



STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2025-26

AITHISG INBHEAN IS CÀILEACHD

St Duthus School Special 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%

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
87.8%

Average Class Size
5.8

Meeting PE Target
Target Met

Pupil Numbers (inc nursery)
29

Teacher Numbers
7 (3 FT 4 PT)

Pupil Teacher Ratio
4.14 (5.8 daily)

SIMD Q1¹
18%

SIMD Q2
25%

SIMD Q3
50%

SIMD Q4
7%

SIMD Q5
0%

Unknown
0%

ASN²
100%

No ASN
0%

FSM³
100%

No FSM
0%

EAL⁴
0%

No EAL
100%

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

Reading

Few

Writing

Few

**Listening and
talking**

Few

Numeracy

Few

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

St Duthus School is in a rural coastal setting serving a wide geographical area ranging from Alness in the South, Bonar Bridge in the Northwest, Helmsdale in the North and the Dornoch and Tain areas. We are a specialist provision for pupils aged across primary and secondary who have complex additional support needs.

There are 29 children attending the school, ranging from Primary 1 to Secondary 6. We have 5 composite classes in total: 1 x P1-P3, 2 x P4–S3 and 1 x Senior Phase Classes S4-S6.

We moved into the new Tain Royal Campus on 22nd April which is a brand new facility. The campus is shared with the new Tain Primary School and Tain Royal Academy with St Duthus having a separate wing of the campus.

Staff provide a supportive and nurturing environment for pupils and have developed good relationships with our partners, including the team of wider professionals and parents. We very much encourage a team approach to meeting the needs of our young people.

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 children are making the following progress:

We have had no exclusions this year.

Attainment

P1-S3 – Broad General Education

In a Special School most children in Broad General Education will be working between pre-early milestones and early level. A few may be working within first in some areas. Children are assessed and their progress is tracked. Interventions are put in place where we feel a child is not making progress as expected in relation to their potential. For some children their progress may be lateral due to their individual circumstances and pupils may also participate in awards programmes.

Almost all children and young people will use a range of communication systems to communicate with each other and adults. These include but not exclusively signing, symbols and assistive technologies.

S4-S6- Senior Phase

Most children and young people are working towards accreditation at National Level 1 and 2 in a range of curricular areas. A minority of learners may be working at level 3 in some areas.

This year children and young people have attained accreditation in the following areas:

Maths, English, Creative Arts, Social Subjects, Science, Physical Education, Food, Health and Wellbeing.

Pupil also work towards individual awards such as Personal Achievement Awards.

Destinations of School Leavers

Our school leavers progress on to positive destinations to access activities and work within the community.

School vision, values and aims

Lèirsinn, luachan agus amasan na sgoile

RESPECT • ACHIEVEMENT • COMMUNITY • HAPPINESS • COMPASSION

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: Transition to new campus.

School Improvement Plan Priority 1: Transition to new campus.

Summary of progress	Next steps
✓ Children moved into the new school campus on 22nd April 2026. ✓ Pupils were shown videos and pictures and engaged in social stories around transition and change. ✓ All pupils at St Duthus had an enhanced transition with multiple familiarisation visits prior to the new school move. ✓ Transition period was reviewed to ensure positive outcomes for all children and transition was altered and enhanced for those who required this. ✓ Parent/carers open days were held to showcase the new school to family members. ✓ Partner open day was held to showcase school to the various partners who work closely with St Duthus and our children. ✓ School name was altered and new school badge and school uniform colours introduced following consultation with pupils, staff and parents/carers. ✓ New school hours introduced to ensure that secondary pupils are accessing 27.5 hours of teaching per week.	✓ Continue regular update meetings on progress with Steering Group. ✓ Create close links with Tain Primary and Tain Royal Academy to work in collaboration across the campus. ✓ Children at St Duthus access classes and activity at Tain Royal Academy on a more regular basis. ✓ Develop links to mainstream classes and specialist curriculum areas. ✓ Review school hours and gather views of impact.

RESPECT • ACHIEVEMENT • COMMUNITY • HAPPINESS • COMPASSION

Impact

The move to the new school at Tain Royal Campus has been a positive experience for children and staff. Children took part in enhanced transition so that they were familiar with their new environment prior to the move date.

We undertook consultations with pupils, staff and parents regarding the change of school name, a new school badge which was designed by our pupils and new school colours.

We carried out consultations with parents/carers regarding new school hours to ensure that secondary pupils were accessing 27.5 hours of education a week. View and concerns of parents/carers were listened to and new hours were agreed following the consultation period.

Pupils now have access to PE facilities and a fantastic garden space which they previously did not have. This has had a positive impact on health and wellbeing and has expanded the teaching and quality of delivery in this curricular area significantly.

Children now access a state-of-the-art school with up-to-date facilities and equipment.

School Priority 2: Curriculum Rationale

School Improvement Plan Priority 2: Curriculum Rationale

Summary of progress	Next steps
✓ Increased community involvement and links created with local groups and providers. ✓ Close links established with partners focusing on transitions. ✓ Transitions links strengthened for positive post school destinations. ✓ Focus on life skills built into the curriculum through health and wellbeing, links with local groups and workplace experience. ✓ Personalised child-centre focus in curriculum ✓ Individualised learning to suite each pupil's unique needs and abilities. ✓ Parent/carer open days to showcase new school ✓ Initial work focused on identifying the core principles that underpin learning at St Duthus, including communication, independence, wellbeing and life skills.	✓ Refresh working groups to retrieve and collate information and views. ✓ Involved parents/carers and partners in seeking views of school and whole school community. ✓ Develop curriculum further with an inclusive and life skills-based approach. ✓ Develop a full understanding of what our learners needs, gathering pupil's views utilising Wee HGIOUS. ✓ Increase transition opportunities and positive post school destinations. ✓ Review aims and values

	✓ Finalise and publish St Duthus Curriculum rationale next school session.
Impact	
St Duthus has seen significant changes in recent years in staffing, management and has recently undergone a move to the new school campus. The school hours, badge and colours has also changed as part of a refresh which accompanied the move. Staff have begun to review the curriculum rationale to develop a shared understanding and strengthen understanding among staff of what matters most for learners at St Duthus School. Staff report increased confidence in identifying core priorities for learning and teaching. Parents/carers have welcomed opportunities to visit the new school and understand how the curriculum will evolve. The new facilities have already broadened the range of learning experiences available, particularly in PE, outdoor learning and life skills. This has had a positive impact on engagement, motivation and wellbeing. Community involvement has been increased and closer links established with partners and providers focusing on transition and post school destinations.	

School Priority 3: Assessment, tracking and monitoring

School Improvement Plan Priority 3: Assessment, tracking and monitoring

Summary of progress and impact	Next steps
✓ Improved understanding of planning and tracking and confidence in use via new tracking and monitoring system introduced. ✓ Standard format for BGE and senior phase introduced. ✓ IEP's reviewed termly and embedded in tracking document. ✓ Moderation of assessments and pupils work developed understanding and confidence among staff and increased identification of interventions. ✓ Increased consistency of judgements among staff and increase of staff confidence. ✓ Senior SQA tracking system reviewed to show progression and completion of courses.	✓ Full use of new tacking and monitoring system to be used in BGE ✓ New Senior SQA tracker to be fully developed and implemented. ✓ Continue to develop planning, assessment and tracking to reinforce and develop confidence. ✓ Continue to use a range of assessments to support learning with focus on identifying next steps. ✓ Develop links with specialist teachers further with view of increased cooperation post move to new campus. ✓ Review and moderate IEP's. ✓ Increase accuracy of data allowing more individualisation and differentiation of work for pupils. ✓ Planning, Tracking and Data attainment meetings scheduled

	✓ Work with Special School ASG on moderation
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Impact

To raise attainment for all our children and young people within BGE and Senior Phase by improving planning, assessment and tracking.

Discussion and reviews taken place to identify the best approaches to improve outcomes for our learners and know if they are making progress by having systems in place that can track this.

Current BGE tracking system reviewed by staff and altered to make systems easier to manage for staff and developed confidence.

Progression easier to track with more clear and concise system.

Senior SQA tracking systems reviewed and analysed. More coherent senior SQA tracking systems being developed to show clear progression for every pupil and avoid repetition of courses and qualifications.

Progress and impact of Pupil Equity Fund

Adhartas agus buaidh Maoin Cothromas Sgoilearan

Attention Autism is being used to deliver the curriculum and is very popular with teachers and students. Staff underwent Level 1 training this year and most pupils engage with Attention Autism. Teacher confidence is improving and developing and gaining experience in the use of attention autism will be continued with peer learning and coaching.

Whole school approach to communication developing at both school and further links with home. Increased engagement from home evident and whole school consistent approach developing, continue to use this format and system for moving forward.

Digital software use and confidence in this developed further among both staff and pupils with the purchasing of tablets to develop access to learning. Develop digital learning further.

Wider achievements

Coileanaidhean nas fharsainghe

Pupils have participated in the Dynamic Youth Award, Personal Development Award, the Bronze Wild Challenge Award and the JASS Awards.

Pupils have increased their participation in events and attend Disability Sports events regularly this school year. Pupils have competed in the Disability Sports Athletics Championships, Boccia, Disability Football, Cricket and Shinty. There have been successful outcomes across several events building confidence and participation. Pupils have all taken part in Bike Ability to develop awareness of road safety and cycling proficiency.

Pupils have also engaged closely with community projects and providers visiting Grow for You, Blooming Gardeners, UHI College courses and ASN Farming.

Comments from learners, families, stakeholders and staff

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

Parents strongly agree that that their child likes being at school, is safe and are treated with respect. There is a strong agreement that the staff know parents as an individual and that their emotional wellbeing is supported. Parents further feel strongly in agreement that they are satisfied with the quality of teaching in the school and that it is well led and managed.

Partners agree that the school works in partnership with their service and organisation and that they are aware of the procedures for reporting concerns. They further feel that the school values contributions made by partners.

Staff feel that it is rewarding being a member of staff at St Duthus school and that children and young people are encouraged and supported to treat others with respect.

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:

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

Our overall evaluation of our capacity for continuous improvement is:

We are confident in our capacity for continuous improvement.

We are making progress to improve in our own practice and deliver quality learning. Through self-evaluation and collegiate activities, we are identifying areas to develop and interventions needed to make positive changes.

Key priorities for improvement planning

RESPECT • ACHIEVEMENT • COMMUNITY • HAPPINESS • COMPASSION

Prìomhachasan airson planadh airson leasachadh

Improvement Priority Title
Curriculum rationale
Planning, tracking assessment and moderation
Whole school communication approach
ASG Improvement Priorities
Curriculum Improvement Cycle (CIC)

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 by contacting the school office.