

15 September 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

In May 2024, HM Inspectors published a letter on Gledfield Primary School. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and The Highland Council. We subsequently returned to the school to look at how it had continued to improve its work, and published another letter in August 2025. Recently, as you may know, we visited the school again. At the time of our visit the nursery class was closed. As a result, we were unable to evaluate the progress made towards the areas for improvement in relation to the nursery class. During our visit, we talked to children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We heard from the headteacher and other staff about the steps the school has taken to improve. We looked at particular areas that had been identified in the original inspection. As a result, we were able to find out about the progress the school has made and how well this is supporting children's learning and achievements. This letter sets out what we found.

Improve further approaches to self-evaluation to identify and address areas of improvement. All staff should work effectively as a team to continue to improve the work of the school and nursery. They should do this with a continued focus on improving outcomes for all children.

Due to the closure of the nursery class, HM Inspectors were only able to gather evidence on this area for improvement for the school. Senior leaders and staff have made significant progress towards this area for improvement.

Since August 2025, the headteacher has provided strong and effective leadership, establishing much needed stability and a clearer sense of direction for the school. She has built highly positive relationships with children, staff, parents and partners. Parents and staff speak very positively about her approachable, purposeful leadership, and the renewed focus she has brought to improving outcomes for all children.

Working closely with the local authority, the headteacher and staff have strengthened approaches to self-evaluation. Together, they identified key priorities and developed a clear action plan and school improvement plan. These plans set out appropriate outcomes, responsibilities and measures of impact, ensuring a strong focus on improving children's attainment and achievement. Staff are now using self-evaluation frameworks more effectively to support this work.

There is clear evidence of improved approaches to monitoring the work of the school. A robust calendar of activities, including observations of learning, learning walks and monitoring of children's work, is now in place. Staff have more reliable evidence to support ongoing improvements. Teachers appreciate feedback from the headteacher following



learning observations. They articulate clearly how this feedback helps them to better meet the needs of children in their class.

Staff have strengthened their shared approach to learning and teaching, leading to growing consistency in children's experiences. Staff demonstrate increased engagement in professional learning, which now aligns more closely to school improvement priorities. Staff now need to evidence more clearly the impact of this professional learning on outcomes for children.

The headteacher fosters well a strong culture of leadership across the school. All children now participate in leadership groups and contribute more meaningfully to school improvement. They speak confidently about their role in shaping the life and work of the school. Staff provide effective support for these roles.

Improve approaches to learning and teaching to ensure all children experience consistently high-quality learning experiences across the school.

There has been positive progress towards this area for improvement. The headteacher should continue to build on this work to ensure all children experience consistently high-quality learning across the school.

The headteacher leads staff effectively to improve the quality and consistency of learning and teaching across the school. Staff have engaged positively with well-considered professional learning designed to improve their classroom practice. They articulate clearly how their planning and teaching now helps children understand better what they need to learn and how they will know they have been successful. Teachers are working together very well to improve how they better meet the needs of all children. As a result, almost all children experience learning better matched to their individual needs.

Teachers have improved the structure of lessons. They now use learning time more purposefully and balance, more effectively, direct teaching, discussion, independent work and reviews of learning. In most lessons, teachers now match learning closely to children's needs. As a result, almost all children engage better in independent, paired and group work, and benefit from more relevant and stimulating activities. The headteacher should continue to work with teachers to review timetables to maximise all available time for high-quality learning and teaching.

In most lessons, teachers now provide clear explanations and build well on what children already know. They use questioning appropriately to check children's understanding of how to complete tasks set for them. Teachers should build on this positive work to use questioning more skilfully to help support children to think more deeply about their learning.

Teachers now give useful verbal feedback to support children's learning. This helps children identify better what they are learning and what they need to do to improve. Staff continue to improve the written feedback they give to children. For example, teachers feedback on children's writing is now more closely linked to the purpose of the learning. The headteacher

should now work with staff to build on this positive start to ensure children experience high-quality written feedback consistently across all areas of the curriculum. Children are developing well their ability to assess their own and others' work, particularly in writing. Staff should now support children to better understand their progress and next steps in learning.

Staff working with younger children have improved play-based learning. They have enhanced learning environments and increased opportunities for purposeful play. Children benefit from more engaging experiences that support curiosity and exploration. Staff are beginning to improve how they observe and record learning through play. They should now continue to refine the balance between direct teaching and play-based approaches.

Review approaches to planning for each curriculum area to ensure children experience progression, breadth and depth in their learning. This will help ensure teachers plan lessons and activities that are well-matched to all children's needs.

There has been positive progress in this area for improvement.

The headteacher and staff take greater account of the school's curriculum rationale when planning children's learning. Children benefit from strong partnerships with local and national organisations. These partnerships enrich children's learning experiences. For example, children learn about marine life with a local development organisation. They strengthen their understanding of environmental sustainability skills with parent volunteers and build outdoor learning skills through work with the local wildlife ranger service. They also enhance their cultural understanding through traditional music and dance. As a next step, staff should plan and track more rigorously how these experiences improve outcomes for all children, ensuring learning is progressive and builds on what children already know and can do.

Teachers use digital technology increasingly well to support learning. Children develop skills in research, presentation and communication. They use online platforms more effectively to share their work. Staff also use assistive technology increasingly effectively to help remove barriers to learning for children. Moving forward, staff need to build on this to ensure digital learning is progressive and consistently purposeful and impactful. Senior leaders should also increase opportunities for skilled and knowledgeable children to lead digital learning across the school.

The headteacher has worked well with staff to improve approaches to planning learning. Teachers now use planning materials that provide guidance on progression in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. These support teachers to better meet the needs of different groups of learners. Staff now need to consider how they plan learning that allows them to better meet children's individual needs. The headteacher recognises the need to strengthen planning across all other curriculum areas. While children experience valuable learning, this is not yet sufficiently broad, balanced or progressive. Staff need to now ensure they plan learning that is progressive for all children as they move through the school.

Children learn French and Gaelic. Teachers need to now develop a clear and progressive programme for Gaelic (Learners) in line with national guidance.

Continue to develop approaches for checking children's progress. Staff should improve how key information is used to help raise attainment and achievement for all.

Staff have continued to take positive steps to improve their approaches to checking children's progress. To achieve this, staff use a range of information well to support raising attainment and achievement across the school.

The headteacher has strengthened staff confidence in analysing assessment information. Teachers now identify more accurately children's strengths and next steps in literacy and numeracy. Staff use a wider range of assessments to gather clearer evidence of children's progress, including how well they apply their learning in new situations. Teachers now use this information more effectively to plan learning that meets the needs of individuals and groups.

Staff have improved the quality of planning and use assessment information effectively to support children who require additional support with their learning. Teachers ensure plans include clearer targets, and regular reviews of progress with children and parents. Children who need additional support with their learning make improved progress towards their individual targets.

The headteacher meets regularly with teachers to review children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. These discussions help staff to use data more effectively to raise attainment. Together, they identify appropriate support and interventions for children who require them. Teachers should continue to build on this work by adapting learning more consistently to meet the needs of all learners across the curriculum.

The headteacher introduced an effective system to track and monitor children's attainment more robustly in literacy and numeracy. Staff now use this system well to identify children who are meeting, exceeding or not yet achieving expected levels. The headteacher should continue to use this information to maintain an accurate overview of progress and to inform future priorities.

The headteacher has increased opportunities for teachers to work together to discuss the standard of children's work in relation to national standards. These discussions help staff to improve the accuracy of their professional judgements.

Staff continue to celebrate children's achievements both in school and in the wider community. Staff have introduced a new programme to develop children's independence, confidence and wider skills. Children are enthusiastic about the range of experiences on offer and speak positively about them. Staff should now track children's participation in wider achievement opportunities more systematically and support children to recognise and talk about the skills they are developing as a result.

What happens next?

The school has made good progress since the original inspection. We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. The Highland Council will inform parents about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Fraser Forsyth
HM Inspector

On behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland.