

STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2025-26
AITHISG INBHEAN IS CÀILEACHD

HALKIRK PRIMARY SCHOOL

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%	Over 91%	75% - 90%	50% - 74%	15% - 49%	Up to 15%

Kindness, Inclusion, Respect, Integrity

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.

Attendance	Average Class Size	Meeting PE Target
94%	22.5	Target Met

Pupil Numbers (inc nursery)	Teacher Numbers	Pupil Teacher Ratio
90	6	15.8

N3	N4	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
XX%	XX%	14.4%	13.3%	14.4%	12.2%	21.1%	21.1%	c

SIMD Q1[1]	SIMD Q2	SIMD Q2	SIMD Q3	SIMD Q5	Unknown
0 - 10%	0 - 10%	40 - 50%	50 - 60%	0 - 10%	0 - 10%

ASN[2]	No ASN	FSM[3]	No FSM	EAL[4]	No EAL
0 - 10%	0 - 10%	10 - 20%	80 - 90%	0 - 10%	90+%

[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

2024/25 Proportions of pupils achieving Curriculum for Excellence Levels (P1, P4, P7 combined):

Reading	Writing	Listening and talking	Numeracy
Most	Most	Most	Most

Gaelic Medium 2024/25 Proportions of pupils achieving Curriculum for Excellence Levels (C1, P4, P7 combined):

Gaelic reading	Gaelic writing	Gaelic listening and talking
Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

We have had no exclusions this year.

Overall children are making the following progress:

Reading	Writing	Listening and talking	Numeracy
Good progress	Good progress	Good progress	Good progress

Gaelic Medium (delete if not relevant):

Gaelic reading	Gaelic writing	Gaelic listening and talking
Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

We have had no exclusions this year.

School vision, values and aims
Lèirsinn, luachan agus amasan na sgoile

Halkirk Primary School

Vision

Working together to inspire learning and achievement for all
in a safe, caring and happy place

Values

 Kindness	 Inclusion
 Integrity	 Respect

Aims

At Halkirk, we strive to provide the highest quality learning and teaching. We try to ensure that all our children attain and achieve their full potential and acquire the wide range of skills and abilities relevant to growing, living and working in the contemporary world. We fully support the development of skills for life-long learning and work. As a Rights Respecting School, we put the Rights of the child at the heart of everything we do. We work hard to ensure that all children feel valued, respected, safe and secure. We continue to develop our school, so all have a voice and a feel of belonging. We help to prepare our confident pupils for successful learning pathways enabling them to become effective contributors and responsible citizens within the community of Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland and beyond.

Kindness, Inclusion, Respect, Integrity

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: PLAY PEDAGOGY (Building a high-quality learning environment focussing on purposeful play)		
School Improvement Plan Priority 1		
Summary of progress	**Next steps**	**Stakeholder Views**
We have made good progress in developing play pedagogy, with a clear focus on creating high-quality learning environments which promote purposeful play. This aligns well with National Improvement Framework drivers and Highland Priorities, particularly in improving learning, teaching and assessment, and supporting children's wellbeing and engagement. Across the school, staff have worked collaboratively to design stimulating, well-resourced environments that support child-led and adult-guided play. This has resulted in increased engagement, motivation and independence among learners. Children are more confident in leading their own learning through play and can increasingly explain what they are doing and why, demonstrating a growing understanding of their skills and progress. The introduction of consistent approaches to observing and responding to children during play has strengthened practitioner interactions and ensured that learning is appropriately challenged and extended. As a result, most children are making good progress across curricular areas, with clear evidence of improved communication, creativity and problem-solving skills. Our focus on purposeful play has also supported equity, ensuring that all children have access to rich, inclusive learning experiences tailored to their needs. Staff are increasingly responsive in planning next steps based on observations, leading to more personalised learning opportunities. Engagement has been a key strength. Children are highly motivated and actively involved in their learning. Staff regularly share practice and reflect together to ensure consistency and improvement. Parents and carers are becoming more aware of the value of play through ongoing communication and involvement, strengthening partnerships between home and school.	• **Strengthen the link between purposeful play and attainment**, ensuring that *all practitioners* clearly plan for and track progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing within play-based learning. • **Improve the use of assessment evidence**, so that all *staff* consistently gather high-quality evidence from purposeful play to demonstrate progress and inform next steps for individual learners. • **Ensure equity in attainment**, with a continued focus on purposeful play approaches that support *all children*, particularly those who require additional support, to achieve their full potential. • **Ensure equity in attainment**, with a continued focus on purposeful play approaches that support *all children*, particularly those who require	See Stakeholder views in Comment Section.

	additional support, to achieve their full potential.	
Impact		
• Almost all children are experiencing high-quality, purposeful play • This approach is leading to improved engagement, motivation and participation in learning • Children are becoming more confident and independent learners • Most children are making good progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing as a result of increased opportunities for challenge, application of skills and meaningful contexts for learning. • We continue to show equity with all children including those who require additional support. • Children are continuing to develop important life skills such as communication, creativity, problem solving and resilience.		

School Priority 2: OUTDOOR LEARNING (Linked to Play Pedagogy)		
School Improvement Plan Priority 2		
Summary of progress	**Next steps**	**Stakeholder Views**
We have made good progress in developing outdoor learning as a key element of our play pedagogy, with a clear focus on creating high quality, purposeful outdoor play learning experiences. This work aligns closely with the National Improvement Framework Drivers and Highland Priorities particularly in improvement in children and young peoples' health and wellbeing and ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion. This work supports children to feel safe, respected and included, while providing meaningful opportunities to engage in high-quality, purposeful play experiences. The outdoor environment has been carefully developed to be nurturing, inclusive and accessible to all children. Through both child-led and adult-guided play, children are highly engaged and demonstrate increasing confidence, independence and resilience. Opportunities for outdoor learning have positively impacted children's physical and emotional wellbeing, with most children showing increased motivation, improved social skills and a greater sense of belonging within the school community. Staff interactions within the outdoor environment are increasingly responsive and attuned to children's individual needs. Practitioners promote positive relationships, model inclusive language and support children to work cooperatively, helping to build respect, empathy and a shared understanding of fairness. As a result, children are developing important life skills such as teamwork, communication and problem-solving within a supportive and inclusive context. Our approach to play pedagogy outdoors has strengthened equity, ensuring all children can access rich and meaningful learning experiences regardless of their background or needs. Staff use observations effectively to plan next steps that are personalised and inclusive, supporting children to achieve success and make progress at their own pace. Engagement across the school community has been a key strength. Children are enthusiastic and actively involved in outdoor learning, staff collaborate effectively to share practice, and parents are increasingly engaged through communication about the benefits of outdoor learning and play. This has strengthened relationships	Moving forward, we will continue to embed a shared understanding of high-quality outdoor purposeful play across the school, ensuring that almost all practitioners provide consistent, nurturing and inclusive experiences which promote children's wellbeing and engagement. We will strengthen the quality of adult interactions within the outdoor environment, with a focus on modelling positive relationships, using inclusive language and supporting children's social and emotional development. There will be an increased emphasis on children's voice and participation, ensuring that almost all children feel listened to, respected and actively involved in shaping their outdoor learning experiences. We will further develop assessment approaches within outdoor learning, with most staff using observations more consistently to identify children's wellbeing needs and inform next steps in learning. A continued focus on equity and inclusion will ensure that all children, including those requiring additional support, can fully access and participate in high-quality outdoor experiences. Opportunities to promote wellbeing will be extended further, enabling most children to continue to develop confidence, resilience and positive relationships through purposeful outdoor play. In addition, we will strengthen parental engagement so that most parents and carers have a clearer understanding of the positive	See Stakeholder views in Comment Section

	impact of outdoor learning on children's wellbeing and development. Senior leaders and staff will enhance monitoring and evaluation processes to ensure ongoing review of the impact of outdoor learning on wellbeing, inclusion and engagement, supporting continuous improvement across the school.	
Impact		
• Almost all children feel safe, nurtured, respected and included within high-quality outdoor learning environments. • Most children demonstrate improved confidence, resilience and wellbeing, with a stronger sense of belonging across the school community. • Through purposeful play, most children are developing as responsible and active learners, showing respect, fairness and empathy in their interactions with others. • Children's voices are increasingly central to their learning and they are becoming more involved in decision making in their outdoor experiences. • All practitioners demonstrate an improved understanding of their role in promoting wellbeing, equality and inclusion through outdoor learning. • Stronger professional dialogue and shared practice led to greater consistency across the school, supporting improved outcomes for all learners		

Progress and impact of Pupil Equity Fund
Adhartas agus buaidh Maoin Cothromas Sgoilearan

Pupil Equity Fund

- A Literacy Teacher was funded through PEF for half a day each week to focus on progress in Literacy.

  The progress in literacy for most pupils involved has been accelerated.

- An Outdoor Learning Teacher was funded through PEF for half a day each week to focus on Outdoor Learning. There has been an increased opportunity for children's learning time outside.

Wider achievements
Coileanaidhean nas fharsainge

Term 1

- Riding for the Disabled Association – 1 pupil
- Kodaly – P1/2
- Swimming – P4/5
- School Photographs – Tempest Photography
- Feis Rois – Addie Harper (P4/5)
- Tutoring in strings
- Tutoring in chanter
- Tutoring in recorder
- Pupil Voice
- JRSO event
- RDA Presentation
- Harvest Assembly – Church
- Visit to Foodbank
- Eden Court Sessions (P6/7)
- Stone Bench presentation

Term 2

- Swimming (P4/5)
- Feis Rois – Music Sessions (P4/5)
- Parent Gardening (P1/2 & P3/4)
- Gaelic Lessons (P4/5 & P6/7) with Richard Smith
- Dancing Sessions (P3/4)
- Tutoring in strings
- Tutoring in chanter
- Tutoring in recorder
- Thurso High School Student - AF
- Hallowe'en Disco
- Community Link – Caithness Family History Society
- Armistice – whole school attendance at war memorial
- Bookbug Week – P1/2 & P2/3/4

- Book Week Scotland
- Anti Bullying Week
- Children in Need – Rights Respecting Schools
- World Children's Day – Rights Respecting Schools
- Road Safety Week – Junior Road Safety Officer
- Paul Castle (Highlife Highland Ranger – Pilgrimage (P6/7)
- St Andrew's Day
- Newton Room (P6/7)
- Kidlit
- Christmas Market
- Stay Safe, Strong & Free – Jo Guthrie
- Kodaly – Music Sessions (P1/2)
- Graeme Paterson visit
- Assemblies – Graeme Paterson
  Jerry Taylor
- RDA Christmas Show
- Christmas Lunch
- Cinema Visit (Whole School)
- School Christmas Parties
- Christmas Service
- Christmas Jumpers
- UHI Student
- Eden Court Sessions (P6/7)
- Visit from Mixu Paatelainen
- RHET Quoybrae (P4/5)

Term 3

- Gaelic Lessons (P4/5 & P6/7)
- Eden Court Sessions (P6/7)
- Burns Supper and Ceilidh
- Children's Mental Health Week
- Pancake Thursday
- Safer Internet Day
- STEM – "Lend a Lab" – P1/2 and P2/3
- STEM – Newton Room Visit – P5/6/7
- World Book Day

- Kodaly Music Sessions – P1/2
- Red Nose Day
- Science Festival week
- Rotary Quiz
- Assemblies
- Assemblies – Graeme Paterson
- P1 Health Checks
- HLH Running Sessions
- Rugby Sessions P6/7 and festival
- UHI Student
- P6/7 Eden
- Easter Service
- Fun Fitness Session
- Down's Syndrome Day
- Cerebral Palsy Day
- World Book Day
- P7 Transition with Crossroads and Bower
- Tutoring in strings
- Tutoring in chanter
- Tutoring in recorder

Term 4

- Pupil Voice re Asymmetrical Week
- Assemblies
- Dental Check Ups
- Football and Netball practice
- Nursery – P1 Transition
- Caithness Music Festival
- Sidh Chalillenn Art Competition and Storytelling – P4/5 and P6/7
- Sports Day & Open Afternoon
- Inter Schools Football
- Inter Schools Netball
- Leavers' End of Year Assembly
- Loch Insh – Residential Trip
- Halkirk Galafest – Halkirk Village Council

- P7 Photos – Tempest Photography
- Soccer Aid Day
- Moving Up Day
- P7 Thurso High School Transition Visits
- P7 School Nurses Talk
- Eden Court Drama – P6/7
- School Trip – P1/2 Caithness Animal Park
- School Trip – P3/4 Stemster Farm
- School Trip – P4/5 Viking tour of Caithness
- School Trip - P5/6 Wick Seacoast Tours, Wick Heritage Centre & swimming pool
- Gold RRS accreditation
- Bikeability (P7)
- UHI Student
- Goblin Car
- Diversity Week
- Couch Chat
- Generation Science Session
- Tutoring in strings
- Tutoring in chanter
- Tutoring in recorder

Comments from learners, families, stakeholders and staff
Beachdan bho luchd-ionnsachaidh, teaghlaichean, luchd-ùidhe is luchd-obrach

	P5-7	P1-4
Our Relationships	• Pupils get on really well with each other. • Pupils get on very well with adults in our school. • Can go to adult if we have a problem. • Can speak to our parents, P.S.A or other trusted adult or Playground Leader if we have a problem. • We get the opportunity to have a say in our school. • Adults listen to us. • Everyone is treated fairly.	• Pupils get on with each other. • Pupils get on well with the adults. • Can go to a Teacher, P.S.A, Playground Leader or at Couch Chat if we have a problem. • We get to choose things. • Adults listen to us. • There are no favourites.
Our Learning and Teaching	• Personal choice in Topic, Writing work and Gym. • Choice in reading book. • S.C and L.I for each lesson. • Targets. • HQAs • Good help from teacher. • Interesting books and good games. • Clevertouch Board and Chromebooks in the classroom.	• Choice in what we learn sometimes. • Targets. • Teachers help us when we are stuck. • Good Toys. • Nice classroom with pictures. • iPads

Our School and Community	• Improvements – picnic benches and planters. • Outdoor Learning equipment • Indoor Play equipment • We feel safe with, Fire Practice, Teachers, Class Charter, Playground Charter, Dining Hall Charter, Safety Rules, CCTV and Children's Rights. • Community knows what is happening in our school through newsletters, Seesaw, newspaper, Facebook and posters. • Improve our long corridor • Our HT going to Village Council meetings.	• New improvements should be games painted on playground and more playground toys. • We feel safe with Teachers protecting us, good behaviour. Class and playground charter. We work together and we have people to talk to. We have fences around the school. • Community knows what is happening in our school through Seesaw, Facebook, photos in paper and we take part in Community events like the Gala Fest.

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	Choose an item.	Good
QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Choose an item.	Good
QI 3.1 Wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Choose an item.	Very good
QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement/Securing children’s progress	Choose an item.	Good
Other QIs reviewed		

Our overall evaluation of our capacity for continuous improvement is:

We are confident in our capacity for continous improvement.

Key priorities for improvement planning
Prìomhachasan airson planadh airson leasachadh

1. Curriculum
2. Makaton

Planning ahead
A’ planadh air adhart

Full details of the school's 2026/27 improvement priorities and actions are detailed on the school improvement plan, which can be accessed on our website or by contacting the school office.