

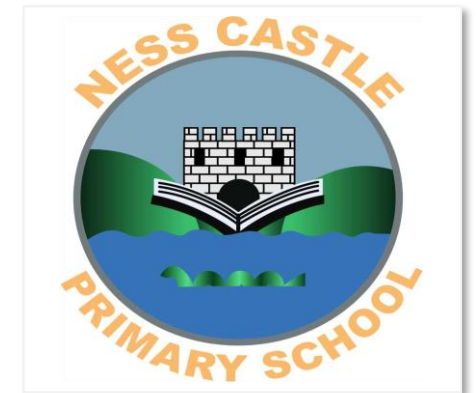


STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2025-26

AITHISG INBHEAN IS CÀILEACHD

Ness Castle 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%

School Profile

Pròifil na Sgoile

The following information can be found on [Parentzone Scotland](https://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
95.5%

Average Class Size
24.8

Meeting PE Target
Target Met

Pupil Numbers (inc nursery)
223 (+79 nursery)

Teacher Numbers
12

Pupil Teacher Ratio
18.5

N3	N4	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
12%	14%	14%	15%	9%	13%	8%	7%	8%

SIMD Q1¹	SIMD Q2	SIMD Q2	SIMD Q3	SIMD Q5	Unknown
1%	3%	2%	2%	89%	4%

ASN²	No ASN	FSM³	No FSM	EAL⁴	No EAL
22%	78%	16%	84%	9%	91%

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

Reading	Writing	Listening and talking	Numeracy
Almost all	Majority	Almost all	Majority

The small number of exclusions that occur in schools may lead to individual pupils being identified, therefore this data is not contained in this report. If you have any questions about exclusions, you should contact us directly.

¹ SIMD – The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is a relative measure of deprivation.

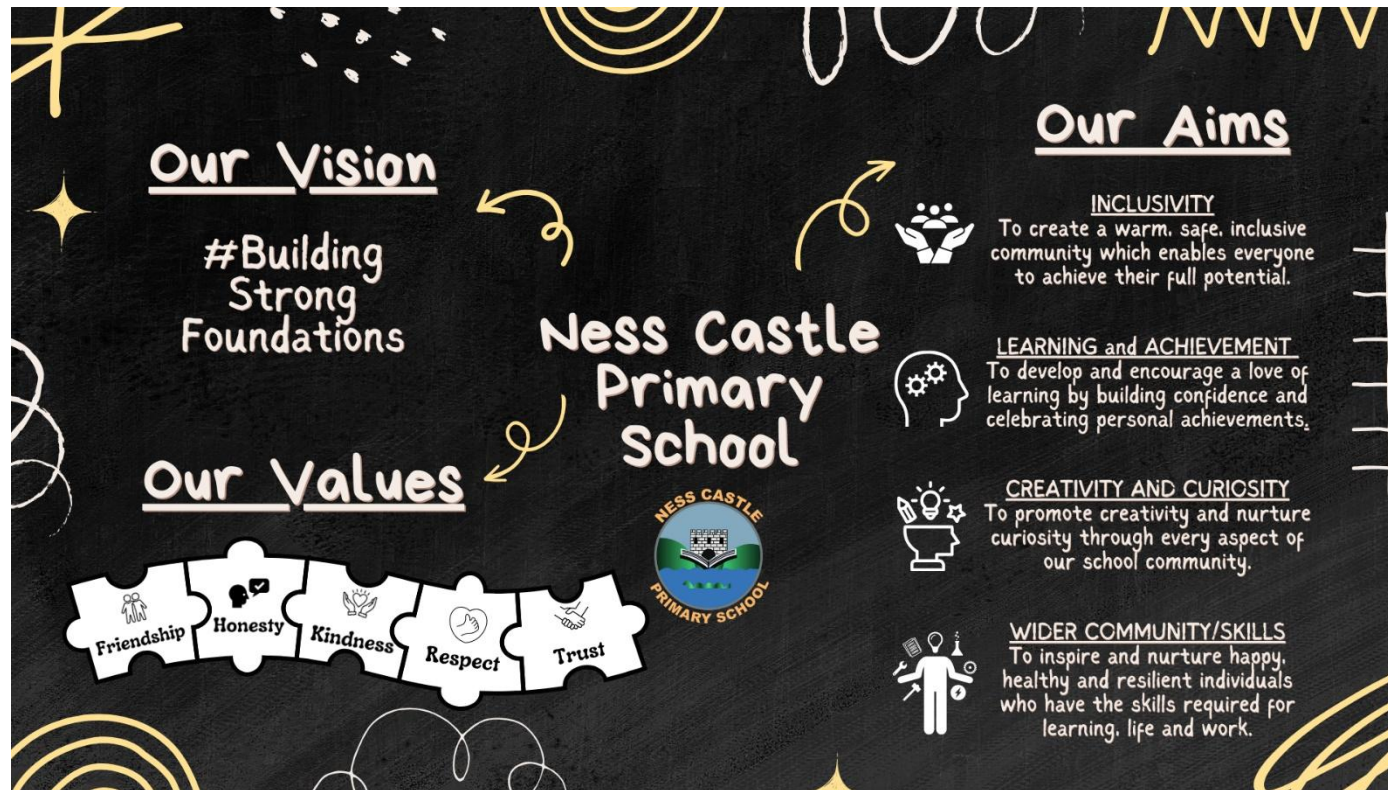
² ASN – Additional Support Needs

³ FSM – Free school meal entitlement

⁴ EAL – English as an additional language

School vision, values and aims

Lèirsinn, luachan agus amasan na sgoile



Our Vision, Values and Aims continue to be embedded across all areas of School and ELC life. In the year ahead, we will continue to ensure that they are shared with the whole school community.

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: COMMUNITY		
School Improvement Plan Priority 1 <i>To ensure leadership is at the heart of our COMMUNITY and that wider achievements are promoted and recorded</i>		
Summary of progress	Next steps	Stakeholder Views
We have made good progress within this priority, with an increase in pupil voice and participation in key areas across the school as well as an increase in parent/carer involvement in curricular and wider opportunities. Our pupil voice (Nessie Natter) groups are in a more regular routine, with class reps gathering information and feeding back to the wider school body, ensuring pupil voice is evident in different elements across the school. Parental involvement opportunities were made available throughout the year with Numeracy Open Afternoon (most parents/carers attending), STEM visits, Community and Class Assemblies (with almost all parents attending) and almost all parents attended our Hopes and Dreams and Parent Consultation meetings, where the sharing of Nessie Novel Learning Profiles also takes place. Staff Leadership has increased, in particular, with a very successful STEM focus week. School Mobile Phone policy was created, taking into account the views of parents/carers and staff, with the key messages of mobile phones not to be used within the school and handed into class teachers if taken into class.	Rights Respecting Schools to make a more prominent focus within next session's SIP to ensure the work becomes embedded across the school. Additional parental involvement opportunities to be sought throughout the year and information to be shared regarding assessment processes across Ness Castle in the coming session. Staff Leadership opportunities to be identified for each staff member within the yearly calendar 2026/27. Pull together final draft of policy and share with all stakeholders.	Pupils enjoy the responsibility of being a rep in one of these groups. STEM week feedback from pupils was extremely positive, with all children identifying their favourite activity and what they had learned. Positive feedback given to pupils and staff by parents following Class Assemblies and Open Afternoons and shared in Nessie Novels. A vast range of views collated from parents/carers and staff members, which form policy.

Wider achievements tracking development was not undertaken due to other commitments.	This will be revisited and developed in the future.	
Impact		
• An increase in purposeful pupil voice across the school. • Parents/carers have a wider understanding of the Numeracy curriculum as well as their child's wider learning and achievements. • Staff Leadership opportunities ensured positive collaboration between staff members within the planning process. • All children and families have an awareness of the mobile phone policy, with no mobile phones now used in school by pupils.		

School Priority 2: CURRICULUM		
School Improvement Plan Priority 2 <i>To develop progressions for the Ness Castle Curriculum, with a particular focus on the teaching and learning of Numeracy</i>		
Summary of progress	Next steps	Stakeholder Views
We have made some progress within this priority, with our curriculum being positively developed and a start made towards raising attainment within Numeracy. Curriculum pathways for all areas of the curriculum are now in place and are accessible by all class teachers. Baseline numeracy data was collected, along with an audit undertaken to ascertain planning, resources and approaches used by all staff members, as well as areas staff found more difficult to teach. A numeracy strategies workshop was delivered to all teaching staff. Numeracy resources have been purchased so that all pupils can access consistent concrete materials from the start of session 2026/27.	Ensure these adjusted for composite classes and that our planning documents are all relevant and linked. Research into approaches and training for the teaching of Numeracy and Maths should be undertaken to ensure the core, support and challenge elements of the teaching are consistent across the school.	

Impact	
• A consistency of approach in the planning across curricular areas is developing. • The use of Numeracy resources will become more consistent across the school. • Some numeracy teaching strategies are now shared across all teaching staff.	

School Priority 3: CONSISTENCY		
School Improvement Plan Priority 2 <i>To continue to develop a CONSISTENT approach to learning and teaching at Ness Castle, with a specific focus on ASN, Behaviour and the ELC.</i>		
Summary of progress and impact	Next steps	Stakeholder Views
We have made some progress within this priority with steps made, across the year, to ensure ensure the wellbeing, equality and inclusion of the children of Ness Castle, maximising opportunities to consider ways of closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged, although this needs to continue to be a focus within our school development. The approach towards ASN implementation has become more consistent across the session, with an increase in 1:1 PSA support for those who most need it. Some professional conversations have taken place in order to support our children who have most need (within the staged intervention process) and some targeted work has taken place. Meeting with our support staff team have supported the needs of our children and has started to develop a shared approach to working with them.	Consistency of approach has been problematic due to staffing absence and inconsistencies so this should be a focus next session with a more stable staff and introduction of a specific working group. Linking the needs of our pupils to our PEF plan more explicitly, with a more rounded approach linking class teachers to support the PSA intervention work. Develop a programme of regular PSA Meetings, which class teachers can also attend, with a focus on supporting individuals and training needs.	

ELC Planning and observation has undergone some development, but other developments linked to room changes, staffing changes and our Care Inspectorate Action Plan have overtaken this target.	Planning within the ELC will form the main priority for the ELC next session.	
Impact		
- Children who are most in need now benefit from fuller, more consistent support and are therefore more settled in school. - PSA staff feel more supported and listened to. - Consistency of approach with regards to ASN across the school is improving.		

Progress and impact of Pupil Equity Fund

Adhartas agus buaidh Maoin Cothromas Sgoilearan

This session, our initial plan was to use our PEF to employ a teacher for 2 days a week for the first 10 weeks of the session and then revisit this at the end of the session for another 10 weeks. This was due to the success of this style of input last year.

Sadly, due to staff absence and the general ASN need in the school being far greater than it had been in previous years, this format wasn't successful. For a short few weeks, the PEF teacher supported wider ASN in the school, working with a number of our most in need children to ensure they were safe, happy and supported in school. Although this is difficult to specifically measure, this allowed the children to be included and ensured pupils were safe.

Once realising teaching staff levels were not going to improve, our PEF was linked to our Numeracy development in the school and the staff worked together to identify concrete materials that will make the most difference to raising attainment for our pupils going forward. These were not able to be purchased in time to use this session, but will be used to support next year's Numeracy and ASn developments across the school.

Over the last 3 weeks of term a teacher 4 days a week is being employed to carry out a variety of PEF interventions. This will ensure the pupils who are most in need will have a positive end to the year before a long holiday. These interventions will include a range of targeted supports including:

- Phonics consolidation and boost for identified infant pupils
- Reading and writing fluency for P3 and P4 pupils
- Consolidation of numeracy strategies to allow for fluency for P4 – P7 pupils

Friendship *Honesty* *Kindness* *Respect* *Trust* #BuildingStrongFoundations

Wider achievements

Coileanaidhean nas fharsainghe

Across the course of session 2025/26, we continued to share many successes across the school and ELC, which we have all been extremely proud of.

We continue to use our monthly Nessie Natter Newsletter – which includes sections/news for both the School and ELC. We use our school website, mainly as an information sharing channel, but each of our classes have a Class Blog held within it, which is updated weekly. Our closed Facebook Group for our ELC parents/carers continues to be a fantastic place where we can share the learning of our youngest Nessies. Our School App is also utilised to share information and quick messages, which more and more parents have now signed up for.

Over the last year our very active Parent Council have again organised a range of different events – a Halloween and Valentines Disco, a Christmas Fair, The return of the Great Nessie Bake Off, Community Easter Egg Hunt, Car Boot Sale and End of Year Disco. The support they receive from the community as well as local businesses is wonderful and this has allowed us to support class trips through contributions towards transport, buy ASN resources for the school, fund new picnic benches (to be purchased for the start of next session) as well as a range of smaller needs across the year.

As a school, we have participated in sporting events including Interschools Cross Country - McRobert Cup, Interschools Athletics (where we came in a close 2nd place in our category) and the Baillie Cup (where there were also a range of medal winners in each event). A group of P6 and P7 pupils also undertook Bikeability training, all achieving success. A group of parents have also set up a P3 football team and another are about to start a group for P1 pupils.

Our Christmas Nativity was once again a sell-out success, with the children from P1 – 3 giving wonderful performances. We are also planning our first end of year performance involving our P4 – 7 pupils.

We once again have supported a number of different charitable organisations and events throughout the year, including the Highland and Dalneigh Primary Food Banks, Purple for Polio and the Highland Hospice.

Across the year, children took part in a number of trips to other places. This included a Mathletics Challenge organised by Dalneigh Primary, the Scottish Maths Challenge at Dingwall Academy, visits to the Newton Room at the UHI, two classes undertook outdoor learning at Aigas and a trip to Farr woods. We also took the whole school to Eden Court to attend the excellent Christmas Pantomime – oh yes it was!

As part of our focus on Pupil Voice, we developed our Nessie Natter Pupil Voice Groups. This session, two representatives from each class formed each Nessie Natter Group, allowing them to share ideas and suggestions based upon Reading Schools, Rights Respecting School (our Little Knights Rights Group) and they also supported our community and became Junior Road Safety Officers

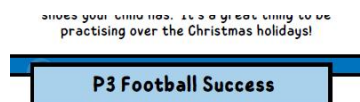
Friendship *Honesty* *Kindness* *Respect* *Trust* #BuildingStrongFoundations

Our House system continues to be a positive motivator, with pupils across the school gaining House points whilst our Vice and House Captains arranged a number of Interhouse events. This provided our P6 and P7 children with many leadership opportunities.

Our P7 trip looked slightly different this year, being made up of 3 different elements – a day at Fairburn Outdoor Centre (undertaking canoeing, archery and bushcraft), a trip on the train to Aberdeen to visit Satrosphere (Science Centre) and Codonas and an Innoflate Trip culminating in a sleepover on the bouncy castle! The children were a credit to the school on all of these!

Wider individual achievements continue to be shared at our monthly Celebrating Achievements Assembly, as well as Nessie Knighthoods being awarded on a weekly basis, with each class teacher selecting a weekly winner who is knighted at our Assembly. A termly Community Assembly, where anyone from our community could join us for a “normal” weekly Assembly, has continued to be popular across the course of the year, alongside each class hosting their own parents and family members to their class assembly. This assembly allowed children to share their learning and were extremely well supported by all.

Overall – another busy but very productive year for the school and ELC – continuing to build our place within the local community and beyond.



A big thank you to the group of P3 parents who have set up and are running Saturday morning football training sessions for P3 children. Those involved are thoroughly enjoying them, as well as the regular friendly tournament at Bught Park. They look



Comments from learners, families, stakeholders and staff

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

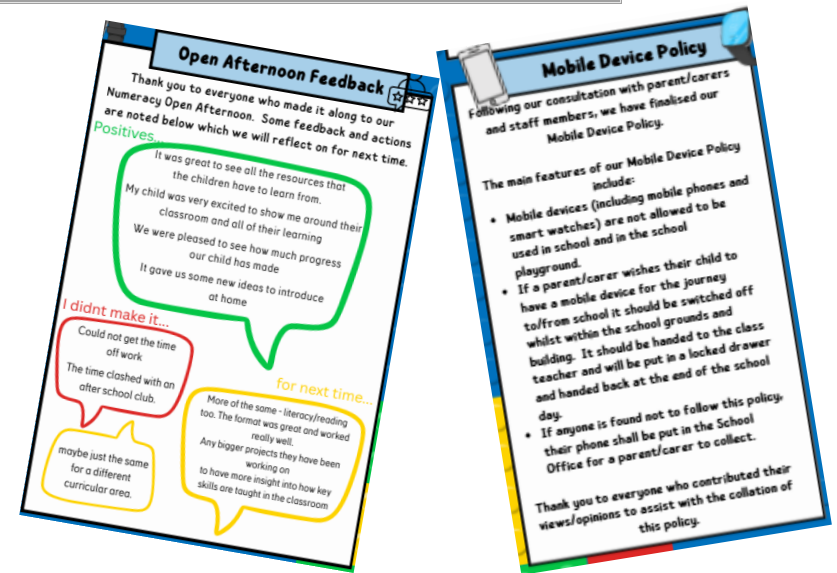
Across the course of the session, we have undertaken a range of different consultations, looking for feedback and actions for our way forward. This was collated and shared with parents/carers in a number of different Newsletters and formats.

We held a Numeracy Open Afternoon for parents, where all parents left feedback for their children as well as completed feedback via a Google Form.

We shared a questionnaire regarding our Mobile Device policy and a majority of parents completed it, sharing a range of responses and ideas.

When parents/family members have been in for parents evening they have been able to review their child's Nessie Novel (Learning Profile) and when visiting for class assemblies, parent comments have been collated by class teachers. These are generally done within our Parent/Carer speech bubbles.

Staff have undertaken a range of self evaluation tasks based upon a range of Qis. We have also started collating evidence within a Self Evaluation powerpoint, with links to discussion notes, feedback and questionnaire responses. We will continue to develop the use of this in the coming session.



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	Satisfactory	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	Satisfactory	Good

Our overall evaluation of our capacity for continuous improvement is:

We are confident in our capacity for continuous improvement.

Key priorities for improvement planning

Prìomhachasan airson planadh airson leasachadh

CONSISTENCY – To ensure a consistent approach to supporting learners across our school – both targeted and universal – in order to raise attainment and support effective inclusion.

COMMUNITY – To develop our Rights Based education and approaches across all elements of our school community – in class, across the school and in the playground.

CURRICULUM – To raise awareness of the new Curriculum Improvement Cycle across the ASG, working together to develop a shared understanding.

Planning ahead

A' planadh air adhart

Full details of the school's 2025/26 improvement priorities and actions are detailed on the school improvement plan, which can be accessed on our website <https://sites.google.com/invernessroyalacademy.org.uk/nesscastleprimary> or by contacting the school office.