

Standards and Quality Report

2021/22



HALKIRK PRIMARY SCHOOL

HIGHLAND COUNCIL | BRAAL TERRACE, HALKIRK CAITHNESS, KW12 6YN - 01847 831246



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

The current role of Halkirk Primary is 101 pupils in 5 classes. There is a Partner Centre Nursery on the premises. The school serves the village of Halkirk and an extensive rural area. Halkirk is a thriving village with high rates of employment. There has been a recent decline of new houses being built/sold which has impacted on the amount of families coming to Halkirk. Halkirk and Halkirk Primaries clustered in August 2017 and then came under new management in August 2018. The Head Teacher is supported by a permanent Principal Teacher at Halkirk and an Acting Principal Teacher at Halkirk. The school and village benefits from funding from the local wind farms of Achlachan, Bad á Cheò and H.D.B.F. Halkirk Primary was not part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge. The school's performance in Maths and Reading is above the Highland average. There are currently 5 pupils with FSM.

There have been some changes to staffing this session. This session there have been 4 full time teaching staff (one who is a Probationer) and one job share. A new ASNT has been appointed to Halkirk Primary this session. This has had an impact in that continuity has been comprised as a settling in period was required. This is particularly insignificant as there are a number of emotional and behavioural issues within the school. Although the staff have worked hard to support these children it is an additional challenge for the ASN Teacher.

The school's Janitorial hours were reduced to 12 hours over 3 days last session (2019/20) causing a number of challenges and this has continued to cause some issues since then (2020/21). A member of staff has kindly offered to open classrooms first thing in the morning. The challenge of dealing with issues such as sickness and waste continues to be an ongoing problem. The Clerical covers Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and half day Friday and temporarily is covering the vacant Clerical post at Halkirk for one day a week. The Clerical is an excellent support to the school. However, having no support on a Thursday and Friday afternoon is an issue regarding phone calls, manning the door, etc.

Improvements this year have been: Realising Ambition, Outdoor Learning and Health & Wellbeing. Halkirk Primary School also gained their Silver Award for Rights Respecting Schools.

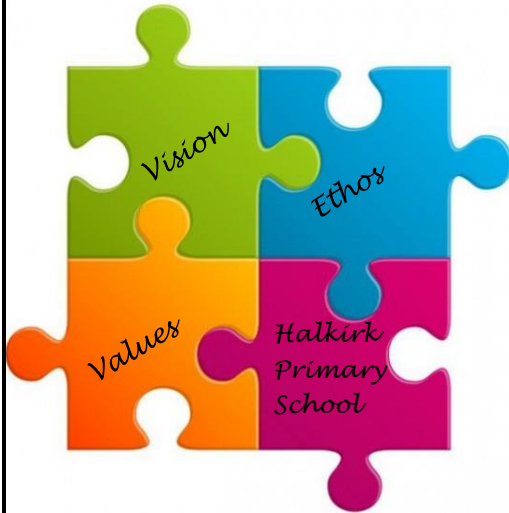
Our School Vision, Values and Aims

Vision



“Working Together to inspire Learning and Achievement for All”

Ethos



Happy
Active
Learners for Life
Kind
Interested
Responsible
Knowledgeable



At Halkirk, our purpose is clear. We create and improve the physical, social and intellectual conditions needed to deliver an effective learning environment, which nurtures our children’s talents. As a Rights Respecting School, we put the Rights of the Child at the heart of everything we do. We work hard to ensure that all children feel valued, respected, and safe and secure. We continue to develop our school so all have a voice and a feeling of belonging

Through this ongoing process, we encourage excellence, share success and enable potential.

We help to prepare our confident pupils for successful learning pathways, enabling them to become effective contributors and responsible citizens within the community of Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland and beyond.



Pupil Voice: what is working well in our school?

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

	P5 – 7	P1 -4
Our Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils get on really well with each other. • Pupils get on very well with adults in our school. • Can go to adult if we have a problem. • Can speak to our parents, P.S.A or other trusted adult or Playground Leader if we have a problem. • We get the opportunity to have a say in our school. • Adults listen to us. • Everyone is treated fairly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils get on with each other. • Pupils get on well with the adults. • Can go to a Teacher, P.S.A, Playground Leader or at Couch Chat if we have a problem. • We get to choose things. • Adults listen to us. • There are no favourites.
Our Learning and Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal choice in Topic, Writing work and Gym. • Choice in reading book. • S.C and L.I for each lesson. • Targets. • KATs. • Good help from teacher. • Interesting books and good games. • Clevertouch Board and Chromebooks in the classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice in what we learn sometimes. • Targets. • Teachers help us when we are stuck. • Good Toys. • Nice classroom with pictures. • iPads
Our School and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements – picnic benches, fixed. • We feel safe with, Fire Practice, Teachers, Class Charter, Safety Rules, CCTV and Children's Rights. • Community knows what is happening in our school through newsletters, Seesaw, newspaper, Facebook and posters. • The school dining hall is big. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New improvements should be games painted on playground and more playground toys. • We feel safe with Teachers protecting us, good behaviour, we work together and we have people to talk to. We have fences around the school. • Community knows what is happening in our school through Seesaw, photos in paper and we take part in Community events like the Gala Week.

<p>Our Health and Wellbeing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievements and successes shared and celebrated in front of the class. • Achievements from clubs put in our Profiles. • Access to water all day. • Healthy options for our break and lunch. • Encouraged to bring healthy food to school. • Lessons about keeping our bodies healthy. • Fruity Friday. • SNAG. • Health and Wellbeing topics. • Opportunity to speak to someone about our feelings. • Note or gmail to teacher if unhappy or worried. • Talk to friends if unhappy. • Talk to a member of staff if worried. • Couch Chat • We have two P.E sessions a week. • Daily Mile • Swimming lessons. • Outside break and lunch. • Outdoor social time. • Outdoor area. • Our Mental Health is looked after. • SHANARRI wheel. • Check-ins • Wellbeing topics • Mental Health Week • Circle Time • Mental Health Strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificates and medals shown to class. • Certificates handed out at Assembly • Healthy snacks from Cook. • Fruity Friday. • Talk to teacher if sad. • Talk to another adult if sad. • Fresh air at playtime and break. • P.E inside and outside. • Daily Mile. • Outdoor area. • Teacher asks us if we feel ok.
<p>Our Successes and Achievements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our successes and achievements are celebrated and recognised in our Profiles and feedback in our jotters. • Celebrations at Assembly. • Golden Time Reward • Sharing achievements with class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profiles. • Golden Time. • Sharing Achievements in class. • Targets set with Teacher. • Lunchtime club • After School club. • Youth Club. • Rainbows • Tang Soo Do • Football • Clubs in Thurso

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificates, cups and medals awarded at special times of the year. • We share our skills as Digital Leaders. • We have P7 buddies. • Playground Leaders. • Classroom responsibilities. • Pupil Voice groups. • Learning conversations with Teacher. • Targets set and agreed with Class Teacher. • Targets and next steps in Profiles. • Opportunity to participate in Lunchtime Sports Clubs with Jay (Highlife Highland). • Multi-sports club after school. • Youth Club in Halkirk. • Tang Soo Do in Halkirk • Football in Halkirk • Guides and Brownies in Halkirk • Pony Club in Halkirk area. • Choir in Halkirk • Clubs in Thurso. • Music opportunities at school. 	
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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.

	P4 – 7	P1 -3
Our Relationships	No changes required	No changes required
Our Learning and Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New toys • Update equipment • New books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New toys • Better devices • Box that more than one can plug into an ipad so can listen with friends. • New books
Our School and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New footballs • More Netballs • More toys • More things for P7 age • New picnic benches • Painted classrooms • Painted lines for football pitch • Vegetable and fruit garden • Comfier benches and bigger tables in dining hall. • More colours in dining hall. • Traffic lights in dining hall • More drink choices. • Music in dining hall. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Games painted on playground. • More playground toys. • More colours in dining hall.
Our Health and Wellbeing	No changes required	No changes required
Our Successes and Achievements	No changes required	No changes required

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: Teacher and practitioner professionalism

Year of Project: 1

Purpose: *More focused programme of CPD opportunities*

Progress and impact:

On focus within the National Improvement Framework is on Teacher Professionalism.

“Teacher Professionalism demonstrates the overall quality of the teaching workforce in Scotland and the impact of their professional learning on children and young people’s progress and achievement”

As the quality of teaching is a key factor in improving children’s learning and the outcomes they achieve, it was important for us to continue to evaluate and progress in this area. At Halkirk Primary the teaching is very good with experienced and knowledgeable teachers in post. The teachers’ professionalism is of a high standard and all engage in career-long professional learning. However, as a staff, we felt that we did not engage in the GTCS Standards document as regularly as we could. Teachers participated well in CPD but it was felt that this was not always linked to the School Improvement Plan or data.

Strategies which were employed were numerous and various. At a staff meeting a discussion was held regarding the importance of CPD linked to SIP (when appropriate) and taking into account local and national priorities. It was felt that CPD could become more focussed and collaborative at times. The GTCS Standards (The Standard for Full Registration) was included in the Self Evaluation Calendar, sitting alongside the Q.I HIGIOS 4.

The areas which were included in CPD were Outdoor Learning, “Realising the Ambition”, Moderation and Curriculum Development.

The impact for Outdoor Learning could be seen in the childrens’ increased enjoyment outside, pupil voice and through the Leuven scale.

Very good progress was made in this area.

Next steps:

Continued programme of CPD opportunities.

Improvement Project 2:

Primary focus: Parent/carer involvement and engagement

Year of Project: 1

Purpose: Increased involvement of Parent/Carers

Progress and impact:

Next steps:

One focus within the National Improvement Framework is Parental engagement. This was limited in some areas due to COVID restrictions.

“Research shows that when parents and carers engage in their children's learning and when children and young people live in a supportive home learning environment, it improves children and young people's attainment and achievement”

“This covers parental and family engagement in the learning of children and young people, as well as parental involvement in the life and work of school”.

As Parental engagement is a key factor in improving children's learning and the outcomes they achieve, it was important for us to continue to evaluate and progress in this area.

At Halkirk Primary, Parental engagement has always been a high priority and evident. Parents were informed of their child's progress through Parent-Teacher meetings, Report Cards, Newsletters, Phone calls and emails. Prior to COVID restrictions, parents were invited to many school events such as Open Afternoons, Ceilidhs, Burns Suppers, Christmas events, etc.

Just before COVID, the school took on board the “Seesaw” app as a method of ‘Profiling’ and communicating between School and Home. This action was to improve excellence and equity and to achieve positive outcomes for all children particularly with school closures during COVID.

All children were able to progress in their learning, communicate with their teacher and peers and most importantly share their learning with their parents.

Due to COVID restrictions parents and carers were not permitted in school but strategies were employed to include them in their children's learning and experiences as much as possible e.g. The Christmas Show “Around the World” was virtual and our Christmas Enterprise was a Pupil's Christmas Market. We had a Virtual Loch Insh Residential Trip and Virtual Sports Day.

Many of these online events involved parental participation. The evidence of the impact could be seen in photographs and comments which were posted.

Very good progress was made in this area.

Next Steps: Increased parental participation in school events.

Improvement Project 3:

Primary focus: School and ELC improvement

Year of Project: 1

Purpose: Improve Health and Wellbeing within the School

Progress and impact:

One focus with the N.I.F is School Improvement.

"School improvements focuses on the quality of education including learning, teaching and assessment, as well as the quality of the partnerships that are in place to support children and young people with their broader needs. These are essential elements to raise attainment for all children and young people and close the poverty related attainment gap."

At Halkirk Primary we decided to focus on our Health & Wellbeing as an Improvement Priority. (The authority asked us to prioritise three areas following COVID19 – Health and Wellbeing being one of them).

Health & Wellbeing has always been a priority at Halkirk Primary with children being offered numerous and varied opportunities and experiences.

Children receive a minimum of two hours P.E each week, lunchtime and After School Activities, Sports Day, opportunities for outdoor play, use of Playground toys, Daily Mile etc.

We introduced Wellbeing Indicator Wheels at the start of the session, 2021-22. Children were supported by P.S.As and our UHI Student in completing the wheels, through discussion and by asking specific questions relating to their Health and Wellbeing. Children then set individual targets for areas they identified as being lower (in consultation with their Class Teacher). The base targets were identified as being those that were the most vulnerable aspects of the Wellbeing Indicators.

Learning Conversations between pupil and teacher showed the impact of these targets and further next steps were highlighted when necessary.

School Trackers were completed for Health and Wellbeing which allowed staff to identify which areas were causing concern for children. As a result, a plan was put in place to improve excellence and equity for all – this included teachers adjusting and reaffirming classroom practice and lessons. The UHI student delivered P.E lessons to include lessons which provided activities which allowed some children to enjoy new experiences.

Emotional Check-Ins – PSAs were timetabled to work closely with children who have Social and Emotional needs. Children were provided with an “Emotional Check-In” and were nurtured in the “Safe Room”.

Couch Chat

However, as a school we did not provide regular opportunities for Outdoor Learning. This was an area which we wanted to address in regards to School Improvement. It was agreed that as part of our Health and Wellbeing for 2021/22 that our Early Stages teacher would embrace Realising the Ambition and begin to implement it in her class.

Unfortunately, funds were not available for outdoor equipment. Our Janitor made us two Mud Kitchens. Early Years Staff have led some focused outdoor lessons within the school grounds. These have been hugely popular and successful. The P1-3 class have had more opportunities to experience outdoor free play.

Very good progress was made in this area.

Next steps:

To continue to develop Outdoor Learning (SIP priority in 2022/23). Funding for outdoor equipment is to be applied for through the Wind Farms.

Evaluation of Progress

We believe we have made the following progress this session:

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