

Standards and Quality Report

HELMSDALE PRIMARY AND NURSERY

SESSION 2021/22



HELMSDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Helmsdale Primary and Nursery

HIGHLAND COUNCIL | OLD CAITHNESS ROAD, HELMSDALE KW8 6JW



In Helmsdale Primary school we are growing to be-
kind, respectful, resilient, motivated, curious, and creative.

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.

Context of Our School

Helmsdale Primary is clustered with Brora Primary (11 miles South) with the Headteacher, Mrs D. McKenzie normally on site 2 days of the week (Tuesday/Thursday).

Helmsdale Primary is part of the Golspie ASG. It serves a large catchment area from Forsinard to Loth. Helmsdale like many rural settings, is a relatively small school. The school is comprised of a Nursery and three composite classes. We offer an early years/childcare setting for 3- and 4-year-olds for the expanded 1140 hours (one of the first schools in the area to pilot this 3 years ago).

Helmsdale has a team of three fulltime teaching staff- Mrs A. Henderson in infants, Mrs S. Taylor (PT) in middle stages (Mr Smith management cover) and Mrs D. Kingston in upper classes (Mrs Gill/Mrs Hannan covered during T2/T3 absence).

A significant number of learners (48.15%) in the school are classed as having ASN as per the [Highland Council staged approach](#) Of children in Nursery- Primary 7 12.9% had a child plan in 2021-2022.

We have a visiting Additional Support Needs Teacher (ASNT) for 1 day per week- Ms Ross. Children with additional support needs are supported mainly within the mainstream classes. Staff consult with ASNT and other agencies such as- Occupational Therapist (OT), Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) to ensure strategies are in place and needs are met to the best of our provision and ability.

Helmsdale Primary school sits within an area of deprivation as per the SIMD index. We have an increasing number of families on low income, which is demonstrated by the amount of PEF (Pupil equity funding) for our small school. During the 2021-2022 session 16.7% of learners signed up to be in receipt of free school meals (Primary 1-4 all automatically eligible through Scottish Government initiative)

We value the good working relationships with families and the wider community. We take pride in being an integral part of the community and make good use of a wide range of local resources. Our expanded outdoor provision continues to be a focus for us in school in terms of use and learning development.

Helmsdale Primary school recognises success both within and out with the school- at assemblies and through class displays and parent pages/profiles. We continue to celebrate positive citizenship and build on the recently developed school values.



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Our School Vision, Values and Aims

(Recently formed alongside second level learners and parents post lockdown)

'It Takes A Village To Raise A Child'

HPS Vision-

Our Vision is to work in partnership with pupils, parents, and the wider community.
Our Vision is to create an inclusive and welcoming environment where learning is exciting, challenging, and relevant and everyone is valued and encouraged to achieve their potential.

HPS Values-

- 🍃 To be kind
- 🍃 To be respectful
- 🍃 To be resilient
- 🍃 To be motivated to achieve our potential
- 🍃 To be curious
- 🍃 To be creative



HPS AIMS

- ❖ To provide a safe, happy and caring environment for learning.
- ❖ To provide stimulating and challenging teaching and learning experiences both within and out with the classroom.
- ❖ To foster effective partnerships between pupils, staff, parents, outside agencies and the wider community, working together to create a cohesive learning environment.
- ❖ To encourage pupil achievement and attainment by developing skills and positive attitudes encouraging successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.
- ❖ To deliver a broad balanced and differentiated curriculum encouraging children to progress at their own pace with appropriate support promoting and encouraging appropriate level of independence and learning skills for the future.
- ❖ To work closely with the schools in the Golspie ASG fostering links with colleagues, monitoring standards, and developing transition.



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Pupil Voice: what is working well in our school?

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

- ✓ *"I like getting dojo points."* (Nursery child)
- ✓ *"We like sharing photos with home."* (P1 learner)
- ✓ *"We work hard and take turns."* (P2 learner)
- ✓ *"Getting outside to do tasks it's good going to the shore and the horseshoe"*



- ✓ *"We are lucky to have the polycrubs, not many schools do."*
(P4 learners)



- ✓ *"We like our work; we enjoy learning about money and places round the world."*
(Primary 4 learner)
- ✓ *"We do Community things and learn from other people- like the river opening."*
(Primary 5 learner)



- ✓ *"We like keeping fit and doing the Daily Mile."* (Primary 6 learner)
- ✓ *"STEM is one of our strengths."* (Primary 7 learner)



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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-
(Information gathered in term 4 of 2021-2022)

🍃 **Children in the ELC stated they would like Mam's Day again in Nursery-**

- Getting parents/carers back in- children want to share their learning journey with their families. Underway now restrictions have lifted.

🍃 **P1/2 stated they would like more craft, games, outdoor activities, cookery, and movement-**

- more active learning this sounds like which is already part of their day, but as a staff we will review how it is done...

🍃 **P3/4 would like more visiting teachers; like science and music. They think it is good to have a variety of people-**

- All class CCR is now covered by PE where it used to be split between 2 teachers (PE/art), most enjoy the long session, but some find it a little too much in the one block.

🍃 **P5/6/7 stated they think we need more after school clubs-**

- Now underway (Active schools, Tuesday sessions).



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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:

Primary focus: School and ELC improvement

Year of Project: 1

Purpose: Improvement in Health and well being (Recovery from Covid-19 impact)

Progress and impact:

- New school vision/values and aims were launched and introduced to all pupils at whole school assemblies.
- Increased use of visuals and de-escalation techniques adopted throughout the school and all classes regularly engage in emotional check-ins (some referring to the Emotion Works cogs from the Covid recovery programme)
- There was an increased focus on Outdoor Learning with a purpose- Go Wild Highland sessions with Ian Paterson and outdoor learning sessions through Sheiling Project outreach worker were bought in and loved by Staff and pupils alike as demonstrated in the feedback – being outdoors had a positive effect on all.
- PEF support had a health & wellbeing focus for a significant portion of time and the ASNT teacher completed Resilient Kids with a target group to prepare for transition and to get learners into a better head space.
- Staff strived to give emotions support as best they could; Youth Mindfulness-trainer couldn't deliver. CSW no support given this session (staff shortage), PMHW is supporting a child but again very thinly spread across the area.
- Programme of activities –Daily Mile, football coaching, rugby coaching, yoga, continues and is enjoyed by pupils- very limited but schools sport programme has resumed- took part in Cross Country and Football competitions.

Overall good progress has been made in this area with a wide variety of activities delivered to all with positive feedback and engagement from pupils.
Support from parents to volunteer is increasing to offer more activities out with school.

Next steps:

- Embed Vision/Values and Aims across whole school community.
- Introduce 'rights/responsibilities' focus through assemblies and sign up to Unicef rights respecting schools.
- Whole school engagement in 'Do Be Mindful programme'- starting Aug '22 with staff training blocks initially.
- Wellbeing surveys carried out at all stages- to track motivation and wellbeing.
- Full use of visuals and de-escalation strategies so all pupils are included, not just those with ASN.
- Build on parental support and engagement- website with advice and support/ encourage wider audience to parent council meets- actively encourage new members.
- Further building of school's sports programme- increase tournament opportunities.
- Continue and develop outdoor learning, look to get accreditation for this in some way- eg John Muir award/other.
- Seek CSW support for specific needs (opportunities were minimal due to staffing issues)



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Improvement Project 2:

Primary focus: Curriculum and assessment

Year of Project: 1

Purpose: Recovery of learning, teaching and assessment

Progress and impact:

- We continued to focus on the recovery elements of the curriculum, whilst at times still being affected by localised Covid outbreaks which closed down classes (upper stages were hit particularly hard with several periods of online learning).
- Staff have worked tirelessly adapting teaching and sourcing resources to ensure equity in classes with increased needs and level 4 learners- completing specific training to enhance their practice.
- Benchmarks and Highland progressions are referred to at all stages to support planning and assessment so there is continuity across all classes.
- The curriculum has been reviewed- any areas that need refreshed have been highlighted- alternative reading schemes were sought and as a school and ASG we are reviewing Literacy next session.
- Active play from Nursery up includes Literacy and Numeracy and is in line with Realising the Ambition- Nursery confident with this, p1/2 also.
- Children's interests are followed where applicable at all stages and learners are enthusiastic over this ownership. This has led to some great STEM work in upper primary and some in-depth Interdisciplinary learning in the middle stages. Learners are included in setting success criteria where applicable.
- A key focus of post covid recovery was on health and wellbeing and building resilience, many children were not in a suitable place to learn so a significant amount of time was spent on reiterating the need to be kind/understanding of others- 'Maslow before Bloom'
- Training for staff to access materials and store /share info on new platform- 'Sharepoint' was held.

Overall steady progress was made in this area, blocks of staff and pupil absences due to isolation/other hampered progress somewhat.

Staff are getting back on track with formal assessment records in pupil profiles.

Next steps:

- 🌱 Continue to focus on closing the attainment gap in literacy and maths through focus groups with PEF support worker.
- 🌱 Follow SIP for curriculum focus and ensure all areas of the curriculum are being covered again (1 + 2 languages).
- 🌱 Continue to refer to importance of play and ensure Realising the Ambition is used as a core document in ELC.
- 🌱 Roll out use of Sharepoint across the school and with all teaching/Early years staff to ensure relevant information is available to the whole school community.
- 🌱 Staff to have pupil progress and attainment meetings with HT/ASNT.
- 🌱 Set baseline assessments across all stages for all core curricular areas.
- 🌱 Maintain class pages/web page updates and build back work on profiling.
- 🌱 Have set dates for newsletters and more regular parent emails.
- 🌱 Build back open mornings/parent visit opportunities and increased engagement in commenting on pupil work.



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- ASG work on moderation and assessments to ensure consistency in awarding achievement of a level.

Improvement Project 3:

Primary focus: Performance Information

Year of Project: 2

Purpose: Closing the attainment gap

Progress and impact:

- Termly reviews of pupil progress were carried out to quickly identify any attainment gaps and how best to support individuals/focus groups- works well as small school so adjustments can be made- restricted by only 1 day per week ASNT.
- Focussed support from Action for Children worker and other relevant agencies eg PMHW is working well and there are good relationships. However limited SLT visits and no CSW time this session.
- Staff worked closely with ASN teacher to flag up any testing needs- specifically with literacy difficulties. PEF support meant we could target specific groups using resources and interventions such as 5-minute box, apples & pears/dancing bears and Truggs reading activities.
- Keeping track of progress improved; to allow us to monitor progress and pick up any dips- paper tracking moving online next session.
- Quality learning and teaching- sharing of good approaches at ASG level and within own Staff- extended Staff absence for one class led to 6 months of supply. Covid meant very restricted ASG work.

Next steps:

- Maintain more comprehensive calendar for tracking and recording.
- Analysis of data to continue to be key in identifying interventions and next steps.
- Shift to all tracking being saved online- Sharepoint.
- ASG calendar planned for next session.
- Staffing back up to full cohort again.
- ASNT time upped to 2 days which should help significantly.
- Action for Children PEF support to continue – great asset.
- PMHW to continue enhanced support for specific learners.

All of the above is a boost to morale for everyone and a positive shift to getting back to 'normal' school life at Helmsdale Primary School.



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Evaluation of Progress: Primary (HGIOS4)

We believe we have made the following progress in the Primary setting this session:

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

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

Theme 1 Our relationships	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	Satisfactory

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

We are confident in our capacity for continuous improvement.



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Evaluation of Progress: Nursery (HGIOELC)

We believe we have made the following progress in the ELC setting this session:

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

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

We are confident in our capacity for continuous improvement.



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