

The Highland Council

Agenda Item	10a
Report No	CC/08/26

Committee: Caithness and Black Isle and Easter Ross
Date: 19.01.26
Report Title: Thurso High Associated School Group Overview
Report By: Assistant Chief Executive – People

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1

This report provides an update of key information in relation to the schools within the Thurso High Associated School Group (ASG) and provides useful updated links to further information in relation to these schools.

- 1.2 The primary schools in this area serve 783 pupils, ELC settings serve 194 children (144 in LA settings and 50 in Partner settings as at September Census), with the secondary school serving 707 young people.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:

i. Scrutinise and note the content of the report

3 Implications

- 3.1 Resource

There is no financial implication of this report.

- 3.2 Legal

There is no implication on community in this report.

- 3.3 Risk

The Service is committed to a sustained focus on progress and improvement to mitigate against the risk of under-performance which impacts on children and young people being able to achieve their full potential.

- 3.4 Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)

There are no health and safety risks arising from this report.

- 3.5 Gaelic

Continued improvements in primary phase Gaelic Medium Education attainment will support progress in secondary.

4 Impacts

- 4.1

In Highland, all policies, strategies or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children's Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.

- 4.2

Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.

- 4.3

This is an update report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

5 School website links

5.1 Secondary -

[Link to Thurso High website](#)

Primary -

[Link to School information on Highland Council website](#)

School	Link to School Webpage
Castletown Primary	Castletown Primary website
Crossroads Primary	Crossroads Primary website
Halkirk Primary	Halkirk Primary website
Miller Academy Primary	Miller Academy Primary website
Mount Pleasant Primary	Mount Pleasant Primary website
Pennyland Primary	Pennyland Primary website
Reay Primary	Reay Primary website

5.2 Standards and Quality Reports – latest reports

School	Leadership of change	Learning, teaching and assessment	Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Raising attainment and achievement
Castletown Primary	Good	Good	Good	Good
Crossroads Primary	Good	Good	Very Good	Good
Halkirk Primary	Good	Good	Very Good	Good
Miller Academy Primary	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Mount Pleasant Primary	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory
Pennyland Primary	Good	Good	Good	Good
Reay Primary	Good	Good	Very Good	Good

ELC	Leadership of change	Learning, teaching and assessment	Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Raising attainment and achievement
Castletown PS Nursery	Good	Good	Good	Good
Miller Academy PS Nursery	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Mount Pleasant PS Nursery	Good	Good	Good	Good
Pennyland PS Nursery	Good	Good	Very Good	Satisfactory

6 Education Scotland Inspection reports

6.1

School	Date of Latest Published Report	Link to Education Scotland Pages
Castletown Primary	27/08/2024	Link
Crossroads Primary	16/09/2025	Link
Halkirk Primary	*+ 5 Years	Link
Miller Academy Primary	*+ 5 Years	Link
Mount Pleasant Primary	*+ 5 Years	Link
Pennyland Primary	07/10/2025	Link
Reay Primary	03/06/2025	Link

7 School Rolls

7.1 ASG SCHOOL ROLLS – Session 2025-26

Primary School	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	Total
Castletown Primary	6	8	9	9	10	14	11	67
Crossroads Primary	1		4		3	2	3	13
Halkirk Primary	13	12	13	11	19	19	3	90
Miller Academy Primary	31	49	50	41	26	39	31	267
Mount Pleasant Primary	18	10	19	28	26	21	32	154
Pennyland Primary	17	19	12	20	36	19	30	153
Reay Primary	4	4	5	6	6	8	6	39
Total	90	102	112	115	126	122	116	783

School Name	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	TOTAL S1-S6
Thurso High School	136	135	132	131	110	63	707

7.2 School Roll and Capacity Forecasts

The school roll and capacity forecast for the ASG can be found here:

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/818/school_roll_forecasts

8 Attendance/Absence/Exclusions – Session 2024/25

8.1

Primary Schools	% Actual Attendance	% Authorised Absences	% Unauthorised Absences	(2024/25) No of Exclusions	(2024/25) Exclusion Rates per 1000 pupils
National Primary (2024-25)	93.10%	4.30%	2.60%	2004	5
Highland Primary (2024-25)	92.70%	5.10%	C	61	C
Castletown Primary	92.09%	5.92%	1.98%	-	-
Crossroads Primary	94.76%	3.22%	2.02%	-	-
Halkirk Primary	94.85%	3.59%	1.56%	-	-
Miller Academy Primary	94.31%	4.12%	1.58%	-	-
Mount Pleasant Primary	91.49%	5.65%	2.86%	-	-
Pennyland Primary	92.67%	5.12%	C	C	C
Reay Primary	92.30%	6.32%	1.38%	-	-

Secondary School	% Actual Attendance	% Authorised Absences	% Unauthorised Absences	(2024/25) No of Exclusions	(2024/25) Exclusion Rates per 1000 pupils
National Secondary (2024-25)	88.40%	6.60%	5.00%	8472	26.9
Highland Secondary (2024-25)	86.80%	7.50%	5.70%	454	32.7
Thurso High School	88.62%	7.34%	3.98%	29	40

9 Attainment Profile

9.1

Primary Attainment – Pupils Achieving Expected National Curriculum for Excellence Levels - P1,4,7 Combined, Literacy and Numeracy

2023/24	Roll P1/4/7	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
National		81%	76%	87%	80%
Highland		76%	71%	87%	74%
Castletown Primary	35	80-90%	70-80%	90+%	80-90%
Crossroads Primary	2	c	c	c	c
Halkirk Primary	43	80-90%	60-70%	80-90%	80-90%
Miller Academy Primary	121	90+%	90+%	90+%	90+%
Mount Pleasant Primary	66	50-60%	40-50%	60-70%	40-50%
Pennyland Primary	84	70-80%	60-70%	70-80%	60-70%
Reay Primary	13	c	c	c	c

2022/23	Roll P1/4/7	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
National		80%	75%	87%	80%
Highland		74%	68%	74%	72%
Castletown Primary	40	70-80%	70-80%	80-90%	70-80%
Crossroads Primary	-	c	c	c	c
Halkirk Primary	35	80-90%	70-80%	90+%	70-80%
Miller Academy Primary	88	80-90%	80-90%	90+%	80-90%
Mount Pleasant Primary	87	60-70%	60-70%	70-80%	60-70%
Pennyland Primary	91	60-70%	50-60%	80-90%	70-80%
Reay Primary	17	c	c	c	c

2021/22	Roll P1/4/7	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
National		78%	73%	86%	78%
Highland		71%	63%	81%	69%
Castletown Primary	38	70-80%	60-70%	90+%	80-90%
Crossroads Primary	7	c	c	c	c
Halkirk Primary	44	60-70%	60-70%	80-90%	60-70%
Miller Academy Primary	92	80-90%	80-90%	90+%	80-90%
Mount Pleasant Primary	88	60-70%	60-70%	70-80%	60-70%
Pennyland Primary	99	40-50%	30-40%	60-70%	40-50%
Reay Primary	15	c	c	c	c

9.2 Secondary Attainment

School leavers Achieving Literacy

Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 5 Literacy
Thurso High	2023/24	92%	84%
Virtual Comparator	2023/24	91%	78%
Thurso High	2022/23	94%	83%
Virtual Comparator	2022/23	91%	77%
Thurso High	2021/22	94%	90%
Virtual Comparator	2021/22	96%	85%

School Leavers Achieving Numeracy

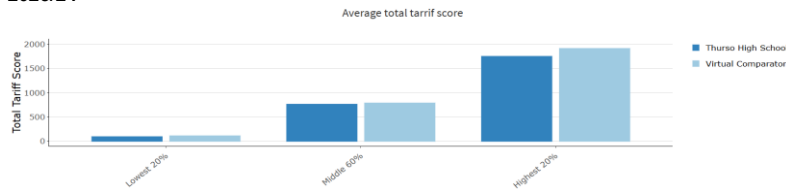
Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Numeracy
Thurso High	2023/24	92%	70%
Virtual Comparator	2023/24	88%	71%
Thurso High	2022/23	90%	75%
Virtual Comparator	2022/23	88%	65%
Thurso High	2021/22	97%	81%
Virtual Comparator	2021/22	93%	75%

Senior Phase

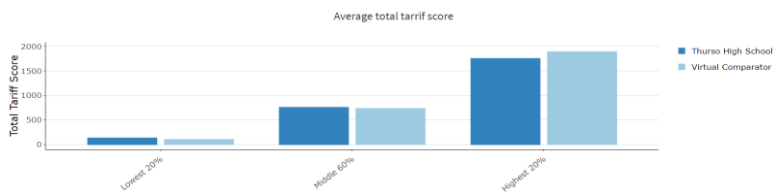
Average Total Tariff Score for Leavers

Establishment	Year	Lowest 20%	Middle 60%	Highest 20%
Thurso High	2023/24	92	762	1750
Virtual Comparator	2023/24	110	787	1913
Thurso High	2022/23	132	756	1753
Virtual Comparator	2022/23	102	734	1891
Thurso High	2021/22	217	879	1778
Virtual Comparator	2021/22	183	875	1956

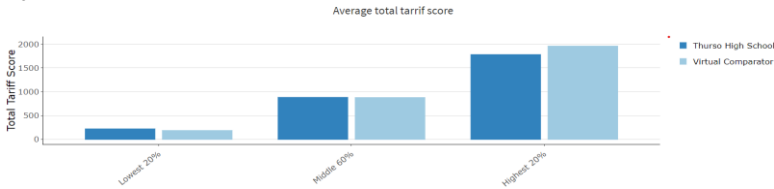
9.3 2023/24



9.4 2022/23



9.5 2021/22



9.6 Pupil Destinations 16+

Leaver destination information is taken from the School Leaver Destination data collected by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) on behalf of the Scottish Government.

% Positive Destinations			
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Thurso High	93.29	97.22	95.57
Highland	94.45	95.27	96.5
Scotland	95.74	95.87	95.71

Number of pupils leaving in school year:

	Thurso High	HIGHLAND	SCOTLAND
2021/22	77	2559	55211
2022/23	107	2474	54719
2023/24	158	2629	55961

Destinations of Pupils (%)

DESTINATION	Thurso High			HIGHLAND			SCOTLAND		
	21/22	22/23	23/24	21/22	22/23	23/24	21/22	22/23	23/24
Higher Education	33.76	36.45	31.01	34.11	33.1	32.07	41.27	40.3	40.8
Further Education	12.98	16.82	31.65	19.54	20.53	20.39	25.45	26.62	26.43
Training	3.89	0.93	1.27	1.52	1.9	3.04	2.91	3.35	3.89
Employment	42.85	37.38	31.65	38.73	39.05	40.4	25.12	24.34	23.08
Voluntary	1.29	0	0	0.31	0.53	0.42	0.47	0.52	0.58
Activity Agreements	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unemployed Seeking	5.19	4.67	3.16	2.89	2.95	2.05	2.32	2.24	2.16
Unemployed Not Seeking	0	3.74	1.27	1.76	1.62	1.45	1.55	1.57	1.86
Unknown	0	0	0	0.9	0.16	0	0.4	0.32	0.27

Note: National averages have been calculated from the figures for all available local authority and grant-aided schools, whereas the local authority averages are based on local authority schools only.

Assistant Chief Executive – People

Date: 05/01/26

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Background Papers:

Appendices: