

The Highland Council

Agenda Item	5c
Report No	BIER-08-26

Committee: Black Isle and Easter Ross Area Committee

Date: 26 January 2026

Report Title: Alness Academy Associated School Group Overview

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive – People Cluster

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update of key information in relation to the schools within the Alness Academy 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 674 pupils, ELC settings serve 162 children (89 in LA settings and 73 in Partner settings as at September Census), with the secondary school serving 489 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 are no implications arising from this report.
- 3.2 Legal
There are no implications arising from 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 implications 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 Alness Academy website](#)
Primary – [Link to School information on Highland Council website](#)

School	Link to School Webpage
Ardross Primary	Ardross Primary website
Bridgend Primary	Bridgend Primary website
Coulhill Primary	Coulhill Primary website
Kiltearn Primary	Kiltearn Primary website
Obsdale Primary	Obsdale 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
Alness Academy	Good	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory
Ardross Primary	Satisfactory	Good	Good	Satisfactory
Bridgend Primary	Good	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory
Coulhill Primary	Good	Good	Good	Good
Kiltearn Primary	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Obsdale Primary	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

ELC	Leadership of change	Learning, teaching and assessment	Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Raising attainment and achievement
Bridgend Primary Nursery	Very Good	Good	Very Good	Good
Coulhill Primary Nursery	Good	Good	Good	Good
Kiltearn Primary Nursery	Good	Good	Very Good	Good
Obsdale Primary Nursery	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

6. Education Scotland Inspection Reports

6.1

School	Date of Latest Published Report	Link to Education Scotland Pages
Alness Academy	+ 5 Years	Link
Ardross Primary	+ 5 Years	Link
Bridgend Primary	8/27/2024	Link
Coulhill Primary	3/7/2023	Link
Kiltearn Primary	+ 5 Years	Link
Obsdale Primary	Report not yet published for Obsdale (22 September 2025)	Link

*Education Scotland website shows review and inspection reports in last 5 years, older reports are no longer available to view on the site.

7. School Rolls

7.1 ASG School Rolls – Session 2025-26

Primary School	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	Total
Ardross Primary	8	5	5	4	5	2	4	33
Bridgend Primary	34	43	36	46	49	36	31	275
Coulhill Primary	22	12	34	21	21	21	27	158
Kiltearn Primary	12	19	15	14	15	15	18	108
Obsdale Primary	15	13	20	12	12	17	11	100
Total	91	92	110	97	102	91	91	674

School Name	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	TOTAL S1-S6
Alness Academy	81	99	91	89	77	52	489

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	5.3
Highland Primary (2024-25)	92.70%	5.10%	C	61	C
Ardross Primary	93.97%	2.95%	3.08%	-	-
Bridgend Primary	91.60%	5.06%	3.34%	-	-
Coulhill Primary	87.68%	8.22%	C	C	C
Kiltearn Primary	91.35%	6.17%	2.48%	-	-
Obsdale Primary	87.00%	8.36%	C	C	C

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
Alness Academy	81.55%	8.66%	9.68%	40	79.1

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9. Attainment Profile

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

2024/25	Roll P1/4/7	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
National		81%	77%	88%	80%
Highland		77%	72%	87%	75%
Ardross Primary	14	C	C	C	C
Bridgend Primary	130	70-80%	70-80%	80-90%	70-80%
Coulhill Primary	63	70-80%	60-70%	80-90%	70-80%
Kiltearn Primary	49	60-70%	60-70%	70-80%	60-70%
Obsdale Primary	38	60-70%	60-70%	70-80%	50-60%

2023/24	Roll P1/4/7	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
National		81%	76%	87%	80%
Highland		76%	71%	87%	74%
Ardross Primary	10	C	C	C	C
Bridgend Primary	115	70-80%	70-80%	90+%	70-80%
Coulhill Primary	89	50-60%	50-60%	70-80%	50-60%
Kiltearn Primary	51	50-60%	50-60%	70-80%	30-40%
Obsdale Primary	60	50-60%	40-50%	70-80%	50-60%

2022/23	Roll P1/4/7	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
National		80%	75%	87%	80%
Highland		74%	68%	74%	72%
Ardross Primary	12	C	C	C	C
Bridgend Primary	116	70-80%	70-80%	80-90%	70-80%
Coulhill Primary	82	50-60%	50-60%	70-80%	60-70%
Kiltearn Primary	56	70-80%	70-80%	80-90%	70-80%
Obsdale Primary	46	50-60%	40-50%	60-70%	50-60%

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9.2 Secondary Attainment – Literacy

School Leavers Achieving Literacy			
Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 5 Literacy
Alness Academy	2023/24	C	81%
Virtual Comparator	2023/24	C	77%
Alness Academy	2022/23	90%	80%
Virtual Comparator	2022/23	90%	71%
Alness Academy	2021/22	C	86%
Virtual Comparator	2021/22	C	71%

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9.2.1 Secondary Attainment – Numeracy

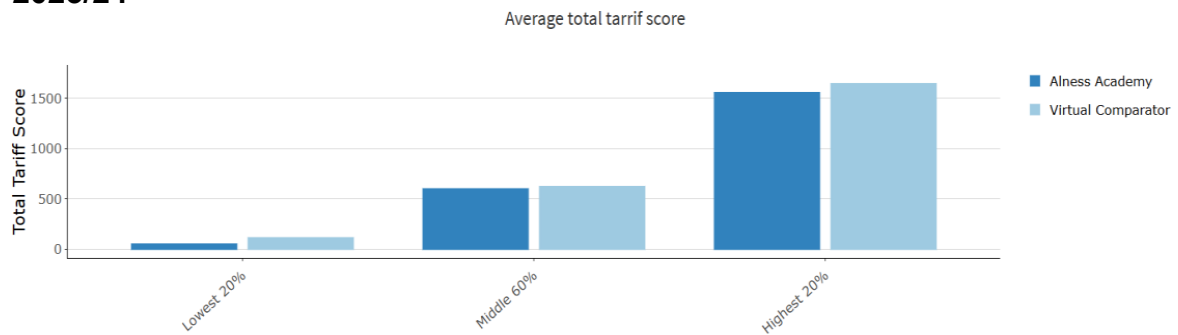
School Leavers Achieving Numeracy			
Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Numeracy
Alness Academy	2023/24	90%	67%
Virtual Comparator	2023/24	89%	65%
Alness Academy	2022/23	81%	64%
Virtual Comparator	2022/23	87%	58%
Alness Academy	2021/22	87%	67%
Virtual Comparator	2021/22	84%	57%

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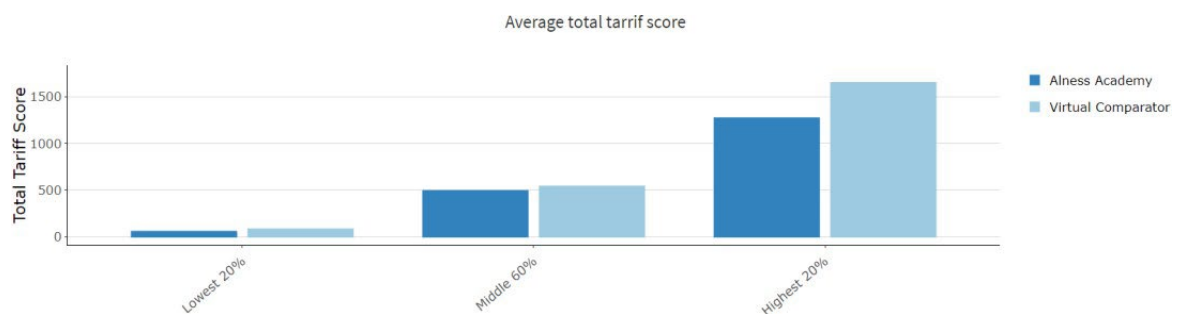
9.2.2 Senior Phase

Average Total Tariff for Leavers				
Establishment	Year	Lowest 20%	Middle 60%	Highest 20%
Alness Academy	2023/24	50	599	1557
Virtual Comparator	2023/24	112	622	1646
Alness Academy	2022/23	56	492	1271
Virtual Comparator	2022/23	82	540	1649
Alness Academy	2021/22	96	614	1598
Virtual Comparator	2021/22	81	590	1662

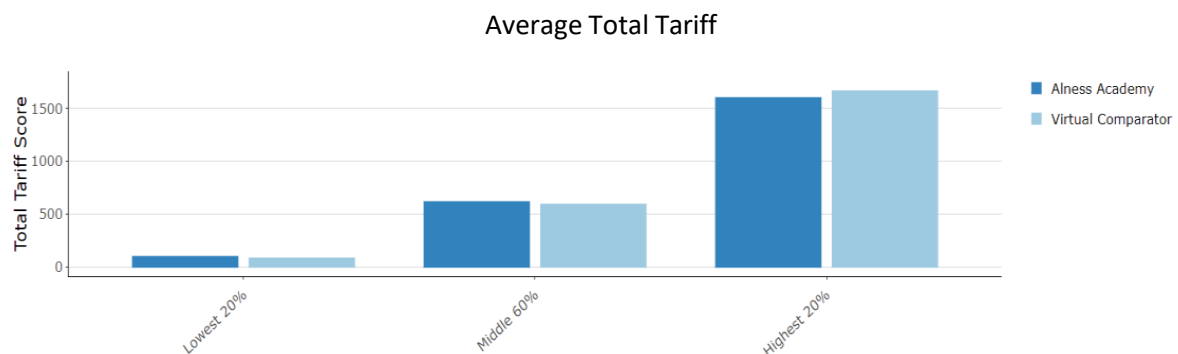
9.3 2023/24



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
Alness Academy	88.16	91.43	97.47
Highland	94.45	95.27	96.5
Scotland	95.74	95.87	95.71

9.6.1 Number of pupils leaving in school year:

	Alness Academy	HIGHLAND	SCOTLAND
2021/22	76	2559	55211
2022/23	70	2474	54719
2023/24	79	2629	55961

9.6.2 Destination of pupils (%):

	Alness Academy			HIGHLAND			SCOTLAND		
DESTINATION	21/22	22/23	23/24	21/22	22/23	23/24	21/22	22/23	23/24
Higher Education	26.31	18.57	27.85	34.11	33.1	32.07	41.27	40.3	40.8
Further Education	18.42	40	21.52	19.54	20.53	20.39	25.45	26.62	26.43
Training	1.31	4.29	6.33	1.52	1.9	3.04	2.91	3.35	3.89
Employment	42.1	28.57	41.77	38.73	39.05	40.4	25.12	24.34	23.08
Voluntary	0	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	11.84	8.57	1.27	2.89	2.95	2.05	2.32	2.24	2.16
Unemployed Not Seeking	0	0	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.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - People

Date: 12 January 2026

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Background Notes:

- (For all figures marked with "C")
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- All data used within this report comes from the most recently published source.

Appendices: n/a