

2021/22



HONESTY

RESPECT
How do we treat each other?
Is it true? Is it kind?
Is it necessary?

RESPONSIBILITY
Don't be a bystander.
Help make our school a safe,
happy and healthy place. Report
any inappropriate behaviour,
bullying or vandalism.

BEHAVIOUR
Think about how you behave
when people are watching and
when no one is watching.

UNIFORM
Present ourselves in the best way
possible.

PHONES
Phones out of sight in the
corridors.

RESPECT

DINGWALL ACADEMY

"You can become even more excellent by consistently setting higher and higher standards for yourself and then doing everything possible to live up to those standards."

"With high standards everything matters, nothing is small stuff."

"Be the best version of yourself possible."

"Never apologise for having high standards. People who really want to be in your life will rise up to meet them."

DETERMINATION

RESPONSIBILITY

#THE DINGWALL STANDARD

Dingwall Academy
HIGHLAND COUNCIL

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 seek feedback from pupils, parents, and staff to shape our improvement journey.

We set termly targets and review progress towards our improvement targets throughout the session.

DINGWALL ACADEMY

Dingwall Academy is a true comprehensive, covering a large catchment area taking in the market town of Dingwall and several rural communities. Current school roll is 1065, of which 50 are placing requests. More than 50% of pupils use school transport, with some travelling over 20 miles. There is a sense of community, throughout lockdown, we worked hard to maintain regular communication with staff, pupils, and parents. Some of the changes made to support our community during lockdown have been retained.

A high percentage of pupils stay on for S6. Last session 99% of pupils moved onto positive post school with over 50% moving onto Higher or Further Education. 47% of pupils have additional support needs, and this session more than 50% of our S1 and S2 pupils have a recognised support need. The school prides itself on its inclusive ethos and within the school we have an ASD base, a Nurture Base, a Hearing-Impaired Department and space to support pupils with SEBD. 12% of pupils are entitled to free school meals.

Staffing continues to present challenges and we have made targeted use of additional staffing this session to support recovery. We have been able to maintain a broad curriculum; a number of pupils travel to college courses at both Inverness and North Highland Campus. A small number of pupils follow distance learning courses delivered online. Pupils now make seven option choices at the end of S2. In 2022, S4 pupils were presented for National 4 and National 5 after following two year courses for the first time.

The school currently has 34 pupils following Gaidhlig medium. We also offer Gaelic in the BGE, at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher.

Visitors to the school comment on the friendliness of pupils and the strong and positive relationships between staff and pupils.

Delivering online learning during two sessions was extremely challenging and so we returned at the start of session 2021 – 22 hoping for a more settled year.

Unfortunately, the continued presence of Covid led to high levels of pupil and staff absences and another very challenging year. Staff worked tirelessly to cover for absent colleagues and to provide work for pupils working at home. As a result, we

were able to minimise the impact on pupil learning and only had to close to specific year groups on four occasions.

In November 2021, the school was signed off by HMI following their initial inspection in 2018. Covid delayed the publication of the year on report, the school was pleased to receive this sign off, but also to read that HMI recognised the efforts of staff during the pandemic.

In May 2022 we delivered the first SQA exam diet since 2019. This was a new experience for all senior phase pupils and their approach was exemplary.

“Just wanted to share the positive feeling I get when I come into the school. Really good to see that the manners, behaviour and attitude of the young persons are still there. Clearly there's great credit due to you, your SMT, and the staff throughout the school for instilling that ethos. Once again it has been a pleasure to be involved.”

School Invigilator May 2022

At the end of this session, there will be significant change to the Senior Management Team in the school. Two Depute Head Teachers retire at the end of session, and a further Depute will move on from their post in October. Teacher recruitment is becoming increasingly challenging, we start the session with vacancies in Home Economics and Modern Languages.

We hope that session 2022 – 23, while bringing much change, will finally allow us to settle into post Covid and promote the standards and values of our school in a consistent and calm way.

Our School Vision, Values and Aims

RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, HONESTY AND DETERMINATION

“A school with a sense of community – a school where, by taking a collective responsibility, pupils and staff have the opportunity to achieve extraordinary things.”

“Sgoil a tha na coimhearsnachd. Sgoil far am faigh sgoilearan agus luchd-obrach an cothrom co-uallach a ghabhail gus nithean iongantach a choileanadh.”



Pupil Voice: what is working well in our school?

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

- **The Teachers.**
- **The range of opportunities, including extra-curricular.**
- **That there is someone to turn to when you need help.**
- **Being treated well.**

*“Everyone is nice, the community is great, and there is no unfairness”
S1 pupil*

*“I feel welcomed, there is people there to help and good people to become friends with.”
S2 pupil*

*“It’s a great place to build friendships, Dingwall helped me to build my identity”
S6 pupil*

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.

- **The one- way system is too confusing.**
- **Too much litter and mess from some pupils.**
- **Lack of respect from some; sexist and homophobic comments.**
- **More opportunity for pupils to be involved.**

"The Size of the School causes the one- way system to be annoying and often makes you late for classes."

S1 pupil

"Some things are too strict, and some other things are too slack, nothing else in my opinion."

S2 pupil

"There isn't enough awareness around how pupils can be involved with the school."

S6 pupil

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:

Health and Wellbeing linked to Covid Recovery

A range of initiatives and interventions were put in place to support wellbeing and recovery.

Progress and impact:

- We delivered the SQA Mental Health and Wellbeing Course to all of S3. 91 pupils achieved at least one unit.
- S1 pupils took part in a 1st of the Month Wellbeing activity.
- 6 members of staff completed Mentoring in Violence Prevention training, all S6 pupils were given the opportunity to take part in training in June.
- The MCR programme started in December 2021, this provides 1:1 mentoring to some of our more vulnerable pupils and group work for younger pupils.
- We were able to return to the Growing2gether mentoring project – 12 pupils completed the course.
- We appointed an additional part time Maths teacher. The impact of this will be detailed further under Improvement Project 3.
- We appointed an additional part time English teacher to support Literacy in S1 and S2. 18 pupils completed the Fresh Start reading programme.

- We provided a 1:1 reading intervention programme for 6 pupils.
- We appointed an additional 1FTE teacher to support pupils with Social, Emotional, Behavioural and Family Needs (SEBFN).
- We created a school podcast; this was to help celebrate and re-connect with our wider school community.
- We launched a review of our Anti-Bullying policy with pupil, parent and staff representatives.
- There was a whole school review of our Behaviour Policy; now referred to as our Promoting Positive Relationships Policy. This includes our newly formed Dingwall Standard. This will be a key priority for next session.
- S2 pupils were given the opportunity to take part in Friday wellbeing walks and there was a whole school wellbeing walk in October.
- Our attendance officer continues to do excellent work, engaging with pupils and families.

Next steps:

- Promoting Positive Relationships Policy to be finalised and presented to staff, pupils and parents.
- Dingwall Standard to be launched at the start of session 2022 – 23. This sets out our high expectations.
- We have registered to become a 'Rights Respecting School' and will start working towards accreditation.
- We aim to train 20 S6 pupils as MVP mentors to then work with S3 pupils during next session.
- We want to create a regular programme of assemblies, in part planned and delivered by pupils.
- We need to consider different options for delivering the SQA MHWB course.
- We want to consider how we can formalise a programme for pupils to be involved with volunteering.
- We plan to re-introduce our Spring and Christmas Fairs and give pupils the opportunity to achieve the SQA 'Assist with an Event' Award.
- We have reviewed our wellbeing check in procedures and will provide more routine opportunities for pupils to complete during next session.
- We need to complete the review of our Anti Bullying Policy.
- We need to formalise procedures for our Pupil Voice.

Improvement Project 2:

Learning Teaching and Assessment

Progress and impact:

- The Languages Department, Science Department and SMT all took part in an initial training session learning about the Teaching Sprints Initiative. The Languages and Science teachers all carried out two Teaching Sprints and then delivered a further information session to all staff during the February in-service.
- All staff took part in an online information session on Teaching Sprints during the May in-service.
- Staff and pupils made effective use of Google Suite to support learning during pupil and staff absence.

Next steps:

- All staff will take part in the Teaching Sprints initiative during next session.
- We will provide pupils with more opportunity to feedback on their learning experience.
- We need to use the Teaching Sprints initiative to create more opportunities for staff to share and discuss practice.
- During Covid restrictions, all classrooms were set up in rows, with limited opportunity for group work. We need to provide more opportunities for active learning.
- We will continue to build on the increased and effective use of IT in learning and teaching.
- We need to ensure that the eportfolios in S1 and S2 are being used by pupils, staff and parents and are impacting on learning.
- We have been given the opportunity to appoint an additional Attainment Depute for the ASG. We need to define their role and set targets for moderation and assessment.

Improvement Project 3:

Raising Attainment and Achievement

Progress and impact:

- We returned to our monitoring and tracking system for BGE and Senior Phase. Pupils in S1 and S2 access their M&T via Google Sheets, S3 – S6 via SEEMIS reporting and target setting sheets on Google.
- We appointed a 0.6FTE Maths teacher using PEF funding. We targeted pupils at risk of leaving with no Maths qualification and also gave more pupils the opportunity to achieve numeracy units at N4 and N5. Some S4 pupils were given the opportunity to be presented for Maths and Applications of Maths at N5.
- Following monitoring and tracking, we identify those S4 pupils who should be aiming for 5+ courses at Level 5. All pupils had a 1:1 meeting with a member of SMT to discuss progress.
- We included target grades in S5 and S6 reports.
- We identified pupils in S4 who were achieving 4 National 5 qualifications at prelims and discussed how they might increase this to 5 subjects.
- We met with the PT Maths and English to identify pupils at risk of leaving without literacy or numeracy.
- We appointed an additional 0.6FTE English teacher using PEF funding to target reading in S1 and S2.
- We considered our ACEL data and reviewed assessment procedures.

Next steps:

- We need to establish a clear remit and targets for the newly appointed attainment Depute.
- We need to monitor the impact of our 2 year National courses on attainment.

- We need to consider alternative pathways for those subjects where pupils are at risk of not achieving National 5.
- We need to extract the risk matrix information and add to our monitoring and tracking system in S1 – S2.
- We need to make more effective use of the monitoring and tracking data to provide appropriate interventions for our targeted groups.
- We need to reflect on our family learning and provide appropriate guidance and support.
- We need to ensure that all pupils in the BGE are aware of our Learning Pathway and how they can make progress.

Improvement Project 4:

Curriculum

Progress and impact:

- S4 pupils were presented for exams in 2022 after completing 2 year national courses. Staff provided feedback on the number of subjects pupils are studying in S3/4 and a decision made to stay with seven subjects. There will be a further review of this.
- Departments were required to complete a self-evaluation exercise using Insight and Authority Attainment data.
- We offered the SQA Mental Health and Wellbeing Course as a curriculum insert.
- Our DYW co-ordinator started post in August but unfortunately left at Christmas. In this time, they started to create positive links with local employers and also increased opportunities for pupils to volunteer and have this volunteering recognised. A new DYW co-ordinator was then appointed in June 2022.
- S3 pupils were able to complete the National 3 Languages for Life and Work Course.

Next steps:

- We will continue to review the time allocated to National Courses in S3 and S4.
- We need to review how we offer the Mental Health and Wellbeing Course and increase the number of pupils who achieve the full course.
- We are working with UHI to look at provision for pupils struggling to engage with school. (My Future My Success MFMS)
- We need to extend the number and range of partners who can provide flexible pathways for targeted pupils.
- We need to increase the range of courses available for pupils at SCQF 2 and SCQF 3.
- We need to consider curriculum provision for our targeted groups.
- We need to broaden our Curriculum Inserts for S3 and S4.
- We will work with our DYW co-ordinator on specific projects including a creativity course for S3; confidence building in S6 and targeted work experience.

Evaluation of Progress

We believe we have made the following progress this session:

Quality Indicator	School self-evaluation
Leadership of Change	1.3 Good
Learning, teaching and assessment	2.3 Good
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	3.1 Very good
Raising attainment and achievement	3.2 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 on our [website](#) or by contacting the school office.