

Summarised inspection findings

Sgoil a' Bhac and Sgoil Àraich Loch a Tuath

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

17 September 2019

Key contextual information

Sgoil a' Bhac provides learning through the medium of Gaelic (GME) and English (EME). At the time of the inspection, there was almost equal numbers learning through Gaelic and English at the primary stages. Sgoil Àraich (nursery) Loch a Tuath is also part of the provision. This is currently an all GME provision, with parents having an option at the end of nursery to access EME or GME from P1 onwards.

The headteacher (HT) has been in post for two years. She is also HT of Tolsta Primary School. There are 39 staff contributing to children's education at Sgoil a' Bhac.

1.3 Leadership of change

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- The HT has brought much-needed stability to the leadership of the school. On commencing post, she initially prioritised building relationships with staff, children and parents. This included ensuring that the school's vision, values and aims are relevant. This initial work has built a platform on which to base future improvements. Children exemplify the values in their approach to learning.
- Staff have a local knowledge of the school's context. They recognise that their location is rural and are supportive to minimising resultant challenges that children may encounter. Staff and partners plan projects such as, *Ar Dileab* (Our Legacy) to build children's knowledge of their island and local historical events. Staff recognise their important role in securing the future of the language of their community. The aims of the school should go beyond promoting Gaelic to developing successful and confident speakers of Gaelic. The vision, values and aims should be used regularly to measure how well they are being met.
- On commencing post, the HT improved the arrangements for self-evaluation to inform the strategic planning of the school. These arrangements include meetings to track and monitor attainment for individuals and classes, and feedback to teachers on learning. The HTs' hub, where a group of HTs take forward evaluative activities in each other's schools, affords an outward-look to gathering evidence on leadership of change. There is scope for self-evaluation arrangements to be more rigorous and systematic. The HTs' hub would benefit from more direction from the education authority on benchmarking standards and identifying areas for improvement. Arrangements for self-evaluation have not identified significant gaps. Action points set should be consistently identifying clear targets to be taken forward, with steps towards these measured. Bureaucracy could be reduced by ensuring that only evaluative evidence and resultant impact is recorded.
- Arrangements for safeguarding should be monitored as part of self-evaluation.

- The HT has used information from self-evaluation to identify priorities for improvement in two school improvement plans (SIP). These are linked to national and local authority priorities. There is impact from the focus on wellbeing, raising attainment, improving arrangements for those who need additional support with their learning, and raising the profile of the national programme, Developing the Young Workforce (DYW). This is improving the pace of change of a school that has had constraints on achieving well-paced outcomes. There is scope for the gathering, analysing and use of intelligence to be more strategic and be a more accurate account of the school.
- The development of the curriculum, as a 2-12 continuum of learning is not robustly based on the design principles of progression, coherence, breadth, depth, personalisation and challenge. Progression pathways should be put in place for all curricular areas. The development of a pathway for health and wellbeing, and literacy and Gàidhlig should be given a high priority.
- Senior leaders should work with staff, and other stakeholders, to develop a written shared understanding of what highly-effective practice looks like in learning, teaching and assessment. This should take account of immersion and how this interacts with EME and inclusion. Staff should use this statement to reflect on their practice, as well as in receiving feedback on their teaching. Learning observations should have an identified criteria to guide how success will be measured. Staff need more feedback where there are inconsistencies and weaknesses in practice.
- The school should build further their awareness of national standards and expectations. Staff should continue to increase their understanding of national self-evaluation frameworks, including the use of the 'Advice on Gaelic Education'.
- There is insufficient clarity on approaches to immersion at the older stages. The extent and quality of immersion should be monitored at a strategic level. Staff should take more cognisance of what the statutory Guidance says on immersion through Gaelic.
- The HT recognises the continued need to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy, and across curricular areas. She has improved the use and analysis of data from which interventions are set. Tracking and monitoring now needs to be more robustly and systematically underpinned by regular use of progression pathways, and a reliable range of assessment. In the pursuit of excellence and equity, the attainment and progress of particular groups of children should be tracked. This should include the attainment of children in GME and that they are meeting national expectations of equal, or better attainment to their peers in English medium by the end of P7.
- Staff are committed to leading change and improvement. They all have roles to support the totality of children's learning. Those driving change for Gaelic are passionate about the language. Staff engage with change methodology as one way of demonstrating impact. They are collaborating with the Northern Alliance to improve outcomes in early literacy. Clear remits should be drawn up for the role of teachers, principal teacher and HT as leaders of all aspects of change. These need to be linked to priorities in the school improvement plan. Staff would benefit from being supported with related professional learning, including by engaging in professional inquiry.
- Staff are at an early stage of implementing national programmes such as DYW, and in their use of 'Career Education Standard' for both GME and EME.
- Children have an opportunity to be members of the pupil council and focus groups. They are starting to use national self-evaluation frameworks to identify how they may improve their

school. Parents have welcomed the opportunity to be involved in improvement. Going forward, this should remain a focus.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- Across Sgoil a' Bhac, staff, children and their peers enjoy positive relationships. This contributes to a calm and purposeful learning environment. Children demonstrate high standards of behaviour and routinely help each other to learn. Most children are engaged and interested in learning experiences. They are confident and contribute effectively to the life of the school. Older children develop leadership skills by taking on roles such as buddies, house captains and sports leaders. There are a range of ways that children's views are gathered, such as focus groups, graffiti walls and surveys. As a result, children feel their opinions are valued. For example, children's suggestions have been actioned in refurbishing the library.
- Older children exercise choice through the selection of masterclass sessions as part of their curriculum. Teachers plan a few aspects of choice within topics. There is capacity to increase the opportunities for children to consistently take the lead in their learning. This will contribute to building further their responsibility and independence.
- The local community features strongly and proactively in the life of the school. Children develop a local knowledge and understanding through a wide range of real-life experiences and visits around the island. There are effective links with businesses and organisations to support children's learning. These focus on technologies, the world of work activities, and assistance with Gaelic language and homework. As a result, children are developing skills for learning, life and work. The school should build on this positive work to create a whole-school planned framework of cross-cutting themes, including enterprise, sustainability and career education. This will assist in planning for progression.
- Overall, the quality of teaching across the school is not yet consistent. Most of children's learning experiences are good, with some being very good. However, there are some which are of a lower standard. Teachers are organised and well-prepared. Staff know the children well and match learning activities to meet the needs of most children. In most lessons, differentiation is provided through levels of adult support and varying expectations. There is scope to continue to improve differentiation in lessons, particularly in challenging high-achieving children in their learning. In a majority of lessons, questioning only tests understanding and recall. A few teachers have developed their questioning techniques to promote children's higher-order thinking skills. Opportunities for this practice to be shared more widely should now be arranged.
- Teachers use some effective practice for total immersion and immersion within GME. These practices need to be shared across the 2-12 provision to promote more consistency. Staff's frequent and skilful interactions are in quality Gaelic. Children are very keen learners of GME, some of whom require a high level of challenge. They use Gaelic very well in adult-led situations and when they are more independent in their learning.

- In almost all classes, teachers provide clear explanations to help children understand the purpose of the lesson or task. In most lessons, teachers explain what children need to do to be successful in their learning. As a next step, staff could now develop children's ability to co-create these measures of success. This will help children to fully understand the skills they are developing and take ownership of how to improve their learning. For children in GME, targets should be set to help them to achieve further accuracy in grammar.
- In all classes, children access laptops, or use the computer suite at times, to support their learning. Children at the early level use programmable toys to enhance learning in literacy and numeracy. Across first and second level, most children are able to access the internet to carry out research-based tasks. During numeracy lessons, there are opportunities for children to play online games and strengthen their skills through competition. Children in GME have had an input on science and literacy through Gaelic using the digital platform, e-Sgoil. Teachers are not all yet effectively using interactive boards to enrich learning. The school has identified this as a continued area of development.
- Assessment is not yet fully integral to the planning of learning and teaching. In most classes, children self- and peer-assess their work, particularly in writing. In a few classes, children are given opportunities throughout the lesson to self-assess their understanding. This allows the teacher to make well-timed interventions to support learning. All teachers provide a range of oral and written feedback for children to help them understand their progress in learning. However, the quality of this is variable. Where written feedback is most effective, it focuses on strengths and clearly outlines what children need to do next to improve.
- Teachers use a range of standardised assessments, including Scottish National Standardised Assessment through the medium of English and Gaelic. These are assisting in measuring children's progress. There is a need to make more effective and consistent use of formative assessment approaches across the school. Senior leaders should support teachers in developing holistic assessment as an integral part of planning. This will help inform planning and provide additional evidence of children's application of skills. The HT and staff should develop and implement a strategic assessment strategy, which clearly details ongoing and periodic assessment approaches.
- Children are supported to recognise themselves as learners through the use of learning logs. These include wider achievements. Learning logs are individual to children and shared with parents to invite their comments. Children recall what they have learned in class. They identify targets on which they want to work. The most effective targets are linked to relevant skills. There is a need for a more rigorous and systematic approach to the use of learning logs as part of regular learning conversations. This will help children to evaluate their progress against chosen targets and make better progress.
- Staff have worked collaboratively on moderating aspects of assessment in numeracy and technologies. This has been with colleagues at Sgoil a' Bhac and through local authority events. Teachers are using National Benchmarks for reading and writing to support their understanding of achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence level and agree expectations. As a result of teachers' developing confidence in assessing children's progress, the school's attainment data is becoming increasingly reliable in these specified skills. The school should now ensure their calendar includes opportunities to moderate assessment of listening and talking.
- Teachers are referencing the recently-introduced progression pathways to help support their planning in a majority of curricular areas. However, the planning of teaching and learning currently remains too resource driven. Closely linking planning and evaluations will help to ensure teaching is more informed by assessment and children's prior learning. The HT plans to

make changes to planning to reduce bureaucracy and provide a clear strategic framework. This will support staff in continuing to raise attainment and achievement.

- Staff have termly tracking meetings with the HT which focus on literacy and numeracy. These meetings help identify children who require support and interventions. Teachers are beginning to track progress across curriculum areas, however this requires more depth. To ensure validity, the school should engage in more rigorous moderation processes to ensure expectations, outcomes and experiences for all children are accurate. Furthermore, this will help to secure a shared and consistent understanding across staff.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- The HT recognises the need to work with stakeholders to revise the curriculum overview and rationale, which underpin the design and organisation of the curriculum. This will ensure that the curriculum is more systematic and reflects better the local context of Sgoil a' Bhac and aspirations for children.
- For GME there needs to be a clear rationale for immersion at the second level that is current and based on national advice. This rationale will then assist in implementing immersion as a driver in the curriculum through which all of children's learning is organised. HM Inspectors have asked the local authority to support the school in taking this forward.
- Progression pathways are in place for the majority of curriculum areas. These ensure coverage of experiences and outcomes. Clear and flexible progression pathways are now needed for all areas of the curriculum, to ensure children make appropriate progress. These pathways should correlate closely with National Benchmarks to meet children's needs; build on prior learning and abilities; be aspirational and place assessment at the heart of learning and teaching. This work will support further teachers' understanding of standards and expectations. It will help them to provide more appropriate challenge for individual learners, raise expectations and attain consistently high standards. Staff recognise, as a matter of priority, the need to develop a progressive and coherent learning pathway for health and wellbeing, and literacy and Gàidhlig.
- Teachers should be clear in how knowledge, understanding and skills should be built over time. The school should raise further children's awareness of skills as being transferrable and supporting children to make meaningful links across learning. Information from tracking progress in learning could be used more effectively to plan learning for groups and individuals to take account of their needs, and raise attainment and achievement for all. Staff should work together to review the use and purpose of 'Golden Time' in providing children with rich, meaningful learning opportunities.
- The HT has correctly identified the need to ensure a whole-school collegiate understanding of interdisciplinary learning. This should build on current practice, and provide children with more opportunities to learn in meaningful contexts. The opportunity for children to influence planning in this area should be developed further.
- Staff are aware of national guidance in creating opportunities for learning that help children to develop skills for learning, life and work. For example, the school organised recently a successful DYW Day which included input from a significant number of community partners. Moving forward, embedding the principles of this guidance will help to build a stronger focus on careers education within the wider contexts of children's learning.
- In EME, children learn Gaelic (Learners) as their first additional language as part of a 1+2 Approach to Languages. Teachers embed some Gaelic in contexts beyond language teaching. At assemblies for religious observance, children sing hymns and psalms in both Gaelic and English. As the school builds their approaches to GME, continuing to embed the language across contexts would be an important feature on which to focus. On completing their time at sgoil àraich, parents choose whether their children continue with GME, or enrol in EME. For children in EME, their understanding of Gaelic through immersion should be considered more in planning for progression within the 1+2 Approach to Languages.
- In GME, children learn French as their second additional language as part of a 1+2 Approach to Languages.

- Outdoor learning experiences are positive. These are developed through a variety of activities including the use of a poly-tunnel for growing plants. Moving forward, we have asked senior leaders and staff to develop a more progressive 2-12 approach to outdoor learning. This will ensure greater depth of learning and enable children to learn through investigation, enquiry and problem-solving. The school's development of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) activities across the school will be strengthened further by these actions.
- Children have an increasing number of opportunities to use digital technology to deepen and enhance their learning. Moving forward, the school is aware of the need to develop a whole-school strategy in this area. This will ensure children have further opportunities across the curriculum to develop appropriate knowledge and skills in this important area.
- All children experience two hours of quality physical education each week.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Parents appreciate the stability that the HT's appointment has brought. They show a strong commitment to the school, the Parent Council, and to supporting events and fundraising. Parents have been proactive in improving the school entrance, which now presents a more welcoming environment. The visibility of Gaelic should be consistently high. Parents have successfully enlisted the support of volunteers and funding from local sources. Members of the Parent Council are enthusiastic about continuing to have an active role in Sgoil a' Bhac. They are now at a point where they are ready to have more engagement with the curriculum.
- The school is supported very well by a range of partners, including local businesses, Community Learning and Development, and organisations. They support the school well with DYW, which raises children's awareness of career options. Comann na Gàidhlig (CNAG) supports children and their families with homework. They also provide children with immersion opportunities beyond the classroom. The local football club, and a member of staff, ensure that children are developing an interest and skills in football to be potentially part of the local football team. Currently, children are doing very well in 'Cuach na Cloinne' football competition for all children across Scotland in P4-P7 GME. Children are afforded a range of musical and cultural activities, some of which result in performing at the local Mòd. Other contributions support children with important events in their lives, such as transition. The church assists the school in meeting religious observance. They also support the school community with life changing events. There is real interest in supporting and investing in the children of Sgoil a' Bhac.
- The publication, 'Loch a Tuath' provides the community with an insight into important events taking place at the school. Children could have more of a role in maintaining their pages on the school's website. The HT should ensure that the number of channels of communication are manageable, which in turn would assist in keeping these up-to-date.

2.1 Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- The quality of wellbeing, equality and inclusion is good. Positive relationships are a feature of the school. Children, staff, parents and partners describe a supportive and nurturing ethos as being evident throughout the school community. Staff have a shared understanding of their responsibilities in relation to wellbeing and improving outcomes for children. The school seeks feedback from parents, staff and partners on the effectiveness of its work with children.
- Almost all children are happy, enjoy coming to and feel proud of their school. They report that they feel safe and that the school helps them to feel safe. Almost all children know they can talk to adults in the school and share any worries or concerns about matters affecting their wellbeing. They demonstrate positive behaviour across the school and respond positively to staff and visitors. Recognition of the importance of mental health and wellbeing, of both staff and children, has resulted in the school receiving a silver plus award for Healthy Working Lives. From the pre-inspection questionnaires, almost all parents feel that the school fosters their children's emotional wellbeing.
- Teaching staff have a good understanding of Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) and the wellbeing indicators. They take increasing account of the indicators when planning learning. Children have a growing awareness of the language of GIRFEC and the wellbeing indicators. They are developing their appreciation of how these can help them to understand and reflect on their wellbeing. The school has correctly identified the need to continue to embed GIRFEC and the wellbeing indicators as an integral feature of school life. This will allow children and staff to reflect further on children's progress in being safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. There is scope to provide greater focus on children's rights throughout all aspects of the work of the school.
- Parents, children and staff have recently reviewed the school's vision, values and aims. Children talk confidently about the newly-reviewed values. They can give examples of how their actions and attitudes reflect the school values. They are becoming more active in decision-making, and feel that their views are valued and respected. Examples of this include their participation in the school library project and the 'tyre' working group to enhance the playground environment. The vision, values and aims are beginning to set a shared understanding and expectations across the school.
- As planned, senior leaders should ensure that robust, coherent learning pathways are in place for all aspects of the health and wellbeing curriculum. Teachers need to take greater account of the context in which children live when planning health and wellbeing lessons. This can support children more effectively to develop appropriate skills and knowledge to understand and respond to the world around them. Staff should ensure that learning activities across health and wellbeing contribute to improvements in children's attainment and achievements.

- A variety of clubs and activities provide opportunities for children to build friendships and social networks as they develop shared interests. For example, football, netball, scripture union, and cross country. Participation levels across the school are consistently high. The school recognises the contribution these experiences make to children's overall health and wellbeing. However, although the school records children's participation in these activities, they are not yet tracking children's progress in health and wellbeing.
- Senior leaders have a good awareness, knowledge and understanding of current legislation, guidance and codes of practice relating to wellbeing, equality and inclusion. They are familiar with the legislation underpinning the identification of children's additional support needs and work closely with the Additional Support for Learning (SfL) teacher, class teachers and support staff to ensure that they are proactive in fulfilling their legislative duties. Staff engage in professional learning which helps them improve the way they support and care for children. For example, they have increased their knowledge and understanding of factors that underpin wellbeing such as nurture principles.
- The HT and SfL teacher maintain robust additional support for learning records. The information they hold is shared appropriately. It is used by teaching staff and others to plan learning for individuals. Individualised educational plans (IEPs) are in place for those children who require these. SfL assistants work effectively with children, ensuring they are supported well in their learning. There is scope to develop further children's long- and short-term learning targets.
- The HT monitors attendance and punctuality regularly. Attendance and exclusions are above and below the national average, respectively. The senior leadership team and staff know children well and are sensitive to individual children's and families' needs.
- All staff work together well to include children and to overcome barriers to learning. There is a good balance of targeted and universal interventions, delivered in and out of class by teachers and support staff. This is assisting in achieving equity of opportunity and experience. Effective partnership working with a range of agencies is enabling children to be supported in a variety of ways. For example, interventions to provide targeted support through the educational psychologist, and speech and language therapist.
- The school curriculum provides children with a range of opportunities to explore aspects of diversity. This is done through their involvement in charity activities, school assemblies and curricular work. There is scope to develop this further as part of the review of the health and wellbeing curriculum.
- The more formal use of the statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education, February 2017 should be taken forward.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

good

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

- As there are small numbers of children at each stage of the school, broad statements about progress have been made to ensure the anonymity of individual children.
- The inspection team observed a range of lessons, sampled children's work and spoke with groups of children. We agree that the data provided by the school accurately reflects children's progress in literacy and English, early and first levels in literacy and Gàidhlig, and numeracy. HM Inspectors agreed with the staff that they should address the gap between what children are achieving and what they are capable of achieving.
- Teachers are not yet robustly tracking and monitoring attainment across curricular areas. Teachers would be assisted in doing so by continuing to put in place progression pathways. They should also gain more knowledge and experience of the moderation cycle, and continue to engage with diagnostic information provided by both formative and standardised assessments.
- For children with additional barriers to their learning, the evidence provided by the school indicates that most are attaining appropriate to their individual level of need.

Literacy and Gàidhlig

- Attainment and progress is good for most children in the early and first levels, with some aspects of talk being very good. The curriculum needs to be planned further to build on the children's progress and attainment, and sustain improvements to the end of the primary experience. This includes ensuring that children are writing in a full range of genres, which would assist staff in evidencing achievement of a level. Teacher professional judgement of the achievement of a level in listening and talking is not supported by moderation.
- Children have a clear understanding of the benefits of being a speaker of Gaelic, and can identify some career options related to Gaelic. The school should celebrate more that all of its pupils are learning Gaelic, and are on pathways to benefit from fluency in Gaelic and bilingualism.

Listening and Talking

- At the early and first levels, children demonstrate a very good understanding of Gaelic used through total immersion. Their levels of fluency enable them to be confidently accessing the curriculum through Gaelic. At the early level, a total immersion intervention at the beginning of P1 focused on strengthening children's fluency. Children are very spontaneous in their conversation. They enjoy using their Gaelic in a range of contexts, including adult-led situations, and when working in pairs and groups. They are good at retelling stories, and expressing their ideas and preferences. At the first level, a few need support in listening to others and in taking turns. Children at the second level have experience of using their Gaelic

language in a range of settings. This includes in drama productions, sports, school trips and competitions. As children progress through the school, they should be assisted with improving a few points of grammatical accuracy, and the vocabulary they use in English within Gaelic communication.

Reading

- Children enjoy reading in both Gaelic and English. They are able to talk about their own reading preferences and favourite authors. At the early and first levels, almost all children are developing well their skills in reading. Across stages, children need to be independent and more aware of accessing information from non-fiction sources. Children are able to talk about some features of the writer's craft. Children would benefit from more activities which enables them to discuss writer's craft in activities which are less directed by adults.

Writing

- Children's good progress in writing at the early and first levels should be extended into the second level. By the end of early level, a number of children are writing independently. They are able to use capital letters and full stops. At the first level, children are correctly using a range of verbs, including irregular. They punctuate their work according to level. Children have clear criteria to help them improve their writing. Previous moderation of writing with the Gaelic Department at the Nicolson Institute built teacher confidence in teaching this skill. It would be useful to continue and extend such collaborative activities.

Attainment in literacy and English

- For 2018/19, the school predicts the majority of children across the school will achieve reading and writing. The majority of children will achieve listening and talking at early and first level and most children in second level. Overall, attainment in literacy and English is good. Most children across the school are making good progress in reading and writing. The majority of younger children are making good progress in listening and talking, with most children doing so at the older stages.

Listening and talking

- At early level, the majority of children listen and respond to others appropriately. All children enjoy songs, rhymes and listening to stories. By the end of first level, the majority of children listen well and respond appropriately in an adult-led discussion. There is scope for children at early and first level to practise applying their listening skills during peer discussions. By second level, most children can contribute relevant ideas to a discussion. They can recall accurately the main ideas of information given orally.

Reading

- Staff and parents are working on a refurbishment of the library. The school plans to use this area to promote further reading for pleasure and enjoyment. Events, such as 'unusual places to read competition' and bright attractive displays, help give reading a high profile across the school.
- At early level, the majority of children confidently read aloud familiar texts, with attention to simple punctuation. They hear and say blends made by a combination of letters. The majority of children can discuss simple events and characters from stories that they have read. Across first level, the majority of children read aloud a familiar piece of text, with growing fluency and understanding. They can explain their reading preferences and favourite authors. Children would benefit from a further focus on inference questions. At second level, the majority of children talk in increasing detail about characters, make predictions and read fluently with expression. They can use skimming and scanning strategies to select relevant information. With support, the majority of children can offer comments about the author's use of language, for example relating to poetry.

Writing

- Teachers plan regular opportunities for children to write for a variety of purposes. Across the school, the majority of children produce good pieces of writing that demonstrate the skills they have learned in punctuation and structure. By the end of early level, the majority of children are writing independently. They can form a meaningful sentence, which is punctuated accurately. They are beginning to apply their knowledge of phonics and blending when attempting to spell. By the end of first level, the majority of children are increasingly spelling common words accurately. They can use simple punctuation, and common conjunctions to link a few sentences. Children would benefit from practice in selecting the relevant information for their audience and note-taking. Across second level, the majority of children can write accurately in a variety of genres. This includes writing about personal experiences, creative stories and a range of poetry such as Haiku. Most children require further practice using figurative language to engage their reader.

Attainment in numeracy

- For 2018/19, in numeracy, most children will achieve at early and first level and the majority at the end of second level.
- Overall, children's attainment in mathematics and numeracy is good. The majority of children make good progress. As recognised by senior leaders, there remains scope to improve children's attainment in numeracy. From the range of inspection activities, there is scope for all children to better apply their skills in numeracy and mathematics across different contexts for learning. This will help ensure greater depth, challenge and application in learning.

Number, money and measurement

- Most children are developing an increasingly sound understanding of number systems and place value as they progress through the school. By the end of early level, most children are able to count with confidence, work on simple addition and subtraction. They are confident in counting forwards and backwards within 100. By the end of first level, most children are confident in multiplying by two, three, five and ten and display a good understanding of place value. By the end of second level, the majority of children are demonstrating their knowledge of fractions, decimal fractions and percentages. As children move through the school, most are confident and accurate in measuring and estimating using a range of standard units. They are able to select the relevant instruments and units to measure length, weight and capacity. At the second level, the majority of children can calculate perimeter, surface area and volume. Children across the school would benefit from developing a better understanding of the strategies they are using for mental calculation and problem-solving.

Shape, position and movement

- Most children at early level are able to identify 2D shapes. At first level, most children confidently identify 2D shapes and 3D objects. They are able to discuss properties such as face, edge, angles. At second level, the majority of children are confident when measuring angles. They can use mathematical language including acute, obtuse, straight and reflex, to describe and classify a range of angles in the classroom environment. Further development on calculating missing angles is required.

Information handling

- At the early level, most children can construct and display information in a simple bar graph. By first level, most children can draw Venn diagrams and bar graphs to organise and display data. By second level, the majority of children show confidence in information handling. For example, when discussing the advantages in presenting information in different ways including text, tables and graphs.

Attainment over time

- The school can show historical data of Curriculum for Excellence levels covering a number of years. As there are small numbers of pupils in individual year groups it is difficult to draw overall trends in attainment. The school uses standardised and cognitive assessment data to identify areas of improvement. The HT has correctly identified that attainment in numeracy has not been as positive as other areas. To help further inform work to raise attainment, senior leaders are aware of the need to analyse the attainment of different cohorts as they move through the school.
- The HT is continuing to develop systems to track and monitor progress over time. She is able to provide whole class overviews, in addition to child-specific information. The HT recognises the need to ensure teachers' evaluations consistently link to previous identified next steps to evidence progress over time more effectively.
- The school's focus on raising attainment in early literacy, through Gaelic and English, is beginning to show signs of positive impact.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Across Sgoil a' Bhac, children are benefiting from taking part in a wide range of activities. The school celebrates children's achievements through certificates, assemblies, social media and in newsletters. Children have opportunities to develop teamwork and leaderships skills through various pupil groups such as the 'tyre working group' and pupil council. Valuable partnerships with organisations, such as Back Football and Recreational Club, and Active Schools Scotland support children in pursuing an active and healthy lifestyle. Termly masterclasses allow children to choose and develop skills in a range of technology focused activities such as renewables, coding and plastics. Social skills are also developed through these classes as the children are joined with peers from a local school.
- Children develop skills as responsible citizens supporting a range of local and national charitable events, such as the Rotary Club 'swimarathon'. Children speak proudly of the funds they have raised to support the work of organisations such as Bethesda Care Home and Hospice. There is a focus on developing children's awareness of local environmental issues, for example through working with local volunteers on Vatisker beach clean. Children have opportunities to attend a local environmental and art club during the holidays. As a result, they are developing informed, ethical views of a range of issues.
- Children have achieved success in wide range of local competitions, including North of Scotland soccer seven championships, Cuach na Cloinne national football tournament for GME, a primary netball festival and a national numeracy class competition. A few children have been selected to compete in the Island Track and Field Championships. Expressive arts opportunities throughout the school year, such as the school show, Mòd Ionadail Leòdhais and Stornoway Carnival develop children's creativity and performance skills. Children in P7 participate in an outdoor centre residential experience, which helps to encourage independence and resilience.
- Children's participation in clubs and activities, in and outside of school, is tracked by staff. This allows the school to ensure all children have a variety of opportunities to achieve success. A helpful next step could be to support children to identify and discuss the skills they develop through these experiences.

Equity for all learners

- All staff strive to promote equity across learning for all children in an inclusive ethos. They know and understand well children and families, and the socio-economic and cultural context of the local community. As a result, the school is able to respond sensitively to any circumstances.
- Senior leaders monitor the progress of children who face barriers to learning. Staff use this information effectively to provide appropriate interventions and support for children.
- The school receives Pupil Equity Funding. The HT collaborates with other schools in the local area to fund staffing to support children directly in both EME and GME. Systems are in place to track the progress made by these learners. As a result, individual children's needs are being met. They are making progress at expected levels, or from their prior levels of learning. The school should continue to monitor the impact of interventions to identify and close any attainment gap.

Choice of QI: 2.4 Personalised support

- Universal support
- Targeted support
- Barriers to learning

- Across the school, staff are committed to providing a caring and safe environment for their children. They are knowledgeable and responsive to children's social, emotional and health needs. There is a positive ethos throughout the school, leading to a calm learning environment.
- Children across the school are confident and staff encourage them to do their best. In most lessons, teachers plan tasks and activities that meet the needs of children. In a few cases, learning activities need to offer greater challenge to enable children to routinely engage in higher-order thinking, and where possible, support children to apply their learning in a range of situations. Differentiated learning in most lessons is well established and teachers manage well a variety of groups. Staff should now work together to set higher expectations for the highest attaining individuals and groups.
- The school has made a start to helping children become more involved in planning their learning through learning conversations. This approach now needs to be reviewed to enable more personalised support and more frequent opportunities for children to talk about their learning with class teachers. Children need to be more involved in planning learning and have more opportunities to know themselves as learners by identifying their strengths and next steps. A review of formative assessment approaches across the school would help children become more active participants in their learning. The development and delivery of a more cohesive health and wellbeing programme will enable staff to further support children.
- Targeted support within the school is planned and delivered well within a staged intervention approach. Concerns raised by class teachers are acted upon timeously. There is a shared understanding that the support needs of children are the responsibility of class teachers, supported by other partners as required. Support plans are in place for children who require additional support with their learning. Targets are reviewed regularly with parents and partners.
- The SfL teacher provides effective advice to teachers. SfL assistants are deployed throughout the school. They provide effective support to groups and individual children. SfL assistants deliver a number of programmes including 'Let's Move' and a focus on non-verbal reasoning.
- The school works well with a range of partners to identify and remove barriers to learning. Teachers seek out and follow advice provided by specialist support staff in respect of individual children. Teachers and support staff work well together in classes. The school should consider building on this collaborative approach. This would enable staff to widen their professional knowledge and skills through networking with other support teachers and services.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.