



STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2025-26

AITHISG INBHEAN IS CÀILEACHD

HILL OF FEARN PRIMARY SCHOOL

PRIMARY/ELC



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%

Our Values: **H**elpful, Positive learners **O**utstanding Kindness **F**riendly, Nurturing environment

School Profile

Pròifil na Sgoile

The following information can be found on [Parentzone Scotland](https://www.parentzone.scot.nhs.uk/). 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
95%

Average Class Size
16.5

Meeting PE Target
Target Met

Pupil Numbers (inc nursery)
32 (+5 nursery)

Teacher Numbers
4

Pupil Teacher Ratio
8.7

Hill of Fearn Primary School is a non-denominational school and is situated in a rural setting, serving the local community of the village of Fearn and the surrounding area, just outside of Tain. There are 32 children attending the school and 5 children in nursery, ranging from N3 - P7. There are two multi composite classes; P1-3 and P4-7 and there is a separate nursery for 3- and 4-year-olds. The headteacher has overall leadership responsibility for Hill of Fearn Primary School and Tarbat Old Primary School as part of a cluster arrangement. The headteacher is supported by a principal teacher. Staff from both schools work together regularly.

As the school roll comprises a small number of children, attainment and progress will be expressed in 'overall' statements, rather than specific year groups or Curriculum for Excellence levels. This is to ensure the identity of individuals is not disclosed. Overall, attainment across the school in Literacy and English and Numeracy and Mathematics is good. Overall, almost all children are attaining expected levels across the school in Listening and Talking, most pupils in Literacy and English and Numeracy and Mathematics and a few children are exceeding nationally expected levels. A few children who face barriers to learning are making good progress towards meeting their individual targets.

Overall children are making the following progress:

Reading

Good progress

Writing

Good progress

**Listening and
talking**

Very good progress

Numeracy

Good progress

We have had no exclusions this year.

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School vision, values and aims

Lèirsinn, luachan agus amasan na sgoile



**Hill of Fearn Primary
School (H.O.F)**

Healthy, Happy & Handworking



OUR SCHOOL VALUES

Helpful, positive learners

Outstanding kindness

Friendly, nurturing environment

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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: Developing a Rights Based Curriculum

We received our Bronze committed recognition from Rights Respecting schools and are continuing our journey to embed a Rights based curriculum, in line with National and Local policy.

Summary of progress	Next steps
✓ Good progress has been made in this development area overall and as a result we are almost ready to organise a visit for the Silver accreditation next term for the Rights Respecting Schools Award. ✓ Each class and ELC refreshed their class charter with their pupils in August 2025 and have used these to agree expectations in their class/ setting this session. ✓ Pupil representative group has continued with new representatives. The “Rights Respecters” and have been meeting with the principal teacher to plan activities and discuss how to share information with staff, pupils and parents. ✓ UNCRC articles have been created into posters and are displayed around the school to increase awareness of these in everyday context. ✓ Right of the fortnight has continued to be introduced in assemblies by the Head Teacher and followed up by staff in classes. Assembly plan linked to events is in use. ✓ Some of these articles and details have been shared with parents to increase their understanding of the articles being discussed in school. ✓ Interactive whole school wall display continued to be in use in in the main corridor, so it is seen daily by children to reinforce the articles that are being focused on. ✓ Global context has been talked about in assemblies and the older children from P4-7 are watching Newsround daily to discuss more global issues around the world. ✓ Staff across the cluster collaborated to map the links to UNCRC articles to the Interdisciplinary Learning (IDL) topics that are covered in class and key rights vocabulary.	The Principal Teacher will sign up for the Silver RRSA level training and we will book the accreditation visit for September/October 2026.

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✓ UNCRC articles are identified in class teacher's Interdisciplinary Planning (IDL) documents ✓ UNCRC articles are identified in the ELC planning floor books. ✓ An opportunity to develop parents understanding has been shared with parents via Seesaw – a parent information webinar session. ✓ Rights Respecters group have developed a playground charter which has been shared with everyone in assembly. Signs have been created to be displayed in the main playground and the nursery garden as a visual reminder for pupils and for staff to use in discussions. ✓ Emotional check in are offered in all classes and nursery setting daily for children to discuss how they are feeling. ✓ Rights Respecters planned two activity days in February 2026 where pupils took part in a variety of board games, house team challenges etc. ✓ Key dates in the calendar have been celebrated such as Anti- bullying week, World Children's Day and International Day of Play. Linking rights into daily learning/ termly planners e.g. Safer Internet Day, Remembrance Day, Earth Day. ✓ Rights updates and progress with the Rights Respecting Schools Award have been shared in monthly newsletters with parents and at Parent Council meetings termly. ✓ Classes identified a time in the week where FUN 31 takes place in their timetable to highlight the importance of the right to play. ✓ Questionnaire on children's rights undertaken by staff and pupils. Results collated and shared with all stakeholders.	Head teacher to continue to monitor planning as part of the quality assurance calendar to ensure rights are being considered and identified at the planning stage. Pupil voice sessions to discuss the use of the playground charter and measure impact over time. Continue to embed focused UNCRC activities into the school calendar.
Impact We have made good progress within this priority, and a rights - based curriculum is evident across the cluster. We will continue to embed this throughout all stages and ensure consistency with any new members of staff. The children are able to talk about their rights and understand how these are important to them and be applied within their learning environment. Our new playground charter has been introduced to all pupils and aims to support the pupils and adults whilst engaging in play outdoors. Our school charters are visible throughout the school, and this allows for all adults to engage in conversations with children regarding their rights. Pupils are becoming more aware of the wider global issues and discuss these regularly as part of daily discussions or as part of assemblies.	

School Priority 2: Developing a Play Pedagogy Approach from Nursery to Primary 7

To enhance learning and teaching approaches across the school to meet a variety of learning needs and increase motivation and engagement with learning.

Summary of progress	Next steps
✓ Overall we have made good progress with this development area and we received positive feedback during our HMle inspection as a result. ✓ Staff lead the development of play pedagogy very successfully across the school. They engage in high-quality professional learning and support colleagues well across the cluster in developing approaches to play. ✓ Children in the early years class experience high-quality learning through play. Staff have developed the environment both inside the classroom and in the free-flow outdoor space very effectively. ✓ Staff provide children with rich resources to promote sustained play and learning. Staff observe children's interactions and interact skilfully to enhance and extend children's learning where appropriate. There is a careful balance of child led and adult led learning activities. This is resulting in children becoming increasingly independent, creative and able to problem-solve together. ✓ Audit completed by staff on outdoor and indoor play resources to identify areas for development. ✓ A number of staff training courses completed with Play Scotland such as an introduction to play and how to develop a play policy which has increased staff's knowledge and understanding of a variety of play types, the role of the adult and how to plan appropriate play experiences. ✓ Staff sharing session took place with all staff, where a member of staff shared good practice in the implementation of play and how it supports the delivery of the curriculum. This resulted in high quality professional discussion and engagement and set themselves some personal next steps and targets. ✓ Staff shared their learning journey with colleagues across Scotland to share ways in which they have increased play opportunities within their learning and teaching. ✓ All staff including EYPS, PSAs and Teachers have worked together during in-service day sessions to develop a shared vision, values and aims of play for the policy.	To organise a Parent Workshop to launch the newly created Play Policy and share the key messages regarding the positive impact of play.

✓ Stakeholders have been consulted on play such as during Parents evenings, pupil groups and staff surveys. ✓ Increased professional reading materials available in the staffroom to support knowledge and understanding of play pedagogy which has encourage a collaborative culture of research-based practice. ✓ There has been an increase in play opportunities across the upper stages which has had a positive impact with the pupils. The have commented upon this during consultations and has been observed. ✓ All staff are committed to moving forwards with the play pedagogy approach and are mindful of this in their learning and teaching planning. ✓ Following consultation with all stakeholders a Play Policy has been developed to ensure that there are clear expectations of what play looks like, the role of the adult and to keep consistency across the classes and cluster. ✓ There has been positive feedback received from parents regarding the play pedagogy approaches that have been developed and they are keen to support this area of development.	Next steps are to measure any impact on attainment data whilst embedding this approach in our learning and teaching practice.
Impact Baseline surveys and audits ensured that all staff were aware of the starting point of our play journey and were involved in identifying the areas to be developed. As a result of the training staff have developed their knowledge and understanding of play pedagogy approaches and have been developing their learning and teaching practice as a result. We have made good progress with the development of the play policy and following consultation with all stakeholders this will ensure that it accurately reflects a shared understanding of what play looks like across the cluster and the role of the adults. The draft play policy is almost finalised and will be launched in the new school session with pupils, parents and wider stakeholders in the community. Overall, as a result of this development area staff have increased their knowledge and understanding of play pedagogy approaches and play is valued by all staff. Parents are more aware through the sharing of resources and photos on our online app. We were inspected by HMIE in October 2025 and the published report shares very positive feedback around the high-quality play experiences that the children are receiving as a result. Pupils have demonstrated increased motivation in activities, particularly upper stages and observed the benefits in developing social skills and creativity. The next steps is to measure the impact on attainment data as we embed this approach.	

School Priority 3: Development of our outdoor learning environment to enhance learning experiences for all learners.

Following engagement with stakeholders it was identified that we would like to develop the outdoor area to provide more opportunities for play and learning.

Summary of progress and impact

Overall we have made steady progress with this development area however there is still some more work that is required and therefore it would benefit from continuing into next session.

Children are highly enthusiastic about opportunities to learn outdoors, for example, using natural resources during numeracy lessons and developing a 'bug hotel' this year.

Outdoor learning audits completed by staff in the ELC and school to review all areas, resources and identify areas for development.

We held a freshen up our playground event with staff, pupils and parents to clear areas, introduce new planters around the school and paint the shed.

Staff training on play pedagogy approaches throughout the session have developed knowledge and understanding on a variety of play approaches such as loose parts play and risky play.

Some staff have consciously created a space within their weekly timetables for the development of outdoor learning within the school environment. We will look to extend this further to using the local community environments further.

Pupil consultations took place to create designs for the playground, and a wish list was created to share with the parent council. Parent Council have supported us by securing a Tesco Grant to support the investment in resources for outdoors. Engagement with Parent

Next steps

Continue with plans to develop a progressive outdoor learning programme with more regular outdoor learning experiences across all classes.

Increased opportunities to use the local areas to enhance learning experiences.

Engage with a nationally recognised award to focus our outdoor learning opportunities.

Council to use the Tesco grant to develop an outdoor classroom space is ongoing and will continue into next session. We have invested some school budget into purchasing resources for the outdoor spaces such as a mud kitchen for the school playground, a large perspex easel, water investigation station for the nursery garden and some loose parts such as H creates and planks of wood for loose parts play. Nursery have also developed a planting area at the front of the nursery.	
Impact	
We have made steady progress with this area of development and are working closely together with stakeholders to continue this further into session. We aim to continue with our school outdoor area developments alongside developing a progressive outdoor learning programme to continue to engage and motivate pupils in their learning experiences. Parents as stakeholders are also very enthusiastic about supporting this development area further.	

Progress and impact of Pupil Equity Fund

Adhartas agus buaidh Maoin Cothromas Sgoilearan

In literacy phonological assessments demonstrate an increase in scores from 3/12 to 6/12. Pupils are making good steady individual progress, which is being transferred into classroom activities. Pupils now know their single letter sounds, are blending and decoding CVC words as a result of the additional support provided by the pupil equity funding.

All pupils within the group have successfully progressed through the Fresh Start programme by completing on average 15 modules. The impact of this shows that all pupils have increased their Fresh Start assessment by at least 3 stages. As a result of this, three pupils have increased in their reading book band levels by 3 and one pupil has increased in reading book band level by 6. One pupil has completed the intervention programme.

There has been a continued focus on the monitoring of targeted pupil attendance data this session to reduce barriers to learning. The Head teacher and staff have engaged with families to support attendance. The impact of the monitoring has resulted in attendance above 90% for 80% of the targeted group and above 85% for 20% of the target group.

Wider achievements

Coileanaidhean nas fharsainghe

Opportunities are offered throughout the school session through the following methods:

- Weekly assemblies – Star Awards / Head Teacher Awards / School Values Award
- House Points & House Team Events / Head Teacher Challenges
- Bikeability Courses – Level 1 & 2
- Christmas Show Performance
- ASG Country Dancing Competition
- Attendance at the Ross-shire School Sports Events such as County Sports, Cross Country, Swimming Gala and Football tournaments.
- Rotary Quiz
- Parents sharing achievements from home i.e TCD competitions, Horse riding or gymnastics.
- Junior Sports Leader Award
- Music tuition delivered by Highlife Highland

Comments from learners, families, stakeholders and staff

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

Comments gathered from parents during feedback sessions and surveys:

“Play based has helped with confidence and creativity. Would love to see continued investment in outdoor play area and resources.”

“Great for the less confident children who learn better through play. Brilliant that the older class are included too.”

“Great that it is (play) being extended to the older class too”

“I think it is great and our children seem to show a lot more interest and take more in when learning through play. Love it being extended to the upper class”

“I feel that play pedagogy allows all learners, including quieter or less confident children to engage at their own level.

“I wish we could have learned like this when I was in school”

“Creates fantastic relationships towards learning which reduces anxiety and builds confidence and resilience.”

“A great way to help children learn and develop. Looks like a lot of fun and learning.”

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

Our overall evaluation of our capacity for continuous improvement is:

We are confident in our capacity for continuous improvement.

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Key priorities for improvement planning

Prìomhachasan airson planadh airson leasachadh

- Continue to develop the outdoor learning environment and use of the local community to enhance outdoor learning opportunities for pupils and develop a progressive outdoor learning programme.
- Develop a skills framework to support children to recognise and understand the skills they are developing through learning experiences and achievements.
- Staff to familiarise themselves with the developments of the Curriculum Improvement Cycle to prepare for upcoming changes to the curriculum in the future.
- Launch our Play Policy that has been developed this session with all stakeholders
- Develop and launch our new website to promote our school achievements.

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 new website once published or by contacting the school office.