

Standards and Quality Report

2021/22



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 progressing towards achieving these positive outcomes and changes.

Our School

Nairn Academy is a comprehensive secondary school in Nairn. We have 4 associated Primary schools (Rosebank, Millbank, Auldearn and Cawdor). Our school roll is 680. As part of the school we have an extensive additional supports needs provision with pupils accessing mainstream and also benefiting for individualised support programmes. We continue to develop and extend our curricular pathways through our timetable structures extending options using College provision and online/virtual school. Staff are encouraged to extend their professional learning through Council, National and SQA development opportunities. Leadership opportunities at all levels are also encouraged, including strengthening pupil voice.

Post pandemic, we have focussed on our ABC: **Re**adjust, **Re**build, and **Re**connect. It was important to us that we worked to support the whole school community through the many Covid challenges. We were required to change protocols frequently yet we aimed to keep as much routine and purpose for our colleagues and young people. Building back and re-establishing relationships took time as we all adjusted back in school yet still experiencing periods of absence in both our staff and young people. As distancing eased we were delighted to welcome pupils and staff back to face to face assemblies and staff meetings as well see the return of extracurricular activities as important aspect of our reconnection. The focus on relationships has become a key aspect of our improvement journey for the new school year (2022/23).

Over the last year, the planning process for the new build has developed pace, and Stage 3 plans are due to be finalised and submitted at the start of September 2022. The school has hosted face-to-face public consultations. Pupils and staff are working to create positive and generative relationships with Community Councils to support the build in addition to the beneficial existing links with the Council team, architects, builders, other stakeholders and Elected Members. The completion date is October 2025. In the meantime, the current building does put pressure on learning, teaching and day-to-day operation in terms of maintenance, repair, heating costs and weather-tightness. The new school build is a major positive for the whole Nairn/school community providing an aspirational fit for purpose space to support the learning and teaching for our young people.

Our School Vision, Values and Aims

Vision

Nairn Academy staff, pupils and parents work towards a common goal. In a positive environment, pupils are motivated, maximise potential and achieve success."

Motto "Together we will succeed"

The school aims to promote the four capacities as set out in Curriculum for Excellence by encouraging pupils to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

We aim to achieve this by;

- supporting all pupils to achieve their individual potential;
- improving the attainment of pupils;
- encouraging lifelong learning;
- developing pupils' citizenship skills – self-discipline, sense of responsibility, respect and concern for others – in school and in the community at large, both locally and globally and
- promoting the health and well-being of the school community.

Pupil Voice: what is working well in our school?

Our children and young people identified a number of strengths for our school this session. Our pupil voice/ engagement in Nairn Academy includes –

- Pupil Council (including pupils involved in Highland Youth Voice)
- Equality Forum - input into staff training and circulation of QR code for links to protected characteristics support and information
- Online surveys and focus groups around pupil's learning experience
- Weekly Assemblies – online and now back to face to face
- Feedback shared through Infographics and powerpoints
- Loom videos, e.g. course choice process, SQA assessment requirements...
- Senior Leadership Team/ Prefects – leadership projects to improve aspects of the school e.g. acknowledge wider achievement with a new Spirit of Nairn award (in place June 2022)
- Leadership opportunities through Sport Leaders, Sport Ambassadors, buddies, Prefects, Mental Health Ambassadors, attending school building meetings ...

Areas working well –

Our Pupil Council and Equality group continue to meet weekly. They are a dedicated group who work to improve aspects of the school. Many members have attended for a number of years including during the periods of Covid interruptions.

A group of senior pupils volunteered to link with Mikeysline to support pupil wellbeing through Covid. This excellent work continues with noticeboards, signposting, fundraising and input with P7 pupils as part of our transition. The group has increased in numbers with future plans to have Mental Health Pupil Ambassadors.

Our Senior Prefect team continue to lead by example and each year present leadership activities they wish to develop in their S6. They are strong role models and volunteer at a number of school events. They are a very positive 'front face' of Nairn Academy.

Our Pupil Council have participated in the early stages of consultation for the new school build plans. They provide a valuable perspective both on the current building and vitally what they want to see in the new learning and teaching spaces.

Pupils participate in focus groups to help shape school improvements e.g. alternative assessment arrangements and learning and teaching approaches.

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.

Under the Pupil Council sub group themes, pupils have noted the following improvement areas to enhance their day to day experience in school both educationally and also socially-

- Better Mental health - mental health support including exam support
- Better Building - better heat control, water tight classrooms, water fountains, outdoor classroom space, outdoor seating and concourses. Input to new building plans.
- Better relationships - more focus on learning intentions/success criteria and feedback, communication between teachers and pupils, remove stigma going to Guidance and increase the school 'spirit' after Covid.

In reviewing next steps with the Pupil Council, it was noted that some aspects had been progressed but a number will continue through next year e.g. the cultural shift in re-establishing relationships across our school community will take time to embed. The new school will provide key improvements to our building /learning environment albeit this will be in October 2025 so we need to continue to monitor our current work environment.

Our Equality Forum continue to raise awareness with pupils and staff. They have worked across the Northern Alliance in sharing their policy work plus have plans to work towards our Silver Equality Charter.

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 Leadership

Year of Project: 1

Purpose: **Health and wellbeing /ethos /relationships**

Supporting pupils and staff through the impact of Covid interruptions. Working together to re-establish our school connectedness, values and routines.

Progress and impact:

- Relational and Restorative Practice: shifting from a behaviour policy with emphasis on sanctioning negative behaviours to a Supporting Positive Relationships approach rooted in developing, building and nurturing relationships through relational and restorative approaches and developed through work with L30 Relational Systems. This has brought about a review of policies in school and a revisit to our school values. This has remained a key thread through all communications with staff, in newsletters and with pupils including in assemblies.

- Maintaining staff 'connections' with weekly online staff briefings throughout the year (face to face from June 2022). Briefings included signposting professional learning opportunities as well as wellbeing resources/links.
- Staff, pupils and partners are volunteering to lead initiatives around wellbeing to support this with, and for, each other
- Increased awareness among pupils and staff of the supports available including input of external providers. Online resource library developed by Guidance staff for parents and pupils
- Awareness raising and fundraising events have highlighted wellbeing. Themed events have taken place for staff and pupils. Senior pupils manage a noticeboard to highlight supports including external support through our Counselling provider.
- Our Equality Forum continue to raise awareness including a staff information session protected characteristics. A QR code resource was provided to support.
- With some additional staffing resource, we have increased our Pupil Support provision to support the Covid recovery and ensure interrupted learners can be supported with a flexible curriculum. Our new Connect Hub, started June 2022, offers alternative provision for pupils with specific support for attendance / engagement, behaviour, relationships, and nurture. Central to addressing these core areas, pupils attending Connect will also attain qualifications through a range of experiences e.g. leadership, work experience, mental health... Key partners have supported this e.g. DYW, SDS, UHI programmes of study, Mentoring and employers.
- Our breakfast club has been re-established. A group of staff and senior pupils volunteers support this positive focus for pupils each day providing food, drink and social activities to allow pupils to reconnect with each other. This is generously supported by a local bakery and supermarket.
- Targeted support programmes lead jointly by Guidance staff and partners e.g. Seasons for Growth and Turning Tables looking at areas including loss, resilience, healthy choices
- We continue to promote health and wellbeing as a key aspect for our school community. It is widely accepted now as a vital and integral part of our school culture and community going forward.

Next steps:

- Our work on improved relationships continues with training sessions for pupils and a parent information session. Values based approaches continue to develop with an emphasis on embedding our school values in all aspects of school life. Following 2 senior staff attending Columba 1400, we have plans to develop a pupil values based leadership programme this year.
- Continue to develop our Connect Hub with alternative and accredited curriculum.
- Staff wellbeing online resource to be completed with regular reviews/updated resources. Highlight resource and support staff to access including the Education Scotland 'Cycle of Wellbeing' resource. Continue to offer a range of health and wellbeing activities for staff including the Mental Health First Aider training.
- Awareness raising support available for staff and pupils through BLOOM and Mikeysline. Pupil wellbeing / Ambassador programmes being introduced including the Mental Health Award.
- Map out PSE and HWB curriculum input using the SHANARRI indicators. Work also underway to develop Rights Respecting Schools to support our school values, relationships and work on wellbeing
- Continue to develop sense of school community, shared values and mission as we plan for our new school building.
- Continue to support the re-introduction of after school clubs including Duke of Edinburgh. Our new Active Schools Coordinator has already had a big impact in pupil uptake in the Sports leadership programme.

- Greater promotion of the work of the school through social media including celebrating pupil effort, success, attainment and achievement through a process/toolkit to 'acknowledge, appreciate and applaud'.

Improvement Project 2:

Primary focus: Teacher and practitioner professionalism

Year of Project: 1

Purpose : Recovery learning and teaching

From periods of Covid interruptions, review curriculum delivery and pupil experiences as well as opportunities for attainment and achievement.

Progress and impact:

- A School Improvement Plan (SIP) group on Wider Achievement has focussed on different ways pupils can achieve using a wider range of courses- our S6 have now begun the SQA Work Experience Award and the Community Project SCQF at level 5. The Duke of Edinburgh Award is the focus for this group next session as we look to relaunch the programme through the Friends of Nairn DofE.
- The learning and teaching SIP group had two key parts- Research and The Nairn Standard for Learning and Teaching. The groups have produced a range of resources for all staff and presented these at CAT sessions. A padlet with reading materials, strategies etc. has been produced and shared, and a new library of CPD reading is underway. All staff now have access to (or personal copies of) Restorative Practice (Mark Fiddes).
- Faculty meetings feature Sharing Good Practice as a standing item, and the impact of taking on and developing use of new strategies can be seen, for example, in the Maths and Numeracy Faculty.
- Staff confidence in ICT means Google classroom continues to enhance and add to classroom provision, for sharing revision materials, flipped learning, recorded consolidation sessions, and sharing success criteria through Rubriks.
- Strong partnership working across teaching staff, PTs Pupil Support and PEF teacher and emerging role of the Connect Hub.
- Increasing use of pupil voice e.g. surveys, focus groups, learning conversations. Our Pupil Council, Equality Forum, Prefects and Senior Prefect Leadership team are all central to promote pupil voice and help shape our continuous improvement.

Next steps:

- The SIP group will continue to develop the Learning and teaching research online resource for teachers. Support staff to access, use and share the research resource i.e. how has this been used in the classroom, impact and review effectiveness?
- Encourage staff to contribute to CPD sessions to share practice, develop a bank of resources including a refresh/reintroduction of the Star base. Staff are encouraged to look outwards and participate in Highland, Northern Alliance and National networks to develop professional collaboration and learning.
- Refresh/relaunch the Nairn Academy Learning and Teaching Standard with staff, pupils and parents. Using the feedback from pupil focus groups, target learning intentions/success criteria and feedback. Agree process to support class visits to sharing practice and review impact on pupil learning experiences.
- Pupil and parent focus groups/surveys to get feedback and monitor progress. To include feedback from the recent Parent Council survey (July 2022).
- Use of formal and structured observations consistently across the school to share practice with a focus on our Building Positive Relationships work, and strong

learning and teaching through coherent use of the Nairn Learning and Teaching Standard.

- Continue research/evidence based approach with some Faculties using aspects of the Education Endowment Toolkit.
- Specific SIP groups will lead on literacy and numeracy interventions linking across subjects as well as input with our ASG Primary schools. This will build on the quality assurance work in previous years through sharing standards in assessment and moderation.

Primary focus: Curriculum and assessment

Year of Project: 1

Purpose: Attainment / Tracking, monitoring and reporting (TMR)

Progress and impact:

- Working to extend the range of awards- NPAs in Science for Health; Sport and Fitness; Professional Cookery; FA programme through college partners;
- Building to Nationals recovery curriculum model now in for a year and supporting pupils following periods of interruption with home learning due to Covid. Pupils are beginning to demonstrate greater skills development through S3/4.
- Review of tracking, monitoring and reporting- use of more tracking events to provide more frequent information to parent/carers alongside the learning conversations staff have with pupils (developed through the alternative assessment models in the previous 2 years).
- Enhanced and increased use of SNSA data for planning learning and teaching e.g. Excellence Week in English
- Scottish Government additional staffing used to support literacy and numeracy interventions in English and Maths.
- We continue to monitor the Pupil Equity interventions which work with targeted pupils around nurture, resilience, social skills as well as support curricular provision especially around literacy, numeracy and employability.
- Use of parents information sessions again- online session 2021-22, returning to face to face for most session 2022-23.
- Review of timetabling and course choice to look at assertive coursing and ensuring N5 pupils do not undertake college or Day 1 at Level 4 where they might otherwise attain at Level 5, or that missing classes for N5 subjects puts at risk N5 attainment overall.
- Based on previous year's results analysis, changes to S6 provision planned for 2022-23 and new structure of five columns with a Leadership and Wider Achievement focus to reduce "free" periods and increase the number of courses taken. This provides skills development for pupils as well as accreditation/tariff points. All to undertake SCQF Community Project Award and SQA Work Experience Award alongside, with two periods of Senior staff contact per week to facilitate this. Leadership and Wider Achievement options include volunteering in school alongside useful awards developing skills for life- cookery; woodwork (DIY); digital literacy and personal finance; bike maintenance and cycle leadership and modern languages for work.
- Insight analysis undertaken by ALL staff not just the leadership team. This provides a shared focus on attainment next steps and interventions. This is supported by department initial results analysis using Highland and National data which then

feeds into Faculty Improvement plans as well as the professional review process for staff.

Next steps:

- The TMR SIP group will develop our Seemis Tracking system to allow staff to monitor progress, track performance, and identify pupils who would benefit from mentoring, target setting, support with study techniques etc.. to maximise their attainment potential. This aims to provide timely interventions especially around closing the attainment gap
- The TMR SIP group will work alongside the Learning and Teaching SIP group around learning conversations to ensure these support pupils and provide progress and next steps
- From August 2022, Pupil Support colleagues now have a formal 'cause of concern' meeting which highlights concerns from departments including attendance. Attendance processes are being reviewed in line with Highland Council's revised policy and also our school processes including safeguarding.
- Working with Highland Council, our SIP group will support staff in working towards a common Highland TMR system using Google (for session 2023-24).
- Insight Professional Advisors will support a whole staff session (Nov 2022) on our attainment data where we can identify areas working well but also areas to improve. This remains a shared focus across all teaching and Pupil Support staff.

GME Project:

Primary focus: Curriculum and assessment

Year of Project: 1

Purpose:

Gus Gàidhlig a leasachadh bho thaobh an curraicealam, cultar agus gu sòisealta agus àire na Gàidhlig àrdachadh ann an coimhearsnachd Inbhir Narainn

To develop our Gaelic provision in terms of curriculum, culture, social and profile in the Nairn community

Progress and impact:

We are delighted to now have a dedicated Gaelic teacher for Nairn Academy. Following a period of online/virtual Gaelic delivery, our 0.5 teacher started in Feb. 2020 and is now working to develop the Gaelic learning experience for our pupils **in their own local area**.

- Establishing Gaelic department and raising profile of Gaelic
- Gathering resources from other schools, Stortlann, Highland Council
- Visit from drama tutor at Fèisean nan Gàidheal
- Establishing links with other schools such as Dingwall Academy and Thurso High School (who also are a new department with small cohort)
- Networking /professional development with staff joining the Northern Alliance secondary group for Gàidhlig
- Developing connections with Millbank for P7 transition
- Made contacts with Maggie Mulholland and Lena Walker at Highland Council

Next steps:

- S1 Gaelic learners class and Languages for Life and Work Course for S5/6
- Develop Gaelic medium Geography for S1/2
- Visit from Gaelic poet to develop language skills
- Visit from Careers Development Officer at Bòrd na Gàidhlig
- S3 to take part in National Gaelic debate in Stornoway
- To establish and develop projects with Thurso High School and Glen Urquhart High School who also have small cohorts (S1s are working on Penpals project and S2s preparing a presentation about where they live to be delivered virtually to other schools)
- Work closely with Millbank to further develop transition (Meet the Parents event, school visit, P7 parents evening)

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 Satisfactory |
| Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion | 3.1 Good |
| Raising attainment and achievement | 3.2 Satisfactory |

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

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Theme 1 Our relationships | Satisfactory |
| Theme 2 Our learning and teaching | Satisfactory |
| Theme 3 Our school and community (inc. building) | Weak |
| Theme 4 Our health and wellbeing | Good |
| Theme 5 | Good |

Our successes and achievements

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

We are confident in our capacity for continuous improvement.

As with all schools, our improvement progress has been affected by the periods of disruption caused by the Covid-19 situation. We continue with our planned improvements and evaluate the effectiveness of changes.

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.