



STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT AITHISG INBHEAN IS CÀILEACHD

2024-2025

North West Sutherland Schools (Durness Primary, Kinlochbervie Primary, Scourie Primary)



Introduction: Local and National Context

Ro-ràdh: Co-theacsa ionadail agus Nàiseanta

This Standards and Quality Report is influenced by both Highland and national priorities. These can be summarised as follows:

Highland Priorities



National Improvement Framework Priorities



Entitlement, Excellence & Equity:

We will raise attainment and achievement for all, especially for children and young people from disadvantaged circumstances, including rural deprivation. We will focus relentlessly on improving standards and the quality of learning and teaching, to ensure that entitlement, equity and excellence are delivered across the system.

Empowerment & Leadership:

We will develop leadership skills at all levels of the system, for now and the future, building a culture of empowerment and professional capital.

Relationships:

We will maximise health and wellbeing for all children and young people, to give them the best possible start in life. We will ensure every child and young person feels part of the community they live in.

Opportunity:

We will maximise opportunities for our children and young people, and for the wider Highland community and its visitors, through the provision of high-quality services.

The key priorities outlined in the National Improvement Framework are:

- Placing the **human rights and needs of every child** and young person at the centre of education
- Improvement in children and young people's **health and wellbeing**
- **Closing the attainment gap** between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
- Improvement in skills and **sustained, positive school-leaver destinations** for all young people
- **Improvement in attainment**, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

Self-evaluation

To support self-evaluation, quality indicators from the national evaluative framework *How Good Is Our School?*⁴ are referenced.

Links to these sources (and others referenced) can be found here:

[National Improvement Framework Improvement Plan](#)
[HGIOS? 4](#) and [HGIOELC](#)
[Health and Social Care Standards](#)
[National Gaelic Language Plan](#)

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%

We are pleased to present our Standards and Quality Report for Session 2024-25. This report provides important information regarding our school's progress to date and our next steps in school improvement.

Self-evaluation for self-improvement is at the heart of what we do. We continue to develop our practice in making robust use of evidence as a basis for judgements regarding the impact of our work on our learners. All staff understand that self-evaluation is an integral aspect of our approach to continuous improvement through addressing the 3 key questions:

- How well are we doing?
- How do we know?
- What are we going to do now?

Throughout the year we continuously evaluate what we do and how it makes a difference to our learners. We want to know what is working well for our school community and what needs further improvement. We inform decision making and actions through a continuous process of looking inwards, outwards and forwards.

Looking inwards - starts with those working with our children and young people

We focus on the impact on outcomes for learners. Our self-evaluation processes triangulate information, data, people's views and observation of practice to measure impact and inform planning for improvement.

Looking outwards - learning from others

Looking to others for new ideas that challenge our practice and support continuous improvement allows us to learn from what works and what doesn't. This includes practice in other schools, learning communities and learning from educational research.

Looking forwards - creating a vision and planning for implementation

Through leadership at all levels, we anticipate challenges and explore creative solutions. This helps us to create an aspirational vision for our school which shapes our actions and provides a focus for improvement.

Our children and young people are actively consulted and involved in this process. We also give staff, parents/carers, and other partners the opportunity to participate in discussions and activities to shape our improvement journey.

When we develop our improvement plan, we use key questions at scheduled review times throughout the session to know how well we are progressing towards achieving these positive outcomes and changes.



Together we are working hard to ensure the Highlands is the best place for children and young people to grow up safely, learn, develop and achieve.

With positive experiences, our children and young people will always see the Highlands as home.
Le eòlasan deimhinneach, bidh ar cloinn is ar n-òigridh daonnan a' faicinn na Gàidhealtachd mar dhachaigh.

*John Naples-Campbell
Head Teacher
North West Sutherland Schools*

School Profile

Pròfil 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 93.2%	Average Class Size 10	Meeting PE Target Target Met
Pupil Numbers (inc nursery) 43 (9 in nursery)	Teacher Numbers 4	Pupil Teacher Ratio 11

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

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

North West Sutherland Schools are located in the rural west coast of Scotland, serving the local communities of Durness, Kinlochbervie and Scourie.

Throughout the three schools there are 42 children attending the school and children in nursery, ranging from P1 - 7 which are taught together in a single multi-stage class in two schools and a P1- P3 class and a P4 – P7 class in another school. There are two separate nurseries open across the campus for children aged 2 – 5.

The headteacher has overall leadership responsibility for all three Primary Schools across the campus. The headteacher is supported by a Depute Head Teacher for Primary. Staff and children from all schools work together regularly throughout special projects and our ‘all together’ days at Kinlochbervie on a Thursday.

As the campus 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 campus in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is GOOD. Children achieve appropriate CfE levels in literacy and numeracy and, across the campus, a few children are exceeding nationally expected levels. Almost all children who face barriers to learning are making good progress towards meeting their individual targets.

Overall children are making the following progress:

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

We have had no exclusions this year

School vision, values and aims

Lèirsinn, luachan agus amasan na sgoile

The vision for the Campus (across 3-18) is 'We learn through PLAY, We learn to be SAFE, We learn with CARE'.

The values of the Primary School, which were created after the pandemic and in consultation with staff, pupils and wider stakeholders are 'Stay SAFE in School (Show respect to each other. Achieving our best, Fun and Learning go together, Everyone looks after our school)'



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](#).

Our school is committed to a continuous three-year improvement cycle to ensure long-term, sustainable growth in student achievement, teaching quality, and overall school performance. This structured approach allows us to set clear goals, implement targeted strategies, monitor progress, and make informed adjustments based on evidence and outcomes.

Why This Is Important:

- Sustainable Progress:** Improvement takes time. A three-year cycle provides the necessary timeframe to implement meaningful changes, track their impact, and refine them for maximum effectiveness.
- Strategic Planning:** It allows us to break down ambitious goals into manageable phases, ensuring focused efforts and realistic expectations over time.
- Data-Driven Decisions:** Each year within the cycle includes checkpoints to collect and analyse data. This helps us evaluate what's working, what needs to change, and why—enabling smarter, evidence-based decision-making.
- Professional Development:** Teachers and staff benefit from structured time to grow professionally, test new approaches, and collaborate across disciplines, which improves classroom instruction and student outcomes.
- Community Engagement:** A multi-year plan builds trust and transparency with families and the wider school community, showing our commitment to thoughtful, purposeful improvement rather than short-term fixes.

By committing to a three-year improvement cycle, we're investing in a process that promotes excellence, equity, and lasting success for all students.



Purpose:

A significant foundation has already been laid in promoting health and wellbeing across the campus. However, continued focus in this area is essential to ensure that all pupils are empowered to become more resilient and equipped with the skills needed to manage their own health and wellbeing effectively.

In the short term, this work is helping us see tangible improvements in learners' cognitive functioning, greater confidence, and enhanced ability to articulate thoughts and feelings. Longer term, we aim to develop more resilient learners who feel safe, supported, and secure in their school environment, ultimately leading to improved attainment as they progress through school.

To support this vision, we are implementing a number of key strategies:

- **Highland Wellbeing Profile:** Pupils will begin using this tool to identify and understand their needs, fostering self-awareness and guiding appropriate supports.
- **Pupil Parliament:** Expanding representation to include voices from across the campus will ensure more inclusive dialogue and empower pupils to influence change within their school community.
- **Leadership Academy:** This initiative will build resilience, confidence, and leadership capabilities in our pupils, equipping them with lifelong skills.
- **Family Engagement:** Through life-long learning sessions and shared strategies such as Decider Skills, we aim to build strong partnerships with families to support mental health and reinforce learning at home.

This ongoing work is integral to creating a nurturing and empowering school environment where every learner can thrive both emotionally and academically.

Progress:

Content:

- ✓ Related to the NIF - Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education
- ✓ Related to the NIF - Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- ✓ Related to the NIF - the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
- ✓ Pupil Parliament continues to develop and grow in strength.
- ✓ Family engagement continues to be good throughout Primary engagement.
- ✓ Highland Profile has had little progress and needs to be addressed next year.

Impact:

- ✓ Pupil voice continues to grow with pupils using their voice to create positive change throughout their communities.
- ✓ Pupils continue to be aware of their rights and how they impact on their education and life.
- ✓ Evidence has shown that pupils are happy in the campus and engaged in their learning.
- ✓ Parents and carers continue to support the school and continue to access the school pathways (Head Teacher drop ins, parent council etc) to impact change.

Next steps:

To continue to strengthen outcomes in Health and Wellbeing, we will:

- ✓ Develop and embed the Highland Profile across all stages, ensuring that pupil wellbeing is tracked effectively and consistently, with a focus on identifying and addressing the needs of all learners, particularly those at risk of disadvantage.
- ✓ Deepen pupil participation by further empowering the Pupil Parliament to lead and evaluate health and wellbeing initiatives, ensuring their voice directly shapes school decisions and promotes equity and inclusion.
- ✓ Enhance staff capacity to support pupil wellbeing by delivering targeted professional learning on rights-based education and trauma-informed practice, aligned with GIRFEC and NIF priorities.
- ✓ Strengthen strategic family partnerships by building on our positive engagement to co-design wellbeing supports and further promote parent/carer involvement in whole-school wellbeing planning.
- ✓ Implement more systematic evaluation of wellbeing data and pupil/parent feedback to measure impact and guide continuous improvement, particularly in relation to closing the wellbeing-related attainment gap.
- ✓ Ensure a whole-school approach to rights and wellbeing by embedding children's rights more explicitly into learning experiences, school culture, and policies, promoting a shared language and understanding across the school community.

These actions will support our commitment to placing the rights and needs of every child at the heart of our work, while continuing to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for all learners.

Purpose:

Across our campus—nursery, primary, and high school—we recognise the need to ensure a consistently excellent learning and teaching experience for all learners. While there is already strong practice in place, the variety of approaches currently used highlights the need for greater coherence and shared standards. Our mission is to provide every young person with a high-quality, engaging, and equitable education, regardless of stage or setting.

To achieve this, we are focusing on several key areas:

- ✓ **Digital Technology:** We will evaluate and develop our use of digital tools to support learning and teaching, ensuring they are used meaningfully to enhance pupil engagement and achievement.
- ✓ **Data-Informed Practice:** Staff will be supported to build confidence in analysing and using data to better understand individual learners. By using data effectively, we can personalise learning experiences, identify gaps, and plan more responsively to the needs of our pupils.
- ✓ **Feedback:** The quality of feedback is a priority. Across the campus, we are working to ensure feedback is timely, specific, and impactful—supporting pupils to make clear progress, address misconceptions, and understand their next steps in learning.
- ✓ **Pace and Challenge:** We acknowledge the need to provide greater challenge, particularly for our more able learners. The introduction of targeted 'Booster' classes in numeracy and literacy will help ensure that all pupils are both supported and stretched to achieve their full potential.
- ✓ **Collegiality and Consistency:** Through strengthened collaboration and moderation across sectors, we aim to build a more cohesive approach to learning and teaching, so that all pupils benefit from shared high standards and expectations.
- ✓ **Raising Aspirations:** We are committed to providing meaningful and challenging opportunities that raise the aspirations of all learners and help them see their potential, both in and beyond school.

By embedding these improvements, we aim to increase engagement in learning, improve attendance, reduce instances of low-level disruption, and ultimately raise attainment across the Broad General Education. The changes are rooted in a shared commitment to excellence and equity for every child across our campus.

Progress:

Content:

- ✓ Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
- ✓ Improvement in achievement, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- ✓ More staff leadership in consistency across the campus regarding moderation and topic delivery.
- ✓ Data being used to support learners and judgements.
- ✓ Pupils engaged in learning.
- ✓ Digital Learning is gaining more confidence with staff.

Impact:

- ✓ Pupils aspirations have risen with pupils taking more leadership of their own learning and opportunities.
- ✓ Moderation opportunities have enabled staff to become clearer and more confident in levels and assessments.
- ✓ Pupils are having more shared experiences across the campus.
- ✓ Staff are looking at the pace and challenge of lessons which is engaging learners to attain.
- ✓ Feedback is supporting learners more on their own educational journey.

Next steps:

To continue improving the quality of learning and teaching across the campus and support attainment for all, we will:

- **Strengthen consistency in pedagogy** by continuing to support staff leadership and collaboration in planning, moderation, and delivery of high-quality learning experiences across all stages, with a focus on pace, challenge, and progression.
- **Enhance our use of assessment and data** to further inform planning and teaching, ensuring interventions are timely, targeted, and evidence-based—particularly for closing the attainment gap in literacy and numeracy.
- **Expand digital learning approaches**, building staff confidence and capacity to integrate digital tools in a way that enhances learning, increases pupil independence, and supports varied learning styles.
- **Embed effective feedback practices** across the campus so all pupils receive regular, meaningful, and developmental feedback that supports them in taking ownership of their learning journey.
- **Develop pupil leadership in learning** by increasing opportunities for learners to influence and reflect on their learning, including through self and peer assessment, learning conversations, and pupil voice forums.
- **Build on shared learning experiences** across the campus to promote equity, inclusion, and a sense of community, while aligning curricular content and expectations to ensure continuity and progression.

These actions will further our commitment to delivering consistently high-quality learning and teaching, ensuring every child achieves their full potential, regardless of background or circumstance.

School Priority:

Enhancement of creativity and play in our Primary and ELC settings

Purpose:

We are committed to inspiring creativity, independence, and collaboration in all our learners, empowering them to become confident, curious, and resilient individuals. Our aim is to further embed creativity, entrepreneurship, and innovation across learning, recognising these as essential skills for success in an ever-changing world.

To support this vision, we are strengthening our partnerships with educators, employers, creative industries, and the cultural sector. These collaborations enrich the curriculum and provide real-world contexts that motivate and engage pupils. Learners benefit from experiences that foster imagination, open-mindedness, and the ability to think critically and creatively.

Children and young people are increasingly confident and ambitious, showing high levels of self-esteem and motivation. They are developing the ability to take ownership of their learning—posing meaningful questions, challenging assumptions, exploring complex ideas, and offering well-considered solutions. By encouraging risk-taking and multiple perspectives, we are nurturing young people who are adaptable, reflective, and ready to face new challenges.

As part of this ongoing work:

- **Creative Learning Opportunities** such as *Eden Court Sessions*, *Artist Take-over Days*, and themed arts events (e.g. *Maths Week* and *Anti-Racism Week*) provide platforms for expression and exploration across disciplines.
- **Evaluation and Self-Reflection** using the *HG/OLEC Challenge Questions* allows us to critically assess current practice and identify next steps for deepening creativity across settings.
- **Ownership of Learning** is being strengthened through activities that promote learner voice, autonomy, and cross-curricular thinking.

This strategic focus on creativity and innovation supports our wider goal of developing confident learners who are not only academically capable but also imaginative, resourceful, and equipped for lifelong learning in a complex, interconnected world.

Progress:

Content:

- ✓ Link to NIF: Improvement in Achievement, Particularly in Literacy and Numeracy.
- ✓ Link to NIF: Improvement in Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing
- ✓ Link to NIF: Placing the Human Rights and Needs of Every Child and Young Person at the Centre of Education
- ✓ Teachers weekly/termly plans
- ✓ Learning shared on online platforms with parents/community
- ✓ Teacher evaluations of Eden Court sessions during CPD sessions

Impact:

- ✓ NWSS Primary teaching staff/PSA and pupils have been taking part in
- ✓ Everyone is an Artist - 2-year long partnership project between Eden Court and primary schools in the North and West of the Highlands. The project is funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and is part of Round 7 of the Teacher Development Fund. Our participating schools have less than 50 pupils on their roll and given their geographic location rarely visit Eden Court. The project seeks to develop pupils skills and confidence in drama and film.
- ✓ During the activity days with Eden Court staff pupils were very independent and once given a task, actually liked to take full responsibility for it.
- ✓ The activities were cross-curricular, including elements of HWB, Literacy Science

- ✓ Use of film/animation /green screen in Christmas Shows and being developed across the curriculum to support IDL projects
- ✓ and Maths, but taught using Drama and Film techniques.
- ✓ The animation activity was a huge success pupils took ownership of their own learning, pushing themselves to do more – for example making flip books without being asked.
- ✓ Drama games were employed at key times throughout the project and were very well received.

Next steps:

1. Embed Creative Approaches Across the Curriculum

Why: Drama and film techniques proved highly effective in developing confidence, independence, and cross-curricular understanding.

Actions:

- ✓ Develop a Creative Learning Toolkit for teachers, drawing on Eden Court methodologies (e.g., drama starters, animation techniques, green screen).
- ✓ Link creative strategies to Literacy, HWB, and STEM outcomes to ensure alignment with NIF priorities.
- ✓ Designate one IDL project per term to use a drama/film-based approach across all classes.

2. Extend Staff Confidence and Skills in Creative Pedagogy

Why: CPD feedback was positive, and teachers' involvement in creative projects has begun to influence planning. Build on this momentum.

Actions:

- ✓ Schedule termly CPD sessions focused on integrating film/drama into daily teaching practice.
- ✓ Facilitate peer observations of creative teaching approaches within and across schools.
- ✓ Continue the Eden Court partnership and explore opportunities for staff to co-deliver sessions with artists, moving from observer to practitioner.

3. Strengthen Pupil Voice and Ownership in Learning

Why: Pupils demonstrated increased independence, creativity, and self-motivation when given space to lead their learning.

Actions:

- ✓ Introduce pupil-led “Creative Learning Days” each term, where learners plan and run activities (e.g., script writing, short film production, storytelling).
- ✓ Establish a Creativity Council (pupil group) to gather feedback and co-design future projects.
- ✓ Include creative targets in pupil learning profiles, particularly related to confidence, communication, and collaboration.

4. Increase Family and Community Engagement Through Creativity

Why: Learning is already being shared online and creativity has high engagement potential for families and communities.

Actions:

- ✓ Host a termly “Creative Showcase” event (live or virtual) to present animation, performances, or creative learning outputs to families.
- ✓ Continue to use platforms like Google Classroom/Seesaw to share the creative process—not just finished products.
- ✓ Involve local artists, parents with creative skills, and community groups in creative learning opportunities.

5. Evaluate and Sustain Impact

Why: Initial impact is clear—especially in pupil engagement, HWB, and cross-curricular learning. Now focus on evaluating and embedding that impact long-term.

Actions:

- ✓ Create a simple Creativity Impact Tracker aligned with the NIF priorities (Literacy, HWB, Pupil Rights) to gather qualitative and quantitative data.
- ✓ Conduct pupil focus groups to gather feedback on creative learning’s impact on their wellbeing and achievement.
- ✓ Include a “Creativity in Learning” section in annual reporting to the parent council and within SIP reviews.

School Priority:

Leadership of learning, our staff , our pupils, our ELC and primary settings

Purpose:

To strengthen our school community and ensure continuous improvement, we are committed to developing leadership at all levels across our ELC and primary settings. By empowering both staff and pupils to take on meaningful leadership roles, we aim to build a culture of shared responsibility, professional growth, and learner agency.

Our goal is to increase the overall capacity of the school through enhanced collaboration and a strong ethos of professional engagement. Staff are becoming increasingly confident in reflecting on and improving their practice as a result of targeted professional learning. There is a clear commitment to collegiality, with staff taking initiative to lead and support improvement work, motivate colleagues, and contribute to a positive and ambitious school culture.

Pupils, too, are being supported to recognise their voice and influence within the school and the wider NWSS community. They are becoming more confident in discussing their learning, identifying their next steps, and taking ownership of their progress. Aspirational attitudes are evident as children make informed decisions about their learning and contribute meaningfully to school life.

Key actions driving this change include:

Leadership of Learning (QI 1.2) Challenge Questions used throughout the year in staff meetings to engage staff in critical reflection and dialogue around leadership development.

Identification and Allocation of Leadership Roles for both staff and pupils, ensuring responsibilities are meaningful, visible, and linked to school priorities.

Professional Review and Development (PRD) Conversations and staff meetings that focus on identifying individual strengths and opportunities for leadership across the school and community settings.

Through these focused efforts, we are fostering a professional and pupil-led culture where everyone contributes to the school's vision and direction. This collaborative approach enhances our ability to meet the needs of all learners and continuously improve outcomes across our campus.

Progress:

Content:

- ✓ Pupils leading more opportunities across the campus.
- ✓ Pupils are having their voices heard at various levels within the school.
- ✓ Pupils are accessing the leadership academy to develop skills.
- ✓ Staff are taking leadership opportunities with more confidence.

Impact:

- ✓ Pupils are becoming more confident in their skills on leadership, they are able to communicate clearly and contribute to the life of their school.
- ✓ The School is offering more opportunities for pupils to lead.
- ✓ Pupil Parliament grows from strength to strength, enabling pupils to use their voice in a positive and constructive way.
- ✓ Staff are developing their leadership skills but also understanding how they relate to the General Teaching Council for Scotland standards.

Next steps:

Building on the demonstrated progress and impact in leadership development, the school will pursue the following actions to further strengthen leadership capacity among pupils and staff:

- ✓ **Expand leadership opportunities** for pupils across all stages, ensuring a broad and inclusive range of platforms for student voice and agency.
- ✓ **Enhance the role and influence of the Pupil Parliament**, fostering its continued growth as a constructive and representative body for pupil leadership.
- ✓ **Develop and tailor the Leadership Academy programme** to meet the diverse needs of pupils, with a focus on equipping them with practical skills and confidence to lead effectively.
- ✓ **Support staff to engage confidently in leadership roles**, with professional development aligned to the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) standards, promoting reflective practice and continuous improvement.
- ✓ **Implement robust feedback and evaluation processes** to monitor the impact of leadership initiatives on pupil outcomes and school culture, ensuring ongoing responsiveness to identified needs.

These steps will ensure that leadership remains a key driver of school improvement, enabling all members of the school community to contribute positively and confidently to the life and success of the school.

Purpose:

We are committed to establishing a consistent and rigorous approach to the teaching of reading across our ELC and primary settings, with the aim of raising attainment and fostering a lifelong love of reading in all our learners. By embedding a shared reading culture and adopting a structured framework for teaching and assessment, we ensure that every child receives high-quality, targeted support throughout their learning journey.

The **Highland Literacy Road Map for Reading** will underpin our approach, providing a clear progression from early phonics through to higher-order comprehension. This will support staff in delivering well-planned, evidence-informed reading instruction that meets the needs of all learners. The consistent use of this framework will also support smoother transitions between ELC and P1, and P7 into high school, with closer collaboration between ELC, primary staff, and secondary English colleagues.

To address individual learning needs, **targeted reading interventions** will be implemented and regularly reviewed in collaboration with class teachers and ASN staff. Programmes such as *Toe by Toe*, *Accelerated/Speedy Reading*, and *NESSIE (Dyslexia Programme)* will be used strategically to support learners requiring additional input.

To achieve our aims, we are focusing on several key actions:

- **Audit of reading resources** (universal and targeted) by September, followed by purchase or creation of necessary materials.
- **Timetabled, structured teaching of reading**, with a review of current delivery to ensure equity and quality of experience across the school.
- **PM Benchmarks** and other reading assessments used consistently to track progress and inform next steps.
- **Joint staff planning meetings** and **CPD sessions** to build familiarity with the Highland Literacy Road Map and strengthen pedagogical approaches.
- **Family engagement activities** to reinforce the reading culture beyond the classroom and encourage reading for enjoyment at home.

All staff will be supported to build confidence in delivering high-quality reading experiences, ensuring every child has the opportunity to succeed. By establishing a strong, embedded reading culture and consistent practices, we aim to raise attainment and equip all learners with the literacy skills essential for success in school and beyond.,

Progress:

- ✓ Link to NIF: Improvement in Achievement, Particularly in Literacy and Numeracy.
- ✓ Link to NIF: Improvement in Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing
- ✓ Link to NIF: Placing the Human Rights and Needs of Every Child and Young Person at the Centre of Education
- ✓ Quality Assurance calendar which ensures a rigorous approach to monitoring improvement

Impact:

- ✓ Across the school, assessment evidence for reading is valid, reliable and there are shared standards of expectations for standards to be achieved.
- ✓ Pupils are provided with high quality feedback and have an accurate understanding of their progress in learning and what they need to do to improve.

- ✓ Regular staff meetings
- ✓ Monitoring of planning and evaluations of learning
- ✓ Target setting for each child (regular reviews)
- ✓ Monitoring and tracking of children's learning and attainment at termly attainment meetings
- ✓ Termly pupil learning conversations and individual target setting.
- ✓ Analysis of assessment data from ongoing class assessments, summative assessments and standardised assessments. SNSA/SOFA assessments
- ✓ Collegiate and in-service training CPD self-evaluation activities using HGIOS 4 and Highland Literacy Road Map Guidance materials
- ✓ SfL teacher provides timely support for class teachers in terms of reading interventions and weekly online drop-in sessions to discuss pupil progress
- ✓ HC trackers for reading in place
- ✓ Nessy Programme introduced to support targeted pupils identified by class teachers and SfL teacher.
- ✓ Targeted support for reading is given on Thursdays during literacy lessons for P1/2, P3/4 P5/6 classes and individual reading programmes are also now timetabled for Thursdays.

Next steps:

1. Strengthen and Streamline Monitoring and Evaluation Practices

Why: Your quality assurance calendar, regular staff meetings, and planning reviews provide a strong base. Refining these further will help sharpen focus and drive continuous improvement.

Actions:

- ✓ Introduce focused Literacy Learning Walks with peer feedback each term.
- ✓ Establish a termly Literacy Snapshot (a combination of planning samples, pupil voice, and book looks) to gather a holistic view of learning quality.
- ✓ Develop a checklist aligned with Highland Literacy Road Map to support consistency in planning and feedback reviews.

2. Enhance Precision in Target Setting and Pupil Ownership

Why: Regular reviews and individual learning conversations are in place. Now, the goal is to deepen pupil engagement and personalise support more effectively.

Actions:

- ✓ Introduce pupil-friendly learning profiles to help children track and reflect on their own reading and writing progress.
- ✓ Develop a digital or physical Literacy Target Tracker tool that's updated termly and shared with pupils and parents.
- ✓ Use learning conversations to co-construct next steps with pupils, particularly in reading comprehension and writing skills.

3. Embed and Expand Intervention Strategies

Why: Nessy, Thursday targeted sessions, and SfL drop-ins are well-established. The focus now should be on evaluating and scaling what works best.

Actions:

- ✓ Evaluate the impact of the Nessy programme and Thursday interventions using pre/post data and teacher feedback.
- ✓ Expand Thursday model to include writing support and extend to P6/7 if gaps are evident.
- ✓ Create a Literacy Intervention Log to track interventions, progress, and pupil engagement across classes.

4. Deepen Use of Assessment to Drive Planning and Differentiation

Why: You have a strong culture of assessment and data use. Next, ensure this insight consistently informs responsive teaching in all classrooms.

Actions:

- ✓ Develop short, focused weekly reading and writing formative assessment tasks linked to success criteria.
- ✓ Use termly data meetings to highlight trends and share strategies between stages (e.g., what worked in P3 that's applicable in P4).
- ✓ Provide additional training on interpreting SNSA/SOFA results and using them to guide group and individual instruction.

5. Sustain and Evolve Professional Learning and Collaboration

Why: Regular CPD, HGIOS4 self-evaluations, and Highland Literacy guidance have already contributed to improved consistency. Continue this with an eye on collaborative leadership and innovation.

Actions:

- ✓ Introduce teacher-led Literacy Workshops at in-service days, showcasing classroom strategies and successes.
- ✓ Use staff meetings to revisit and co-create shared standards of reading and writing expectations (moderation).
- ✓ Continue SfL online drop-ins but create themed focuses (e.g., fluency, comprehension, decoding) based on staff needs.

Progress and impact of Pupil Equity Fund

Adhartas agus buaidh Maoin Cothromas Sgoilearan

Pupil Equity Fund – Progress and Impact

The strategic use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) across North West Sutherland Schools has led to demonstrable improvements in outcomes for our young people, particularly in literacy attainment, pupil leadership, and attendance. Interventions have been tailored to meet the needs of our learners in a rural context, with a strong focus on equity, engagement, and empowerment.

Literacy outcomes have steadily improved across all stages. Targeted support programmes, structured interventions, and investment in high-quality literacy resources have helped raise attainment, particularly for those previously identified as not on track. Pupils report increased confidence in reading aloud, participating in group discussion, and expressing themselves in writing. Teachers have observed improved engagement with texts, stronger vocabulary acquisition, and more developed writing skills, especially in those who were previously disengaged or reluctant readers. Some learners who began the year well below expected levels have now closed the gap significantly, and in a few cases, exceeded age-related expectations. The impact on self-esteem has been notable, with pupils speaking more positively about their learning and progress.

Pupil leadership opportunities have grown considerably, with many young people stepping into active roles through our Leadership Academy and cross-campus initiatives. Children have co-led assemblies, contributed to school improvement planning, and organised events such as fundraising activities and eco projects. These experiences have nurtured key skills such as communication, collaboration, and initiative. Pupils report feeling more valued and listened to, and staff have noted greater confidence and a stronger sense of ownership among learners. For some pupils who previously struggled with engagement or social anxiety, these leadership experiences have been transformational in helping them find their voice and build a positive identity within the school community.

Attendance has improved across the schools, particularly among pupils who were previously persistently absent. This has been achieved through a more relational and supportive approach to family engagement. Staff have worked closely with parents and carers to understand barriers to attendance, provide flexible support, and celebrate small successes. Improved relationships with families have helped create a more inclusive and understanding school environment. As a result, many pupils who had previously felt disconnected are now more settled, attending more regularly, and actively participating in school life. Parents have reported feeling more respected and supported by the school, and young people are benefiting from the increased consistency and routine.

In summary, PEF funding has enabled us to provide targeted, meaningful support that has not only raised attainment but also strengthened pupil voice, improved wellbeing, and fostered a deeper sense of belonging among our young people. We are committed to building on this progress and continuing to close the equity gap through responsive, inclusive, and pupil-centred practice.

Wider achievements

Coileanaidhean nas fharsainge

Across the North West Sutherland Schools cluster, we continue to place a strong emphasis on developing the whole child through a broad range of wider achievement opportunities. Our primary pupils have demonstrated increased confidence, responsibility, and creativity through a wide variety of activities that go beyond the classroom.

Pupil leadership has flourished this session, with learners actively involved in leading school assemblies, organising enterprise activities, and taking ownership of events within their schools and wider communities. These opportunities have enhanced communication skills, teamwork, and a sense of agency among our pupils.

Our residential trip to Orkney offered pupils a rich blend of cultural learning and personal development. Through immersive, place-based experiences, pupils deepened their understanding of Scottish heritage, geography, and island life while also building independence, resilience, and lasting friendships.

Sports and outdoor learning have played a central role in promoting health and wellbeing. Pupils have participated in a range of activities including athletics meets, inter-school football tournaments, and paddle boarding experiences, all of which encouraged perseverance, fair play, and physical confidence.

The Ridgeway trip proved a powerful outdoor learning experience, allowing pupils to engage with nature, challenge themselves physically, and reflect on personal growth and achievement.

We continue to prioritise creativity and expressive arts, with pupils enthusiastically engaging in school Christmas productions and dance workshops, as well as enjoying a festive visit to the pantomime. These activities not only enriched pupils' cultural experiences but also boosted confidence, collaboration, and performance skills.

Collectively, these wider achievement opportunities have significantly enhanced our pupils' learning journey, contributing to the development of key skills for life, learning and work, and fostering a strong sense of belonging and pride across our school communities.

Below you can see a full range of events that our young people have engaged in which has helped them develop numerous skills as well as recognise that learning does not always happen within the classroom.

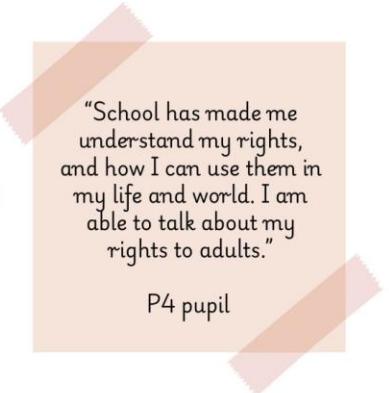
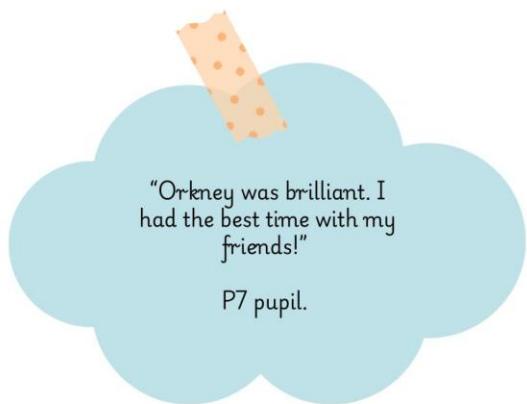
These events include

- ✓ trips within the local area
- ✓ trips nationally
- ✓ creativity activities
- ✓ sporting activities
- ✓ leadership opportunities
- ✓ enterprise activities
- ✓ community events



Comments from learners, families, stakeholders and staff

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



Throughout the academic year pupils have numerous opportunities to have their voice heard including learning conversations with their teacher, pupil parliament or Friday Five discussions with the Head Teacher.

Teachers are always asked for evaluative feedback on any training given and they have a chance in meetings to put their voice on the table.

Parents and carers use the termly drop in sessions with the Head Teacher to voice any concerns or comments they may have, they also utilise the parent council sessions or are able to communicate with staff via Learning Journals.

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

Our overall evaluation of our capacity for continuous improvement is:

We are confident in our capacity for continuous improvement.

The High School, which is part of the campus, has just been through an inspection with HMIE and Senior Leaders are aware of required standards. The Primary has some areas for improvement; including leadership of change and raising attainment.

Key priorities for improvement planning

Prìomhachasan airson planadh airson leasachadh

Building on the foundations laid in the previous academic year, the North West Sutherland Schools cluster has identified five interlinked priority areas for improvement in academic year 2025/26: Health and Wellbeing, Leadership at All Levels, Creativity and Play, Literacy, and Learning and Teaching. These areas are deeply embedded in our self-evaluation processes and are aligned with national expectations and the HGIOS 4 quality indicators. Continuing these priorities reflects our commitment to sustained, reflective improvement and to enhancing outcomes for all learners across our rural primary schools.

1. Health and Wellbeing

(QI 3.1 – Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion)

We recognise that effective learning cannot take place without secure and nurturing relationships. Strengthening our approach to mental, emotional, social, and physical wellbeing remains a cornerstone of our improvement work. We will continue to embed nurturing principles and trauma-informed practice, increase opportunities for outdoor learning, and work in partnership with families and community services to provide holistic support. Pupil voice will guide wellbeing interventions to ensure they are meaningful and impactful. We aim to further reduce barriers to engagement and enhance inclusion across all settings.

2. Leadership at All Levels

(QI 1.2 – Leadership of learning; QI 1.3 – Leadership of change)

We are committed to fostering a culture of shared and distributed leadership, empowering staff, learners, and families to lead aspects of improvement. Through the continuation of our Leadership

Academy, we will provide structured opportunities for pupils to lead learning, events, and improvement initiatives. Staff will engage in professional learning focused on change leadership, and learners will contribute more actively to self-evaluation and planning processes. This priority strengthens our collective capacity for improvement and enhances ownership of our school vision and values.

3. Creativity and Play

(QI 2.2 – Curriculum; QI 2.3 – Learning, teaching and assessment)

In line with the principles of Curriculum for Excellence and research on child development, we are embedding creativity and play as key pedagogical approaches, particularly in the early and first levels. Across the cluster, schools will continue to develop rich play-based environments that foster curiosity, problem-solving, and imagination. Creative learning approaches—including expressive arts, storytelling, and interdisciplinary contexts—will be used to support engagement, equity, and achievement. We will evaluate how these approaches improve learner motivation and attainment.

4. Literacy

(QI 3.2 – Raising attainment and achievement)

Raising attainment in literacy continues to be a key focus. Building on last year's progress, we will refine and expand our targeted literacy interventions, improve consistency in assessment and moderation practices, and enhance the teaching of reading comprehension and writing across all stages. Pupil voice will influence text choices and the design of literacy-rich environments. We are committed to ensuring that all learners experience high-quality literacy instruction that enables them to achieve their full potential, with a particular focus on closing the attainment gap for those most affected by socioeconomic disadvantage.

5. Learning and Teaching

(QI 2.3 – Learning, teaching and assessment)

At the heart of our improvement journey is the continual enhancement of learning and teaching. We will build on effective practices already evident across the cluster to ensure consistently high-quality, inclusive, and engaging classroom experiences. Professional enquiry and collaborative moderation will be key drivers of improvement. Digital tools will continue to support personalised learning and assessment. Learner engagement, feedback, and pupil self-assessment will be developed further to strengthen learner ownership and deepen understanding.

These priorities are rooted in our commitment to continuous improvement and reflect our belief that all children in North West Sutherland deserve the highest quality of education and care. Through robust self-evaluation, professional collaboration, and learner-centred planning, we aim to ensure that every child is supported to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally in our unique and vibrant school communities.

“We need to build our capacity to ensure continuous improvement and empower all learners to achieve success.”

— HGIOS?4, Leadership and Management, p. 5

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://www.nws-schools.com/> or by contacting the school office.