

STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT

2022/23



Ness Castle Primary School

HIGHLAND COUNCIL | Brodie Road, Inverness, IV2 6FW

Introduction: Local and National Context

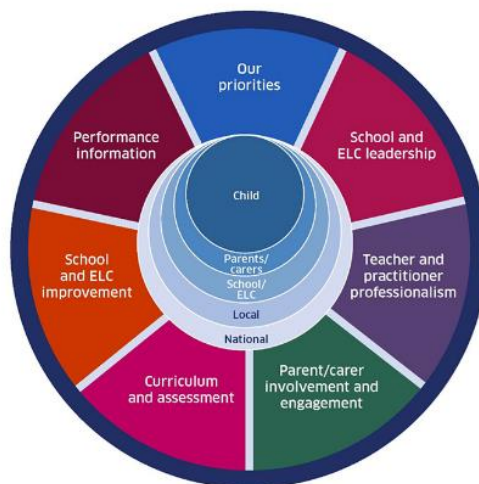
Ro-ràdh: Co-theacsa Ionadail agus Nàiseanta

This Standards and Quality Report is influenced by both Highland and national priorities. These can be summarised as follows:

Highland Priorities



National Improvement Framework Priorities



Entitlement, Excellence & Equity:

We will raise attainment and achievement for all, especially for children and young people from disadvantaged circumstances, including rural deprivation. We will focus relentlessly on improving standards and the quality of learning and teaching, to ensure that entitlement, equity and excellence are delivered across the system.

Empowerment & Leadership:

We will develop leadership skills at all levels of the system, for now and the future, building a culture of empowerment and professional capital.

Relationships:

We will maximise health and wellbeing for all children and young people, to give them the best possible start in life. We will ensure every child and young person feels part of the community they live in.

Opportunity:

We will maximise opportunities for our children and young people, and for the wider Highland community and its visitors, through the provision of high-quality services.

The key priorities outlined in the National Improvement Framework are:

- Placing the **human rights and needs of every child** and young person at the centre of education
- Improvement in children and young people's **health and wellbeing**
- **Closing the attainment gap** between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
- Improvement in skills and **sustained, positive school-leaver destinations** for all young people
- **Improvement in attainment**, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

Self-evaluation

To support self-evaluation, quality indicators from the national evaluative framework How Good Is Our School?4 are referenced.

Links to these sources (and others referenced) can be found here:

- [National Improvement Framework Improvement Plan](#)
- [HGIOS? 4](#) and [HGIOELC](#)
- [Health and Social Care Standards](#)
- [National Gaelic Language Plan](#)

In this report the following words are used to describe the numbers and proportions used:

All	Almost all	Most	Majority	Less than half	Few
100%	91% - 99%	76% - 90%	51% - 75%	16% - 50%	Up to 15%

We are pleased to present our Standards and Quality Report for Session 2022-23. This report forms part of our quality improvement framework and provides important information regarding our school's progress to date and our next steps in school improvement.

Self-Evaluation for Self-Improvement is at the heart of our practice. We continue to develop our practice in making robust use of evidence as a basis for judgements regarding the impact of our work on our learners. All staff understand that self-evaluation is an integral aspect of our approach to continuous improvement through addressing the 3 key questions:

- How well are we doing?
- How do we know?
- What are we going to do now?

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. We inform decision making and actions through a continuous process of looking inwards, outwards and forwards.

Looking inwards - starts with those working with our children and young people

We focus on the impact on outcomes for learners. Our self-evaluation processes triangulate information, data, people's views and observation of practice to measure impact and inform planning for improvement.

Looking outwards - learning from others

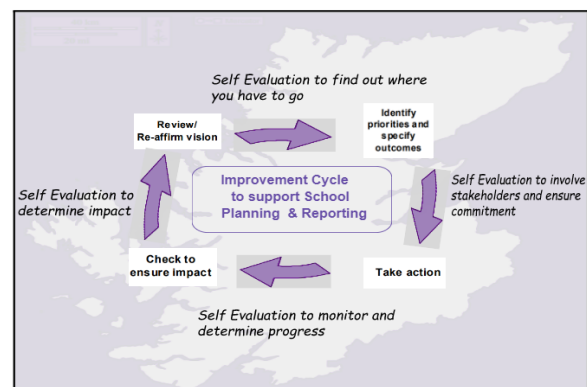
Looking to others for new ideas that challenge our practice and support continuous improvement allows us to learn from what works and what doesn't. This includes practice in other schools, learning communities and learning from educational research.

Looking forwards - creating a vision and planning for implementation

Through leadership at all levels, we anticipate challenges and explore creative solutions. This helps us to create an aspirational vision for our school which shapes our actions and provides a focus for 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 to shape our improvement journey.

When we develop our improvement plan, we use key questions at scheduled review times throughout the session to know how well we are progressing towards achieving these positive outcomes and changes.



Together we are working hard to ensure the Highlands is the best place for children and young people to grow up safely, learn, develop and achieve.

With positive experiences, our children and young people will always see the Highlands as home.

Le eòlasan deimhinneach, bidh ar cloinn is ar n-òigridh daonnan a' faicinn na Gàidhealtachd mar dhachaigh.

Craig Connon
Head Teacher
Ness Castle Primary School

School Profile

Pròifil na Sgoile

The following information can be found on [Parentzone Scotland](#). It is important to remember that statistical data alone is not a measure of how well we are doing. All schools are unique. To understand how well we are doing it is important for us to look at a range of different data sources.

Information as at 14th June 2023

Attendance 91.4%		Average Class Size 21		Meeting PE Target Target Met				
Pupil Numbers (inc. ELC) School - 180		Teacher Numbers 7		Pupil Teacher Ratio 17:1				
N4 17%	N4 14%	P1 19%	P2 12%	P3 8%	P4 11%	P5 11%	P6 7%	P7 0%
SIMD Q1¹ 0%	SIMD Q2 0%	SIMD Q2 0%	SIMD Q3 90+%	SIMD Q5 0%	Unknown 0%			
ASN² 28%	No ASN 72%	FSM³ 23%	No FSM 77%	EAL⁴ 11%	No EAL 89%			

2022/23 Proportions of pupils achieving Curriculum for Excellence Levels (P1, P4, P7 combined):

Reading	Writing	Listening and talking	Numeracy
Majority	Majority	Most	Majority

We have had no exclusions this year.

School vision, values and aims

Lèirsinn, luachan agus amasan na sgoile

As a new school we are yet to formulate and confirm our Vision, Values and Aims as we only moved into our new building at the end of February.

This is one of our main priorities on next session's Improvement Plan, ensuring all stakeholders are involved in the exciting process.

¹ SIMD – The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is a relative measure of deprivation.

² ASN – Additional Support Needs

³ FSM – Free school meal entitlement

⁴ EAL – English as an additional language

Review of progress for session

Ath-sgrùdadh air adhartas airson an t-seisein

These projects are linked to the vision and priorities for Scottish Education based on delivering excellence and equity. Parent/Carer information is available [here](#).

School Priority:

COMMUNITY – To establish Ness Castle as the heart of the community

Purpose:

As a new school, within a new housing estate, there is no hub to the community. It is vitally important to ensure Ness Castle becomes this hub, with all stakeholders being welcome and involved in developing and maintaining this.

Progress:

- ✓ Develop our Ness Castle Vision, Values and Aims, through consultation with all stakeholders
- ✓ Ensure all our stakeholders feel part of the community
- ✓ Create a relevant House System which includes all pupils and staff and select House and Vice Captains to form a Junior Leadership Team
- ✓ Establish Pupil Voice Groups and Committees across our school, where all children are involved.
- ✓ Promote the importance of parental engagement and involvement in school improvement through;
- ✓ Establish a school communication strategy which allows us to promote the school, share our story as well as share learning including

Impact:

- ✓ Due to a later than expected entry to our new school building, this element of the priority will be continued into next session
- ✓ Through Meet the Teacher, Literacy Open Afternoon, ELC Stay, Play and Learn Session and New School Tours our stakeholders (including parents/carers, family members and local community members feel part of our new school community.
- ✓ Establishing our House system (of local Castles) as well as nominating House and Vice Captains has supported the building of our community. House visits to each of the Houses helped to build the team feeling within each House.
- ✓ Successful Nessie Natter Groups, involving children from P1 – P6 in each group, has allowed purposeful pupil voice to be established in the areas of Rights, Development Goals, Health and Wellbeing, Our School Library and Outdoor Learning.
- ✓ Our strong Parent Council and Fundraising Group have supported the school financially and in making decisions for our new school's identity and way forward.
- ✓ Parents/carers and the local community feel well informed of our school and ELC development as well sharing events and learning opportunities. This has been through monthly newsletters, our school class blogs, ELC Facebook page and use of the School App for Parents.

Next steps:

Next session we plan to continue COMMUNITY as a School Priority, focusing on;

- ✓ Developing and promoting our school's Vision, Values and Aims
- ✓ Adapting our Nessie Natter Pupil Voice Groups to make them more target focused and meaningful by reducing the number of groups but adding a "Community" focus group
- ✓ Creating a Parent Engagement and Involvement Calendar to ensure we are capturing purposeful voice through planned feedback sessions, focus groups and to support curriculum development.

School Priority:

CURRICULUM – Establish our Curriculum Rationale, considering “What Makes Ness Castle Unique?”

Purpose:

A curriculum rationale is vital position statement, created in conjunction with all stakeholders, that sets out the framework for meeting the needs of all Ness Castle learners. Creating a contextualised Curriculum Rationale will identify what we want for our learners and what we are going to do to achieve it. Our shared values are necessary as they inform our rationale and we must consider the four contexts of learning (ethos and life of Ness Castle, our curriculum areas and subjects, interdisciplinary learning and opportunities for personal achievement).

Progress:

- ✓ Discussions around the Big Picture, to ensure the whole staff team have the same basic understanding of the elements of a good curriculum going forward. This will include a focus on the 7 Principles, 4 contexts of learning, 4 capacities and 8 curricular areas
- ✓ Develop an understanding of “What makes Ness Castle unique?” – our context, area, SIMD, aspirations...

- ✓ Create Progressive Learning Pathways for all 8 curricular areas – staff identifying good practice from previous establishments and adapt as appropriate

- ✓ From “What makes Ness Castle unique?” discussions, decide on way forward for IDL planning in the school to make it relevant, skills based and creative, considering all learning styles and building in appropriate high quality assessments.
- ✓ Build an Annual Curriculum Overview, which takes into account all aspects of the curriculum

- ✓ Play Pedagogy to be implemented within ELC and P1 by experienced staff. P1 staff to consider ways of planning, observing, assessing and reporting on this curriculum format
- ✓ A particular curricular focus on **Literacy**, including CLPL and curriculum development throughout the session.

Impact:

- ✓ Teaching staff have an understanding of the importance of the 7 Principles of Curriculum Design, the 4 contexts of learning, the 4 capacities and 8 curricular areas. These all lie at the heart of the curriculum work we undertake at Ness Castle.
- ✓ All staff (School and ELC) have, across the course of our first year, developed an understanding of our local area, the local context and the children and families in our school community. This has allowed us to support their needs individualities
- ✓ Collating ideas staff have around each of the curricular areas, all having had a range of different experiences, has allowed us to begin on this journey, using the Highland Council pathways as a starting point.
- ✓ An initial IDL planning format has been created, with elements of skills and responsiveness being evident. This will continue to develop and evolve,

- ✓ Our collegiately created Annual Overview has helped staff to focus their teaching and spread learning opportunities across the whole year.
- ✓ Children in Primary 1 have had a progressive year, building on their experiences in ELC
- ✓ We have begun to develop our literacy curricular, considering elements of resources and assessment. This will be continued into next session.

Next steps:

Next session we plan to continue CURRICULUM as a School Priority, focusing on;

- ✓ Adapting our progressive pathways as we get to know the pupils we are teaching even better.
- ✓ Piloting an adapted format for IDL planning with incorporates elements of High Quality Assessment
- ✓ Auditing and developing our Literacy curriculum within the school and ELC
- ✓ Ensuring our ELC is as literacy rich as possible – both in the environment and interactions between adults and children.

School Priority: CONSISTENCY – Establish a consistent approach to Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Purpose:

In setting up the new school, we are in the unique position to ensure a level of consistency from the outset. There are no preconceptions of what "the Ness Castle way" is going to be like, so we are able to work as a team from the very beginning to ensure we have a realistic and purposeful consistency across the school.

Progress:

- ✓ Establish a baseline of attainment levels/data for the pupils in our school, including elements of ASN, and record these within our new Tracking and Monitoring Spreadsheet.
- ✓ Develop a programme of Attainment Meetings which are purposeful and very much pupil and class level focused. Establish the Fact, Story, Action approach to these meetings
- ✓ Our planning procedures in the school will be developed collegiately and should be responsive to the needs of the pupils, streamlined and manageable. (School and ELC)
- ✓ Following establishment of our ASN baseline in the school, our approaches to recording and supporting all levels of ASN (Form 1 – Stage 4) will be confirmed. (School and ELC)
- ✓ A consistent approach to what good learning and teaching/a good lesson looks like/features in Ness Castle will be agreed.
- ✓ A consistent understanding to the process of moderation, and what moderation is, will be established across all teaching staff in the IRA ASG.

Impact:

- ✓ TMR system was implemented and adapted throughout the session. Class teachers having access to and submitting this data has made them more data aware of the children in their class. We now have a baseline for the children in Ness Castle that we will build from.
- ✓ Highland Council format for P1 and P4 Attainment discussions has been taken on for all stages in the school, focusing in on focus children who we can make a difference with. This has focused staff attention on these pupils. This will continue to be rolled out next session.
- ✓ School forward planning has focused on the "big picture", looking at annual overviews and IDL planning. Highland Council planning for literacy and numeracy has allowed staff to follow a progression for their class. This will continue to be streamlined in the coming session, focusing more on the voice of the pupils too.
- ✓ ELC planning has involved staff collegiately planning for different areas. This continues to evolve and improve, where child's interests have become more prominent as the year has progressed.
- ✓ A baseline approach to recording ASN has been established, ensuring Stage 3 and 4 children have been supported successfully. A particular focus on Stage 1 and 2 children, by DHT, ASNT and class teachers going forward will help support an increase in the overall school attainment levels.
- ✓ Staff are all aware of the main elements of good learning and teaching – through previous experience and ASG training, This element will continue into next session.
- ✓ ASG training on the Moderation (Learning, Teaching and Assessment) cycle has flagged up areas where staff across the ASG are less confident. This will be our focus for the coming session.

Next steps:

- ✓ ASG focus on Differentiation and Assessment Stops going forward, using Power Up Your Pedagogy Professional Reading as the main driver.
- ✓ Continued focus on What Makes a Good Lesson, developing a collegiate approach to this, will ensure consistency of approach across our school.
- ✓ A consistent and streamlined approach to the promotion of positive behaviour across the school will be agreed and implemented, using professional reading and a rights-based approach.
- ✓ A calendar of Self Evaluation will be created and implemented, ensuring we have a consistent approach to this, involving all stakeholders in the process.
- ✓ We need to develop our approaches to Pupil Profiling, ensuring they are effective, manageable and streamlined, again providing a consistency across the school, from P1 – P7.
- ✓ An audit of our current approaches to planning and observation in the ELC will ensure these approaches are as effective as possible.

Progress and impact of Pupil Equity Fund

Adhartas agus buaidh Maoin Cothromas Sgoilearan

Over the course of the last session, we have been getting to know our children across the school. The context of the school is extremely mixed, with the actual SIMD levels not being reflective of the level of need within our families. Using our PEF to provide our DHT the time to do this, also being the lead for ASN, has ensured we now have a clear overview of the individual families and their needs. Having this baseline will allow us, going forward, to provide a far more targeted intervention approach to individuals and their families.

Wider achievements

Coileanaidhean nas fharsaing

Across the course of the session, the Ness Castle team have shared many successes that we are extremely proud of. It's been important for us to share our school's development as wide as possible, using our school website (which includes class blogs) and twitter accounts to great effect, as well as monthly "Nessie Natter" Newsletters. Our ELC have also established a very successful closed Facebook page to share their learning with parents. We have also invested in the School App for Parents which has been a great, simple way of keeping in touch with our parent body.

Our Parent Council have organised a number of extremely successful events – to raise money for the school but also to promote and establish ourselves as a hub of the local community. These have included The Great Nessie Bake Off, Pumpkin Carving, participation in the Inverness 5k and an extremely successful Spring Fayre, bringing the local community into our new building.

As a school, we have participated in sporting events including Interschools Cross Country, Interschools Athletics (being the Murray Challenge Trophy winners) and the Baillie Cup. We also had a team compete in the Euro Quiz and Maths Challenge.

We have supported a number of different charitable organisations and events throughout the year, including the Highland Food Bank, Highland Hospice and Children in Need.

In May we welcomed the current Children's Laureate, Joseph Coelho, to the school. He delivered a wonderful poetry workshop, for our pupils and pupils from our neighbouring schools of Holm and Lochardil. He then officially opened our new school library

Wider individual achievements are shared at a monthly Celebrating Achievements Assembly, as well as Nessie Knighthoods being awarded on a weekly basis, with each class teacher selecting a weekly winner who is knighted at our Assembly.

The wider achievement we are most proud of is our nomination and shortlisting as the Highland Heroes School of the Year. Although we didn't win the category, the fact we were shortlisted within the first six months of opening was a phenomenal success for our parents/families, staff and, in particular, the children of the school and ELC.



Comments from learners, families, stakeholders and staff

Beachdan bho luchd-ionnsachaidh, teaghlachan, luchd-ùidhe is luchd-obrach

Across the course of the session, we have undertaken a range of different consultations, looking for feedback and actions for our way forward.

This was collated and shared with parents/carers in a number of different Newsletters and formats, a couple of examples being below:

You Said We Did

Thank you to all of the parents and carers who responded to our questionnaire before we moved building in February. We have used your responses to help inform and prioritise our developments over our first 12 weeks in the new building as detailed below.

Share your views on how well we care for, nurture and know your child...

YOU SAID	WE DID
My child is very happy in the ELC. He loves all of the staff and they are all fantastic. He's well known by everyone which I understand can be challenging when you have multiple teachers and lots of children! Know my child well	We really appreciate all the positive comments that you have shared regarding our care and nurture for the children in ELC. In our new building we are working hard to continue to provide the same quality of care and nurture.
Child is really cared for and staff know her well	We will:
I feel my child is well cared for in the ELC environment. All staff seem aware of likes and dislikes and encourage the same Very surprised with so cared and lovely staff, every day they spent some time talking what my daughter was doing and eating and they know her very well only after 4 weeks she started! They doing so well, well done!!! I can not fault the care and provision my child receives at the nursery. The staff are wonderful and caring and the activities are engaging and educational. Very well. Always notified of any bumps. Comes home and tell us what they have been up to. Documents for any accidents well. Great communication.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop whole team confidence in using the Highland Council Words Up approach to provide consistent, quality, nurturing interactions between staff and children. Continue to support our temporary and new staff to offer a consistently high level of care. Continue to self-evaluate our care and nurture practice to build on our strengths and identify any aspects to improve.

A Snapshot from our ELC Newsletter, June '23

OUR FANTASTIC NEW BUILDING!

The children have all settled so well into our new building – all now very at home in our new space. It was also great to let parents/carers see it on our first week as well as members of the local community getting a sneak peek during the Spring Fair.

Thank you to those of you who sent in a response to our New Building Tour questionnaire. Some of the comments are below:

The sensory rooms and all the new equipment in each class are my favourite parts. The new Nessies all have such an amazing opportunity.

The library is brilliant. Not all kids have such ready access to a library, amazing to have it on their doorstep. Beautiful, bright and airy. Certainly a positive atmosphere.

I love the new building. My favourite is the gym hall and the cafeteria is spacious and bright.

It was just wonderful! Great spaces and good layout! Loved the nursery. What a difference to have so much space.

An amazing facility to help grow and nurture children. We can't wait to see our children grow in this amazing school and community. Love how proud the children and staff are showing everyone around.

A Snapshot from our Nessie Natter Newsletter, Apr/May '23

VALUES CONSULTATION

As part of the questionnaire before leaving our Home @ Holm, we asked for three words to describe what you wanted our ELC and/or School to be for your child. The results of this can be found within the star on the left, with the larger the word, the more people saying it. This is a perfect introduction to the consultation which will start over the coming weeks, considering what our School/ELC values will be going forward. I plan to work with the children, staff, Parent Council, general parent body and wider community to come up with a selection of values and then take a vote on it. Get your thinking cap on and I will share a consultation over the next few weeks!

Capacity for continuous improvement

Comas airson leasachadh leantainneach

Using indicators from 'How Good is our School 4' together with learner, parent, carer, partner and community feedback we believe we have made the following progress this session:

	ELC	PRIMARY	SECONDARY
QI 1.3 Leadership of change	Good	Good	Choose an item.
QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Good	Good	Choose an item.
QI 3.1 Wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Good	Good	Choose an item.
QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement/Securing children's progress	Good	Good	Choose an item.

Our overall evaluation of our capacity for continuous improvement is:

We are confident in our capacity for continuous improvement.

Key priorities for improvement planning

Prìomhachasan airson planadh airson leasachadh

Going forward, our improvement priorities for the coming session are:

- ✓ **COMMUNITY** – *Continuing to promote Ness Castle as the heart of the local community, ensuring everyone's voice is heard.*
- ✓ **CURRICULUM** – *Continuing to develop the Ness Castle curriculum, ensuring it is relevant, inclusive and aspirational.*
- ✓ **CONSISTENCY** – *Continuing to develop a consistent approach to learning, teaching and assessment across our school (and learning and observation across our ELC).*

Planning ahead

A' planadh air adhart

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:

<https://sites.google.com/invernessroyalacademy.org.uk/nesscastleprimary> or by contacting the school office