



SCHOOL STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT

2022/23



School:	Gairloch High School
Head Teacher:	Wim Chalmet
Date submitted:	16th June 2023



Context of the school:

Gairloch High School is situated in the beautiful district of Wester Ross within Highland Region and pupils live either within the environs of Gairloch village or travel many miles from the outlying villages - having attended the associated Primary schools of Gairloch (English or Gaelic Medium), Shieldaig, Kinlochewe, Poolewe or Bualnaluib. A significant number of our pupils travel by bus each day to reach school.

At Gairloch High School we provide a full and comprehensive curriculum for pupils aged 11–18 (S1- S6) and offer the language of Gaelic (Learners) and Gàidhlig (Medium).

We take great pride in the positive relationships between staff and pupils and strive to raise achievement for all pupils. The school works closely with pupils, parents and the wider community to ensure that pupils could gain the qualifications they needed to progress beyond school.

In session 2022/2023 the role was 105 pupils which included some new starts during the session. Staffing has been a major challenge in session 2022-2023, both in terms of long-term absence but also in relation to the Highland Council staffing formula – the lowest of the 32 local authority areas in Scotland. This results in our school having significantly fewer teachers compared to an equivalent sized school in other local authority areas.

The true commitment to achieving equity and raising attainment, as premised in such publications as the *National Improvement Framework (2020)* and *Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education (2016)* publications means that this imbalance needs to be addressed. There has been an increased reliance on supply cover with an increased cost but, more importantly for pupils, lessons not being covered by subject specialists.

The school has been significantly over-staffed and this in combination with a falling school roll, challenges remain in providing all aspects of a balanced curriculum. We continue to work with learning partners to provide further opportunities for pupils to access a wide range of courses in our senior phase.

There also continues to be a significant impact for our Additional Support Need pupils. Ongoing budget cuts means that key positions such as Pupil Support Assistants have been reduced. This has resulted in an increased workload for our existing staff and at a point where we do not have the human resources to support our pupils to reach their full potential. There is a merging concern with regards to further reduction in Pupil Support Assistants with the new allocation model, that puts school at risk of not being able to meet the needs safely for some of our young people.

School Vision, Values and Aims:



Listening
Èisteachd

Support
Taic

Lifeskills
Sgilean-beatha

Ambition
Miann

GAIRLOCH HIGH SCHOOL

ÀRD-SGOIL GHEÀRRLOCH

School Values

Learning and teaching is our core activity and striving to provide an excellent education will ensure all our pupils, staff, parents and partners have aspirations for lifelong learning. Our ambitions and beliefs for our pupils are to encourage them to become successful, confident adults. Regardless of their gender, race, sexual identity, disability, religious or political beliefs we will care for our pupils in a positive and supportive environment.

School Aims

We will provide a place of education which will:

- *Create successful learners who are stimulated to think, learn and contribute to the life of the school and the wider community.
- *Provide a curriculum of excellence that supports and enables all pupils to achieve their full potential
- *Enable pupils to develop a knowledge and understanding of the world.
- *Create citizens who are informed about environmental, cultural and scientific matters.
- *Communicate and work in partnership with teachers, pupils, parents and other agencies.
- *Create a positive learning environment where everyone knows their views, talents, skills and opinions are valued and considered.
- *Be a positive workplace environment for staff, where everyone feels supported in their work, encouraged to engage in a professional culture of collaboration and provide career-long professional learning opportunities.

Summary of Standards and Quality Report/School Improvement Plan engagement process:

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.

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 capacity for continuous improvement, has been affected by periods of disruption caused by 10+ school day closures due to bad weather/road conditions, industrial strikes and long-term absences. The pressure resulting from this, has restricted our ability to complete planned improvements and to evaluate the effectiveness of changes we have made. Much of our work in session 2023/2024 will be to further rebuild our capacity for improvement.



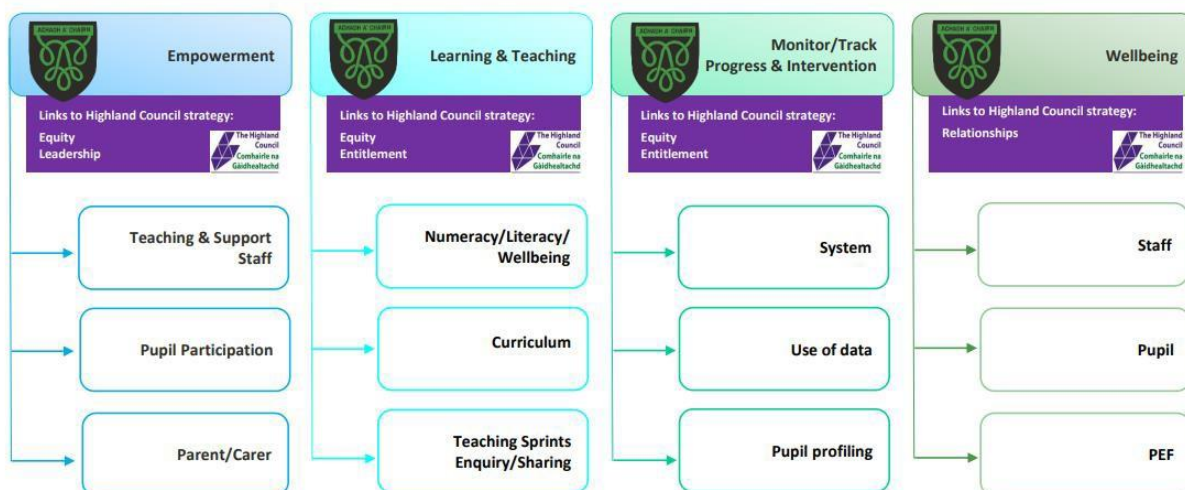
Listening Eisteachd Support Taic Lifeskills Sgilean-beatha Ambition Miann

GAIRLOCH HIGH SCHOOL ÀRD-SGOIL GHEÀRRLOCH Improvement Framework

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY

VISION & VALUES

unicef RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS UN Convention on The Rights of the Child (UNCRC) – Rights Respecting Schools' Award (Bronze) unicef RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS



Pupil Voice: what is working well in our school?

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

- Good pupil/teacher relationships and small classes beneficial for the closer contact with teachers.
- Support provided in guidance base.
- Wide offering of in and out of school activities, eg. trips, DYW events, school dance, clubs, sports day, etc.
- Lots of opportunities for Gaidhlig like debating club, Film G and Spors Gaidhlig.
- Good offering from visiting music instructors: drums, fiddle, chanter, singing, c for craic.
- Uniform, smart but allowing to express yourself.
- Exam set-up in classrooms and familiar invigilators gives more relax feeling.

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.

- More lunchtime clubs that are not sports related, e.g. chess, pride (LGBT), creative arts, debate.
- Library and courtyard open for pupils at lunchtime.
- Work experience opportunities.
- Personal statement talks at earlier stage in school, S3 and S4.
- Advertise apprenticeship pathway on an equal basis as university.
- More active learning in classes, not just paperwork.
- More regular revision tasks (retrieval practice).
- Corridor displays and artwork updated.
- Shinty club.
- High rate of leavers at the end of this session

Our Improvement Journey Headlines Session 2022/23

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: Empowerment

Primary focus: School Improvement – with direct links to 1.3 Leadership of Change, 1.2 Leadership of Learning

Year of Project: 1/3

Purpose:

- Empower pupil voice to improve their learning (learning conversations and target setting), learning and teaching at school (curriculum development), ethos of school and engagement in wider community.
- Empower staff to increase leadership capacity within school and school priorities set within school improvement framework
- Empower staff and school community to take ownership, confidence, and purpose around lesson observations, providing peer feedback and sharing good practice short term
- Empower parent/carers to engage with Improvement Framework constructively and positively
- Achieving UN. Rights Respecting Schools Bronze Award

Progress and impact:

- Lesson observation plans in place
- Lesson observations taken place in faculties with positive feedback from some departments. This has resulted in adaptations in some lessons.
- Building capacity within middle leadership team taking full ownership and accountability towards improvement projects.
- 100% of middle leadership feel like they have ownership of the changes they lead.
- 85% of middle leadership agree they have collective responsibility in the process of change
- 100% of middle leadership team understand the strategic direction of change
- 85 % of middle leadership team agreed that pace of change is managed well
- 85% of middle leadership team agree that all staff are able to contribute to school improvement plans
- 100% of leadership team agree that there is a clear vision and framework for improvement
- In September 2022 S6 pupils have engaged in a learning review session during a leadership week.
- A couple of senior pupils have engaged with local community council and are commended on the work they have done to support wider community
- Many pupils are empowered to take on school leadership roles such as school captains, school mentors, house captains (junior and senior), in class prefects, Duke of Edinburgh Award, Youth Philanthropy Initiative, Sports Leaders, Sport Ambassadors, Sport Committee
- Increased incorporation of UNCRC into BGE curriculum and assemblies
- Staff continue to actively take on leadership roles within school.

Good progress was made in this area.

Next steps:

- Lesson observations within and out with (2) faculty.
- Share outcomes of lesson observations
- Pupils (and staff) trained in providing constructive and positive feedback at focus groups
- Empower pupil voice in curriculum development, learning and teaching and assessment
- Continue to promote leadership at all levels by sharing opportunities and encourage/support individuals.
- Encourage collective responsibility for change at all levels by inspiring others to sustain collective commitment to shared vision through daily actions.
- Continue to develop approaches to empower staff and pupils to lead change in aspects of school improvement.
- Engage parents/carers in the evaluation and further development of School Improvement Projects
- Further develop and achieve UN Rights Respecting Schools Bronze award.

Improvement Project 2: Learning, teaching and assessment

Primary focus: School Improvement – Increasing attainment

Year of Project: 1/3

Purpose:

- Develop quality of learning and teaching
- Integrate DYW links within subjects
- Embed meta skills within subject
- Embed research based 'Teaching Sprints'

Progress and impact:

- Staff Insight training to increase understanding about subject data
- More in-depth course choice conversations including teaching staff
- New course introduced and explored due to knowledge and interest of the individual pupils and cohorts
- Learning & teaching focussed discussions highlighting best practice from across the school with outgoing S6 pupils

Very limited progress was made in this area due to long term staff absence and no DYW coordinator

Next steps – steer from Highland Council:

- Common agreement on what a good lesson looks like. Developing school framework in line with authority steer and pedagogical research
- Promote Teacher collaborative enquiry to improve consistency and quality of learning and teaching and further embed the use of 'teaching sprints'
- Staff to develop confidence in sharing their best practice and to implement or develop their own learning and teaching strategies.
- Pupil focus groups to be established to highlight and share excellent examples of learning and teaching.
- Staff collegiate to evaluate learning and teaching practices across the school against HGIOS4 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment challenge questions.

Improvement Project 3: Monitoring and Tracking

Primary focus: School Improvement

Year of Project: 2/3

Purpose:

- Develop a more consistent approach to monitoring and tracking across school to help pupils to achieve their potential
- Staff to use data to support positive impact on pupil accurate progress throughout pupil's school career (including evidence)
- Staff to use data to inform learning conversations
- ELT to support teaching staff to think about current pedagogy according to the needs of pupils/cohorts
- SLT to use data to inform whole-school curriculum development

Progress and impact:

- Increased use of tracking sheets which has resulted in a greater understanding of cohorts and interventions.

Good progress was made in this area.

Next steps:

- Consistent use across all year groups
- Supporting Learner conversations linked in with Pupil Empowerment Improvement Project
- Supporting teachers to think about pedagogy according to the individual/cohort needs linked in with Learning and Teaching Improvement Project
- Continue to expand our use of the TMR system and to develop a more refined Dashboard for analysing the data we gather.

Improvement Project 4: Wellbeing

Primary focus: School Improvement

Year of Project: 1/3

Purpose:

- Using the Equally Safe at School programme we aim to begin the process of undertaking a whole school project that instigates a cultural shift with staff and pupils and reduces any gender-based discrimination whilst promoting equality and inclusion for all.

Progress and impact:

- Baseline data from pupils and staff collated and shared with staff
- Staff training (e module) has been completed

Good progress was made in this area.

Next steps:

- Training module for staff by partner agency – RASASH
- Wellbeing Ambassadors what needs to change for pupils to report unwanted sexual behaviours.
- Explore support from partner agencies - RASASH - 9 workshops next year across S1/S2, S3/S4 & S5/S6
- Find similar partnership to help reduce homophobia,
- Share SIP with parent council and ask what family learning events/activities might help us all to promote gender equality and reduce sexual harassment and homophobia within our community.
- Establish steering group for ESAS

Improvement Project: Gaidhlig/ Gaelic

Primary focus: School Improvement

Year of Project: 1/3

Purpose:

- Clearer strategic direction and implementation of Gaelic across school.

Progress and impact:

- Gaelic Medium pupils engage with partners to support their learning and fluency.
- High uptake of Gaelic Learner and Ghaidhlig Medium in Senior Phase
- Inspiring report on Gaelic implementation by national report written by Education Scotland and published in National Improvement Framework

Good progress was made in this area.

Next steps:

- Our Young people in Gaelic Medium Education require continued total immersion.
- Continue with Gaelic links within community, regionally and nationally to support and use the Gaelic language in different contexts.

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

Very Good

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

Planning Ahead

Full details of the school's 2023/24 improvement priorities and actions are detailed on the school improvement plan, which can be accessed on our website or by contacting the school office.

www.gairlochhigh.org.uk