

Agenda Item	8.
Report No	CC/10/23

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee:	Caithness Committee
Date:	29 May 2023
Report Title:	Education HMI Update - Caithness
Report By:	Executive Chief Officer - Education & Learning

1.	Purpose/Executive Summary
1.1	Through inspection, HMI aim to promote improvement in all of our schools and innovation that enhances learners' experiences as well as providing assurance to stakeholders. HMI focus on the quality of young people's learning and outcomes and the school's capacity to improve.
1.2	<p>HMI evaluate how well a school is performing in a range of key areas. They use quality indicators (QIs) from How good is our school 4th Edition – Appendix 2</p> <p>HMI carry out inspections using a variety of models. This includes a full model inspection which covers four QIs, and a short model inspection which covers two QIs.</p> <p>The full inspection model used in Wick High School use quality indicators (Qis) from HGIOS4 which evaluate on a six-point scale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.3 Leadership of Change 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment 3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion <p>A further QI for focus is also chosen by the school. This QI will not be evaluated using the six-point scale.</p>
2.	Recommendations
2.1	<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note the key strengths and next steps for Wick High School as reported by Education Scotland on 21 March 2023

3.	Implications
3.1	Resource: There is no financial implication of this report.
3.2	Legal: There is no legal implication of this report.
3.3	Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural): There are no specific implication in this report regarding community.
3.4	Climate Change / Carbon Clever: There is no implication in this area due to this report.
3.5	Risk: Collaborative Lead Officers will work closely with the Head Teacher and the school with regards to next steps.
3.6	Gaelic: None
4.	Overview
4.1	<p>HMI from Education Scotland visited Wick High School in December 2022. During the visit, they talked to parents/carers and young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. At the time of the visit the Senior Leadership Team consisted of the Acting Head Teacher, two Depute Head Teachers and two Acting Depute Head Teachers.</p> <p>During the inspection week, some of the young people were engaging in remote learning as a consequence of the bad weather.</p>
4.2	Attendance was found to be generally in line with the national average. It was recognised that since the pandemic, senior leaders had identified increased patterns of absence as a consequence of COVID-19 and were putting in place strategies to address absences.
4.3	Exclusions were found to be generally below the national average and have reduced over recent years. In February 2022, 21% of pupils were registered for free school meals. This is significantly above the national average of 18%. In September 2021, 22% of pupils lived in 20% of the most deprived datazones in Scotland. In September 2021, the school reported that 40% of pupils had additional support needs.
4.4	<p>The Inspectors found the following strengths in the school's work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The leadership of the Acting Head Teacher in creating an aspirational culture, well supported by Depute Head Teachers and faculty heads. This was found to underpin collaborative approaches by all staff which improved outcomes for young people. - Positive relationships which supported a climate for learning. Staff and young people was found to treat each other with respect, fostering a calm and orderly learning environment.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Young people who identify strongly with their community. Young people were friendly, keen to learn and took pride in their contributions to the life and work of their school and local area. - 										
4.5	<p>Education Scotland's evaluations for Wick High School:</p> <table> <thead> <tr> <th>Quality Indicators:</th> <th>Evaluation:</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Leadership of change</td> <td>good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Learning, teaching, and assessment</td> <td>good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ensuring wellbeing, equality, and inclusion</td> <td>satisfactory</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Raising attainment and achievement</td> <td>satisfactory</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Quality Indicators:	Evaluation:	Leadership of change	good	Learning, teaching, and assessment	good	Ensuring wellbeing, equality, and inclusion	satisfactory	Raising attainment and achievement	satisfactory
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Leadership of change	good										
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5.	Next Steps										
5.1	<p>The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from The Highland Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create learner pathways which better meet the needs of all young people. This includes working more closely with partners to plan a wide range of experiences. This will support young people to maximise their individual skills and talents in their future lives. - Further develop approaches to the health and wellbeing of young people as a whole school responsibility. This includes providing young people with more opportunities to be actively involved in decision-making. - Raise attainment by setting appropriate and aspirational goals for young people that promote ambition and support learners to achieve the best outcomes possible. - Developing further consistent approaches to assessment will enable staff and young people to identify effective targets which will meet better young people's learning needs. 										
5.2	<p>Education Scotland is confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and will make no further visits in connection with this inspection.</p> <p>The Highland Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.</p>										
5.3	Please see (Appendix 1) for full Education Scotland report, published 21 March 2023										
	<p>Designation: Executive Chief Officer – Education & Learning</p> <p>Date: 11 May 2023</p> <p>Author: Annika Jansson - Area Education & Learning Manager</p>										