

Standards and Quality Report

2022/23

LOCHABER HIGH SCHOOL

Lochaber High School

HIGHLAND COUNCIL | CAMAGHAEL, FORT WILLIAM, PH33 7ND

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

Lochaber High School is a six-year comprehensive school which serves the town of Fort William and the greater Lochaber area. There are eight associated primary schools: Banavie, Bun-Sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar, Caol, Invergarry, Inverlochy, Lundavra, Spean Bridge and St Columba's.

The school stands in spectacular surroundings to the north of Fort William at the foot of Ben Nevis, and in typically light-hearted fashion, has been awarded the school with the most scenic setting in Scotland. The school is currently upgrading its grass pitches, and we are excited about the new Bike Park development on our grounds which will create further opportunities for many of our pupils.

The school curriculum is continually developing and improving, and we are looking to re-structure the curriculum in the coming year, however regardless of structure the content of our curriculum and the way courses are built are in line with national and regional educational thinking. In addition, we are always seeking ways to improve the quality of learning and teaching, and the school has an active Learning and Teaching Leadership group to drive forward improvements. The school has a high standing in the local community and beyond, and pupils do well in national exams.

The school operates a 33 period asymmetric week in line with other Highland schools, allowing access to courses from the 'Highland Virtual Academy'. Gaelic for learners, Gàidhlig (Gaelic Medium education) and Gaelic culture and heritage are important aspects of the school's ethos and help to define the school's identity in the local community. West Highland College UHI is a major partner in providing vocational courses as part of our DYW agenda. Almost all pupils leaving the school go on to positive leaver destinations.

60% of our pupils have an identified support need. In addition, we have 52 pupils who are supported directly by Social Work and 126 pupils supported by Health Services. In the last couple of years we have seen an increase in pupils struggling with mental health, and social, emotional and behavioural challenges. Our attendance is below the national average, and has dipped below 90% in the last two years. This is due to a post pandemic symptom, in so far as, school and education appear to be viewed differently by some of our community, and a drop in attendance sits within a particular client group. Actions that we have undertaken as a result of this are:

- We have restructured our Pupil Support (Guidance) Team to offer increased support to all young people.
- There is monthly tracking of pupil attendance accompanied by letters of attendance and latecoming being issued to parents.

- Working with Pupil Support (Guidance), our CSW works with pupils and families with concerning attendance levels. This has resulted in increased pupil re-engagement with learning and has been particularly successful in S4 pupils achieving a full range of SQA qualifications.
- We have additional Parents' Evenings which are led by Pupil Support (Guidance) to offer further support and advice to pupils and parents.
- Tutor Support has been refreshed and includes a number of revamped topics that were requested by staff and pupils. (See HMIE Welfare Questionnaire findings)
- We have further developed our partnership working with Highlife Highland; YAT (worked with two teams of vulnerable young people); Skills Development Scotland; Developing the Young Workforce (24 young people have taken part in work related activities); Lochaber Hope Counselling services can be accessed three days per week in the school as well as beyond school. (35 pupils were referred in February, and 45 in March of this year alone.) In addition, we have ten young people being mentored through MCR Pathways which has resulted in a decline in incident referrals and we have 14 pupils being considered for My Future My Success.

Vision, Values and Aims

Vision

Support, Challenge, Inspire!

Values

At Lochaber High School we wish to promote mutual respect, hard work and resilience. Equality, fairness and inclusion will underpin all that we do as we strive to nurture an able, confident and ambitious community.

Aims

At Lochaber High School we will:

- Strive to provide high quality learning and teaching which will challenge and inspire our young people to realise success.
- We will celebrate the uniqueness of our young people, our community and our learning environment.
- Encourage all our young people to develop their personal qualities and abilities by engaging positively with a wide range of activities and experiences within and beyond the curriculum.
- Value and treat everyone with fairness and respect so they feel included and nurtured within a caring, disciplined and supportive school community.
- Continue to develop productive partnerships with our associated local agencies to improve the well-being of our young people and families within our community.

Pupil Voice: what is working well in our school?

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

Health & Well-being Leadership group identified the following as being successful:

- Diversity Month
- Health & Well-being Days
- Support through the Chrome book webpage to access services such as health, counselling etc.
- Our HMIE Welfare Questionnaire stated:

1. Almost all pupils agree or strongly agree they feel safe at school (91%).
2. Most pupils agree or strongly agree they have someone in LHS they can speak to if they are upset or worried about something (88%).
3. Almost all pupils agree or strongly agree staff treat them fairly and with respect (92%).
4. Most pupils believe they are treated fairly and with respect by other pupils (75%).
5. Most pupils agree or strongly agree that their school helps them to understand and respect other people (83%).

Tutor Support

Guidance staff have now developed the majority of topics making them more relevant, interesting, enjoyable and progressive.

- We have a wide range of partner agencies visiting/presenting including Police Scotland, Connecting Young Carers, Skills Development Scotland and Women's Aid.
- Lessons are more interactive which pupils find engaging.
- There is more focus on key topics such as Mental and Emotional Wellbeing, Sexual Health and Relationships, Careers/Positive Destinations and Substance Awareness.
- There is increased support for pupils in the subject choice process.
- The anti-bullying topic is currently being developed and is being rebranded into key topics which are age/stage appropriate as well as relevant to our local needs.
- Pupils are experiencing national events as part of Tutor Support such as Dyslexia Week and Maths Week.

Learning & Teaching Survey revealed:

- Pupils are growing in confidence in their use of Knowledge Organisers and use them predominantly for revision.
- Pupils are appreciating the blended learning model possibilities, in other words, that much of their course work is on-line which is helping them to pace learning and better prepare for assessments.
- Pupils are acknowledging the benefits of starter tasks and retrieval practice to reinforce prior learning and promote the use of long term memory.
- Pupils acknowledge the level of feedback they receive to reinforce learning and to explore actions required to improve pupil learning.

Raising Attainment Leadership Group:

- Curricular Pathways information helped improve a more informed subject choice process.
- Almost all pupils felt better informed about subject choice from the work done in Tutor Support.
- 100% of S4 pupils got first choice across the range of subjects and most pupils got their first choice of subjects in S5/6.

Pupil Voice: what changes would you like to see made?

Our young people identified the following changes they would like to see:

- Continue to promote diversity and health and well-being events so that they feel represented, more self-aware and confident.
- Increase the opportunity for pupils to be able to discuss their achievements outwith school with an adult in school that knows them well.
- Increase the role of the Pupil Voice.

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: Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Primary focus: Teacher and practitioner professionalism

Year of Project: 3

Purpose: *This initiative is about standardising significant aspects of teaching practice based on cognitive science research, so that we establish a Lochaber High School approach to learning and teaching.*

Progress and impact:

Continue to develop suitable resources for G-Suite including effective ways to give regular formative pupil feedback

Every subject and every department has digitised most of their curriculum. Most pupils stated they used G-Suite for all of their classes and make use of Google Classrooms to review previous learning. There was a reorganisation of resources within subject Google Classrooms to help pupils revise for Prelims and SQA Exams. This allowed pupils to access the revision resources they required, and most Senior Phase pupils stated they found this helpful.

Pupils also stated that resources produced by teachers are clear as well as detailed. The majority of students agreed that working from past papers was helpful and a common feature used across the school. Other resources mentioned regularly and regarded as useful learning tools were: Quizlet, Blooket, Quizzes in class and flash cards. Scholar was also mentioned regularly in Science surveys and Sparx Maths was mentioned frequently in the Maths surveys.

All teachers will continue to deepen their skills in providing formative feedback based on Learning Intentions and Success Criteria.

Most pupils said they received feedback. There were many comments saying that both written and verbal feedback were given. Most feedback that was given was after assessments and pupils commented they understood the feedback was about helping them to improve and get more marks and the feedback identified areas of learning which required improving. Most students acknowledged they received 1-1 feedback either written or verbal and they felt confident about asking for clarity. In addition, pupils identified whole class feedback was given by teachers as a feature of classroom practice. Whole class feedback was a strategy to clarify and remedy common mistakes. The majority of students stated they feel they are being given positive reinforcement in class.

All teachers will continue to develop activities which will improve pupil recall such as daily, weekly, monthly review.

Around 90% of pupils surveyed said that starter tasks were used regularly. Comments from the pupil survey stated that starter tasks helped them get focussed for the lesson, and helped them understand topics better. Around 80% of pupils said retrieval practice activities were used regularly with some pupils commenting that retrieval practice helped them remember previously taught material. They also stated it helped identify gaps in knowledge in addition to being useful for discovering areas that need more revision. Furthermore, senior pupils highlighted that starter tasks were a good reminder of exam topics or previous topics learned; it was a form of revision and acted as good reminders of learning that pupils would not have remembered if they were revising independently.

As a strategy to promote critical thinking skills as well as provide sound feedback to learners, teachers will continue to develop their questioning skills such as “pose, pause, pounce, bounce.”

79.2% of staff believe they promote critical thinking by effective questioning. This appears to be contradicted by 36.8% of pupils believing their teacher helps them think about their learning through questioning. However, if we consider 38% of pupils believe they think about their learning by having discussions with their teacher or fellow pupils, and 5.1% of pupils believe they think about their learning through activities like think, pair, share, then there may not be a great disparity between the points of view between teachers and pupils. Another related statistic is that 60% of pupils believe they understand what they are learning by answering questions, and 27.3% by discussing topics with friends or fellow pupils.

Teachers will continue to provide increased opportunities within lessons and in homework for pupils to practise what is being taught.

94.7% of staff felt they gave enough practice opportunities for pupils in class or as part of homework exercises. 92.6% of pupils feel they get enough practice opportunities either in class or for homework. However, when asked about practising at home only 35.3% of pupils stated they practised weekly, 5.8% daily and 47.4% stated they practised at home sometimes.

In total, there was an investment of eight formal CPD sessions covering the above named aspects of pedagogy as well as further practitioner enquiry sessions led by our Principal Teacher of Learning and Teaching. Two whole school professional learning activities were led by the author of the Teaching Delusion, Bruce Robertson. Furthermore, our Professional Reading Group continued to share educational literature and our Learning and Teaching Leadership Group continued to share good practice. For example, in this month there is a two week staff observation activity underway where staff are showcasing effective or experimental practice, being observed by colleagues, after which professional dialogue is taking place based on teaching practice.

Next steps:

- We will continue with the promotion of practitioner enquiry by adopting a Teaching Sprints model.

- We will continue to share good practice through the review process as part of the Teaching Sprints model at departmental meetings.
- We will continue to invest collegiate time in sharing good practice.

Improvement Project 2: Curriculum

Primary focus: Curriculum and assessment

Year of Project: 3

Purpose: *This initiative is about creating an awareness of the curriculum in its entirety, reshaping it where appropriate to create opportunities to deepen learning, as well as emphasising the importance of knowledge as a foundation for skills.*

Progress and impact:

Review curriculum architecture and build the most effective model for LHS.

After researching different architectural models, the SLT presented three models for staff to evaluate. There were a number of phases to our school's consultation and a final decision has been made about the agreed model moving forward. At this stage we cannot obviously measure impact on our pupils, however it is hoped that the new model will help promote the development of more robust assessment within S1/S2; deepen learning across S3/S4 better preparing young people for the Senior Phase; and will broaden the curricular experience with the implementation of NPAs.

Create a structure to recognise the skills achieved by learners across the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities which lead to SQA Awards (SCQF). *The Ambassador programme has been initiated. There was 42 S6 students leading across a number of areas such as House, Sports and Learning and Teaching. This has been documented in UCAS applications and we have anecdotal evidence that such broadening of experiences has helped and supported applicants to university. As part of the Ambassador programme, five pupils achieved an SQA Award and/or Volunteering award. This offer will be expanded to all new S6 students, and indeed to all other senior phase pupils.*

Subject topics and accompanying assessments will be aligned or arranged as appropriate across the curriculum to promote depth of learning.

There has been limited alignment and cross curricular collaboration between PE and Geography in "water safety"; there has been greater collaboration across S1/S2 science courses, we have collaboration with many community partners and pupils to deliver our Health and Well-being days; we have an improved Tutor Support programme, and we had further collaboration between English and Languages in our Diversity Month. The impact of our Diversity Month requires a particular mention because it put a group of pupils at the forefront of change; it helped have their identity recognised and promoted a sense of recognition and belonging to the school.

Teachers will continue to develop knowledge organisers (revision notes) to support key topics in BGE as well as the Senior Phase.

Knowledge Organisers have been developed across the curriculum at all stages. In fact almost all departments are using them on a regular basis to support retrieval practice and revision particularly in preparation for assessments including Prelims and final exams. In our Senior Phase Learning and Teaching survey, almost all pupils are recognising KOs help support their learning and support students in retaining knowledge and applying skills. Around 75% of pupils said they use knowledge organisers regularly and comments were that these were very helpful as they have everything in one place so it's quick and easy to find information and were useful revision resources that could be used at home or in class. Those students who stated that KOs were not used often, did mention other resources that were used instead of Knowledge Organisers like revision booklets.

Next steps:

- Continue to develop and implement inter-disciplinary learning based on key themes.
- Develop robust and proportionate summative assessment within S1/S2 programmes of learning.
- Develop S3/S4 programmes of learning in line with the proposed changes to curriculum architecture.
- Continue to promote and use curricular pathways information to support subject choice and career pathways.

Improvement Project 3: Well-being, Equality and Inclusion

Primary focus: Teacher and practitioner professionalism

Year of Project: 3

Purpose: *This initiative is about promoting social, emotional and mental well-being.*

Progress and impact:

All staff will ensure all learners are familiar with SHANARRI indicators: (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included) by referring learners to the LHS HWB logo on their chromebooks and accompanying information displayed in all classroom and department noticeboards.

HWB display boards are across the school. All staff are aware of the SHANARRI indicators and use them to measure pupil need. All staff feed into our referral system, and by using our Dashboard data we have a firm grasp of pupil performance, effort; behaviour, and with our Guidance Team and Senior Leadership Team we are fully aware of pupil needs in terms of safety, health issues etc. All staff use the GIRFEC framework to ensure pupils are supported at all stages of their learning, and all staff refer pupils, when appropriate, to the HWB page on their chromebooks. Every week pupils are being sign-posted to suitable support within and without the building. Our positive tracker informs early intervention for those pupils who are struggling with their effort and behaviour. This has led to a reduction in incidents. 34 pupils were working with bespoke targets through using Support Cards, 17 of whom no longer require such support. According to our HMIE Welfare Questionnaire: most pupils agree or strongly agree they feel safe at school; that LHS helps

them to feel safe; they have someone in LHS they can speak to if they are upset or worried about something; and staff treat them fairly and with respect.

All teaching and support staff will promote and engage with termly whole school health and well-being events within the BGE.

We have embedded Health and Well-being days for S1-S3 across each term where the curriculum is suspended for the day and a range of workshops and experiences are organised for our pupils. The themes of the workshops come from the information we gather from the community as well as the pupil and staff Health and Well-being Leadership group. External partners, as well as some senior students, deliver the workshops. This has broadened in the two years with our LGBTQ+ month, which has broadened further into our Diversity month. The Diversity Month is being delivered in partnership working between staff, pupils and now the local community. The town of Fort William is now holding its awareness events in line with LHS. Once again the HMIE Welfare Questionnaire states: that most pupils agree or strongly agree that LHS teaches them how to lead a healthy lifestyle; there are lots of chances at school to get regular exercise; school offers the opportunity to take part in activities in school beyond the classroom and timetabled day; they have the opportunity to discuss their achievements out with school with an adult in school that knows them well, and the majority of pupils agree or strongly agree their school listens to their views.

All staff will share and promote the school's updated vision, values and aims when finally agreed.

At each pupil assembly and staff meeting some or all aspects of our Vision, Values and Aims are shared. VVAs are referred to in most classrooms according to our Learning and Teaching Survey, and according to our HMIE Welfare Questionnaire almost all pupils to most pupils, depending on the year group, agree or strongly agree that staff treat them fairly and with respect.

Next steps:

- The Pupil Voice requires to be further developed.
- Pupil Achievements require to be further recognised.
- Our actions around Well-being, Equality and Inclusion require to be subsumed into the school moving forward to be a Rights Respecting School.

Evaluation of Progress

We believe we have made the following progress this session:

Quality Indicator	School self-evaluation
Leadership of Change	1.3 Good
	2.3 Good

**Learning, teaching and
assessment**

3.1 Good
**Ensuring wellbeing, equality
and inclusion**

3.2 Satisfactory
**Raising attainment and
achievement**

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

Theme 1 Good
Our relationships

Theme 2 Good
Our learning and teaching

Theme 3 Good
Our school and community

Theme 4 Good
Our health and wellbeing

Theme 5 Satisfactory
**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.

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.