps:

- Use HWB evaluative wheel for target setting and learning walls – termly (1/2, 3, 4)
- Class displays on SHANARRI wellbeing indicators to help embed these as new school aims
- Involve pupils in planning and leading events
- Revisit school vision and values with HWB and positive mindset in mind
- Assemblies to focus on SHANARRI
- Continue to use the Benchmarks in HWB for assessments and achievement of a level.
- Plan for regular parental involvement – open afternoons, outdoor learning sessions, pupil led fundraising events
- New management teacher for curriculum support in the nursery to be in place for session 22/23
- Embed nursery routines and continue to develop outdoor area

Improvement Project 2: Recovery of Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Primary focus: Curriculum and assessment

Year of Project: 2

Purpose: to focus on recovery of learning, teaching and assessment (Including new opportunities with digital learning revealed by Covid 19 situation/remote learning)

Progress:

Link to NIF – Improvement in attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy

- Pupil council set up and decisions made by children on focus points chosen by them. Discussions held around developing the outside areas and fundraising for the school
- Literacy and numeracy linked to developing young workforce, with collaborations across the class
- Numeracy linked to Hydroponics, funded by 'Food for Thought' grant.
- Numeracy and Literacy developed through social enterprise businesses - 'Stubborn Sheep Designs' tea towels; designed and sold by children
- Numeracy and literacy woven into real situations to engage the learners and develop sense of self-worth and self-improvement.

Developing numeracy and literacy skills through hands-on activities and outdoor learning was started and will continue to be developed now that all restrictions have been removed. This will allow for pupil led learning, which will lead to improved engagement from pupils and parents.

Impact:

- Pupil led enterprise businesses built upon from previous year (Stubborn Sheep Designs)
- Most ASN children more settled and relaxed in their environment leading to more engagement in their learning and as a result, most are making greater progress according to their own potential.

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- Almost all pupils accessing the outdoor learning opportunities, promoting different ways of learning such as play-based learning and creative thinking, leading to development of higher order thinking.
- Almost all pupils have sense of self-worth, more confidence and better motivation; observations demonstrate children are regularly level 5 on Leuven Scale.
- Most pupils demonstrated problem solving, accounting, profit and loss in a practical way. Numeracy skills developed through hands-on approach
- Most pupils taking ownership of improvement in own work, which has resulted in an increased self-confidence and awareness of their own progress in learning.
- Almost all pupils working together with peers to share and develop numeracy and literacy skills leading to higher-level thinking skills using active listening and effective speaking.

After the difficulties of Covid 19 restrictions, parents have expressed their relief at being able to take a more active part in their children's learning.

Next steps:

- Increase and improve Gaelic signage around the school
- Develop the Gaelic language through outdoor learning and whole school events.
- Continue to embed the use of Gaelic throughout a variety of curricular activities and at different parts of the day
- Staff to work together within the cluster as stage partners, sharing ideas and collaborating to enhance children's learning (with focus on writing)
- All staff to take part in Writing Moderation throughout session 22/23 – 4 sessions across year
- Monitoring of learning samples in writing by HT and PT
- All staff to take part in Steven Graham Writing – 5 sessions across the school year
- Joint planning sessions across the Cluster for stage groups P1-4 and P5-7 with a focus on literacy.
- Identify gaps in reading resources; books, plays, high interest low ability books resources etc.
- Work with pupils to gather views and plan incentives.
- Breadth, Depth and Challenge within the curriculum to be a focus across nursery to P7

Improvement Project 3: Attainment in session 20/21 (focusing on identifying new or widened gaps caused by the Covid-19 situation)

Primary focus: Performance Information

Year of Project: 2

Purpose: Focussing on identifying new or widened gaps caused by the Covid-19 situation

Progress:

- Termly learning and teaching conversations took place as part of pupils setting and assessing their own targets
- Digital communications were used, which fed into PLPs
- Formative assessment used by teachers to determine any gaps in learning.
- Tracking inputted on Seemis regularly
- Children requiring support identified through ongoing assessment and appropriate support put in place
- Input from ASNT on a consultative basis in supporting the children, has ensured focus on supporting children with attainment gaps

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Impact:

The National Average for combined Literacy at P1, 4 & 7 was 67% (for 2021) and in numeracy, 75%.

P1

- 100% of 4 pupils achieved the level in listening & talking
- 75% of 4 pupils achieved the level in reading
- 75% of 4 pupils achieved the level in writing
- 100% of 4 pupils achieved the level in numeracy
- The gaps can be attributed due to ASN and not to FSM/multiple deprivation

P4

- No pupils

P7

- 100% of 3 pupils achieved the level in listening & talking
- 100% of 3 pupils achieved the level in reading
- 100% of 3 pupils achieved the level in writing
- 100% of 3 pupils achieved the level in numeracy

Termly tracking meetings took place between teaching staff and HT in which targets and progress were discussed in detail. Targeted interventions were agreed as a result of these meetings. Focussed target setting and formative assessments informed planning. Gaps were identified and addressed, with forward plans for session 2022/23 put in place. Children with literacy difficulties were identified and interventions planned for new session using new intervention tools.

Next steps:

- Termly trackers to be introduced, with discussions held between HT and CT
- Standardised assessments to continue to be used to gather robust data
- Literacy interventions: Progress in Learning, Wasps, Hornets to be put in place for children requiring support in literacy
- Phonological Awareness to be used across all P1-4 children and interventions actioned as and when required
- Moderation across the ASG to be used to inform planning and assessment of children and to determine achievement of a level
- Open afternoon to be held in term 1 with numeracy focus to deliver family learning opportunities
- Open afternoon to be held in term 3 with literacy focus to deliver family learning opportunities
- Monitoring of learning samples in writing, reading and spelling
- Phonics based reading for all – phonic based texts to be introduced to children in upper years with difficulties in reading
- PM Benchmarks to be used to determine new baseline information for literacy
- Develop reading for pleasure- outdoor book corner in poly-crub and class libraries- pupil involvement of choice of books & incentives
- Work with pupils to gather views and develop incentives/events/resourcing- such paired reading, World Book Day

Evaluation of Progress

We believe we have made the following progress this session:

| Quality Indicator | School self-evaluation |
|---|------------------------|
| Leadership of Change | 1.3 Satisfactory |
| Learning, teaching and assessment | 2.3 Satisfactory |
| Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion | 3.1 Good |
| Raising attainment and achievement | 3.2 Good |

Our children and young people believe we have made the following progress this session:

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Theme 1 Our relationships | Very good |
| Theme 2 Our learning and teaching | Good |
| Theme 3 Our school and community | Good |
| Theme 4 Our health and wellbeing | Good |
| Theme 5 Our successes and achievements | Very good |

Our overall evaluation of our school's capacity for continuous improvement is:

We are confident in our capacity for continuous improvement.

Planning Ahead

Full details of the school's 2022/23 improvement priorities and actions are detailed on the school improvement plan, which can be accessed by contacting the school office.