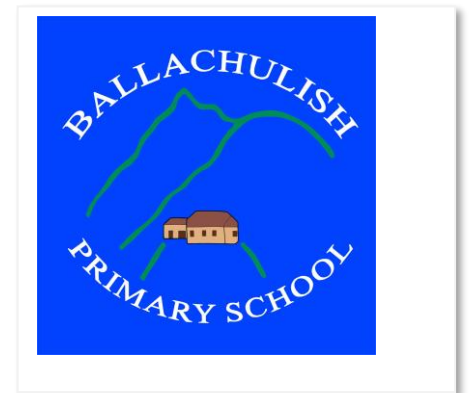




STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2025-26

AITHISG INBHEAN IS CÀILEACHD

Ballachulish Primary School & ELC



All	Almost all	Most	Majority	Less than half	Few
100%	Over 91%	75% - 90%	50% - 74%	15% - 49%	Up to 15%

Values to be confirmed once our new Vision, Values and Aims are finalised in 2026-27

School Profile

Pròifil na Sgoile

Attendance
94.6

Average Class Size
17.5

Meeting PE Target
Target Met

Pupil Numbers (inc nursery)
35 (+16 nursery)

Teacher Numbers
2

Pupil Teacher Ratio
15.6

Ballachulish Primary School is located in a rural setting, serving the community of Ballachulish and Kentallen in South Lochaber, near the shores of Loch Leven.

This year, 35 children attended the school, from P1 to P7, taught in two composite classes. The school also has a nursery, attended by 16 children.

The headteacher leads both Ballachulish Primary and Duror Primary. There is currently a vacancy for a principal teacher.

Because the school has a small number of children, we describe attainment and progress in general terms rather than by individual year group, to protect children's privacy.

Overall, children's attainment in literacy and numeracy was satisfactory. Children reached the expected national levels in literacy and numeracy, and most children who face barriers to learning made good progress towards their individual targets.

Overall children are making the following progress:

Reading

Good

Writing

Good

**Listening and
talking**

Good

Numeracy

Good

We have had no exclusions this year.

Values to be confirmed once our new Vision, Values and Aims are finalised in 2026-27

School vision, values and aims

Lèirsinn, luachan agus amasan na sgoile

Ballachulish Primary School is committed to helping every child develop the skills and qualities they need to thrive in life, learning and work. This year, we began working with children, staff, parents and the wider community to refresh our school's Vision, Values and Aims. This work will be completed and shared with families at the start of the new school year in August 2026.

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 1: Revise Vision, Values & Aims and Curriculum Rationale		
School Improvement Plan Priority 1		
Summary of progress	Next steps	Stakeholder Views
We made good progress with this priority, although the year was more complicated than we expected. In December 2025, Highland Council confirmed that our four-school cluster would be split into two smaller clusters, each with its own permanent headteacher appointed through a fair, competitive process. This created real uncertainty for children, families and staff across all four schools, and meant that proper consultation on new Vision, Values and Aims was not possible in three of the four schools during this period. Our headteacher decided to pause this work in two of the schools, so that their newly appointed headteachers could lead it with their own communities. In Ballachulish, work paused during this uncertain period and started again once our headteacher was confirmed permanently in April 2026. We asked staff, children and parents an initial set of questions, which showed that very few people were aware of our existing values — confirming that we needed a genuine fresh start, with everyone involved.	Finalise our Vision, Values and Aims with children, staff, parents and the community – Term 1, 2026-27. Embed our values in every part of school life, including displays, rewards, assemblies and communication with parents. Develop our Curriculum Rationale and '100 Things I'll Do at Ballachulish Primary' – see School Improvement Plan 2026-27. Help staff get familiar with the curriculum improvement cycle.	'I liked getting to choose what values matter to us.' (Pupil) 'It has been great watching the children take real ownership of this process.' (Staff) 'It's exciting that the school is getting the chance to build something that's truly its own.' (Parent) 'I can't wait to see what our new house names will be!' (Pupil) 'It's been a difficult year for change, but the children have really risen to the occasion.' (Staff)

Values to be confirmed once our new Vision, Values and Aims are finalised in 2026-27

Early conversations with children and staff created real excitement, especially around bringing back a house system. Children took an active part in choosing house names and were inspired by a visit from Duror Primary pupils, who shared their own newly completed values at a special assembly.		
Impact		
We gathered the views of staff, children and parents, which confirmed that awareness of our existing values was low and that everyone was keen for meaningful change. Children took an active part in the consultation and showed real ownership of emerging ideas, particularly the house system. The joint assembly with Duror Primary showed that this work had already begun to inspire thinking beyond our own school. Staff engaged positively with the consultation, despite a challenging year of change.		

School Priority 2: Continue to Develop Pupils' Social and Emotional Wellbeing Curriculum		
School Improvement Plan Priority 2		
Summary of progress	Next steps	Stakeholder Views
We made good progress in this area. Zones of Regulation continued to be used across the school, giving staff and children a shared way to talk about and manage their feelings. Our outdoor nurture group ran throughout the year, with children from across the cluster taking part together. Feedback from children and parents about the nurture group remained very positive. The Wellbeing Heroes programme, delivered by Ewen's Room, ran with our older children in Term 1 and our younger children in Term 2. We measured children's wellbeing using PASS surveys at the start and end of the year and completed detailed profiles for individual children who needed extra support. We were not yet able to begin working towards the Rights Respecting Schools Bronze award this year, so this has been carried forward.	Continue to embed Zones of Regulation across the school. Introduce the CIRCLE Framework for Inclusion as part of our new cluster priority – see School Improvement Plan 2026-27. Begin working towards the Rights Respecting Schools Bronze award in Term 1, 2026-27. Share our Zones of Regulation approach with parents through information sessions, so families can use the same language at home. Review the results of our Term 4 wellbeing survey to help plan next steps.	'I know what to do now when I'm in the red zone.' (Pupil) 'My child talks about the zones at home – it's really helped us understand how they're feeling.' (Parent) 'Having a shared language for emotions has made a difference in class.' (Staff) 'The nurture group is my favourite day of the week.' (Pupil) 'It's reassuring to know there's extra support in place for children who need it.' (Parent)

Values to be confirmed once our new Vision, Values and Aims are finalised in 2026-27

Impact	
Zones of Regulation is now well established across the school. Children and staff share a common language for talking about feelings, and there have been fewer emotional outbursts in school. Children take part in a daily emotional check-in. The nurture group continued to have a positive impact on the children who took part, helping with emotional regulation, friendships and a sense of belonging.	

School Priority 3: Improve Attainment in Literacy – Writing		
School Improvement Plan Priority 3		
Summary of progress and impact	Next steps	Stakeholder Views
We made good progress in this area. Ballachulish Primary joined an additional group of schools taking part in the National Improving Writing Programme (NIWP) from February 2026, as part of Highland Council's wider rollout. Over 12 weeks, this programme helped staff introduce a more structured, consistent approach to teaching writing across the school. Staff engaged enthusiastically with the programme and became more confident in using data to guide their teaching of writing. The programme's approach — short daily writing activities — gave staff a clearer, more systematic way to track progress and respond quickly to individual children's needs. Improvement in writing was particularly noticeable in our P4-7 class, where the new approaches were used most fully. Staff reported feeling more confident about what makes an effective writing lesson. The children have been very enthusiastic about meeting their class targets.	Continue to build on NIWP approaches across the school – see School Improvement Plan 2026-27. Develop a love of reading for enjoyment and work towards Reading School accreditation – see School Improvement Plan 2026-27. Continue using data to track writing progress and identify children who need extra support.	'I feel more confident starting a story now.' (Pupil) 'I love it when we get to our target!' (Pupil) 'The cold and hot writing tasks really show how much progress the children have made.' (Staff) 'My child always talks about the writing she's doing at home' (Parent) 'Writing is one of my favourite things now.' (Pupil) 'I like that we practise the same kind of writing every week so I can see myself getting better.' (Pupil)
Impact		
Children's writing improved, particularly in P4-7, following the school's involvement in NIWP. Staff became more confident in teaching writing, with a clearer focus on well-structured lessons and using data to guide planning and record progress. Staff used 'cold' and 'hot' writing tasks — comparing a piece of writing before and after teaching — to track children's progress over time. The school built stronger links with colleagues across Highland through the NIWP network.		

Values to be confirmed once our new Vision, Values and Aims are finalised in 2026-27

Progress and impact of Pupil Equity Fund

Adhartas agus buaidh Maoin Cothromas Sgoilearan

This year, Ballachulish Primary's Pupil Equity Fund was used to support two areas of work:

Pupil Support Assistant – funding provided nurture support for identified children, including individual support for emotional regulation and anxiety. This was a positive, effective intervention, providing consistent support throughout the school week.

Play therapy – creative and developmental play therapy sessions were delivered by Kinlochlovin' It, a local charity. These sessions helped specific children develop their play, communication and social skills. Feedback from staff and families was positive, and the sessions complemented the school's wider approach to wellbeing.

Wider achievements

Coileanaidhean nas fharsainghe

Children at Ballachulish Primary took part in a wide range of activities this year that helped them develop as confident, capable learners. These included swimming, music tuition, cross-country running, climbing, athletics, skiing, canoeing, paddleboarding, horse-riding and archery. Children competed in shinty, rugby and inter-school sports events.

Children performed for parents and the community at the annual Christmas Show and continued their visits to residents at the local care home.

Comments from learners, families, stakeholders and staff

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

'The school has made huge progress.' (Parent)

'The school has transformed.' (Parent)

'I like coming to school because my friends and teachers are kind to me.' (Pupil)

'We've noticed a real difference in our child's confidence this year.' (Parent)

'It's been a challenging but rewarding year for the whole school.' (Staff)

Values to be confirmed once our new Vision, Values and Aims are finalised in 2026-27

'Everyone is really friendly and I always feel safe here.' (Pupil)

'I'm proud to be part of this school community.' (Staff)

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
QI 1.3 Leadership of change	Good	Good
QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Good	Good
QI 3.1 Wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Good	Good
QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement/Securing children's progress	Good	Good

Our overall evaluation of our capacity for continuous improvement is:

We are confident in our capacity for continuous improvement.

Values to be confirmed once our new Vision, Values and Aims are finalised in 2026-27

Key priorities for improvement planning

Prìomhachasan airson planadh airson leasachadh

1. Embed Vision, Values & Aims; Develop Curriculum Rationale, '100 Things' and Curriculum Improvement Cycle
2. Developing Literacy – NIWP, Reading for Enjoyment and Reading School Status
3. ASG Priority: CIRCLE Framework for Inclusion

Planning ahead

A' planadh air adhart

Full details of the school's 2026-27 improvement priorities and actions are set out in our School Improvement Plan, available on our website or from the school office.