

Summarised inspection findings

Sgoil-àraich Bhràghad Albainn – Breadalbane Academy Nursery Class

Perth and Kinross Council

5 May 2026

HM Inspectors gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the ELC's work using three quality indicators from the Quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors. This document provides our summarised findings.

Key contextual information

Sgoil-àraich Bhràghad Albainn – Breadalbane Academy Nursery Class is part of Breadalbane Community Campus which caters for children aged 2-18 years. The campus includes an English medium nursery and a Gaelic medium nursery – sgoil-àraich. The English medium nursery is located in a spacious, purpose-built large playroom with direct access to a safely enclosed outdoor area. The sgoil-àraich is based in a small playroom. Over the next few months, planned building works will create an outdoor area accessed directly from the sgoil-àraich, as well as new toilet facilities. All nursery children benefit from the extensive facilities in the campus.

The nursery provision overall is registered for 70 children aged 2 to those not yet attending primary school. The registration specifies that no more than 12 children can be aged between 2 and 3 years in the nursery provision. The nursery provision is open for 45 weeks each year. The English medium nursery provides for 44 children who can access their 1140 hours through a variety of attendance patterns. The sgoil-àraich provides for 15 children. Due to challenges in recruiting Gàidhlig-speaking staff, all children attend that provision on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9 am until 3 pm, while only 10 children are able to attend on a Monday and Friday from 9 am until 3 pm. Both nurseries are managed by the campus headteacher. Almost half of the nursery children reside in communities identified by Perth and Kinross Council as areas where people are more likely to experience socio-economic disadvantage than national levels.

The English medium nursery staffing includes a recently appointed principal teacher who leads both nurseries and also has duties in the primary school. Nursery staffing also includes a part-time teacher, five early childhood practitioners and three play assistants. The sgoil-àraich staffing includes a part-time teacher, an early childhood practitioner and a play assistant. Most of the staff in the English medium nursery are temporary or recently appointed.

Curriculum	good
This quality indicator highlights the importance of placing the needs, interests, rights and progress of children at the centre of curriculum design and implementation. <u>Curriculum</u> is defined as the totality of all that is planned for children from ELC, through school and beyond. It emphasises that children are entitled to a curriculum underpinned by the <u>principles of curriculum design</u> and enriched through meaningful learning experiences indoors, outdoors and within the community. It recognises the need for all children to experience opportunities to develop the interests, knowledge, skills, and attributes they will need to adapt, thrive and achieve in today's world. This quality indicator also recognises the importance of the curriculum supporting progress in children's learning as they enter the setting and at key points of transition. The themes are: • curriculum rationale and design • continuity and progression in the curriculum • partnerships • skills for life and learning	

- The curriculum is developing well and evolving to take account of the needs of children. It is firmly based on play and is fully aligned with Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). It is developed around the values of Believing, Belonging, Aspiring and Achieving. In consultation with children and families, the whole school recently developed a clearly stated curriculum rationale which includes the nursery class. The curriculum is evolving to take account of the nursery context, the children and the community. With support from a recently appointed principal teacher, staff are thinking strategically about the overall purpose of the nursery provision. This includes identifying the principles that underpin children's experiences such as breadth, progression, depth and challenge, and children's rights.
- Staff welcome, respect and value all children, establishing a sound basis for developing learning. Staff make effective use of their community to support the curriculum. Recent examples include visits to the nursery from the police, a farmer and a sports leader. Children attend visits out into the community, to the woodland, and fire station. These help children to connect with different professions and increase their understanding of their community.
- Staff link play experiences to national advice and gather information and observation assessments for each child. They do not yet have information that demonstrates how children's learning across the wider curriculum is progressing. Staff now need to gather information on children's achievements and progress across more areas of the curriculum. This may help staff identify gaps in learning and ensure all children receive their entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Staff understand the importance of effective transition into the setting. When required, they collaborate meaningfully with colleagues to provide enhanced transition experiences for individual children. Working with primary staff, nursery staff have created a well-established programme of visits to support children settle as they transition into P1. An early childcare

practitioner works in P1 to ensure that new learning builds successfully on the nursery class experiences.

- Staff are actively working to engage families in supporting their child's learning at home. This includes giving parents daily prompts and questions to ask their children at home. Recent examples include 'Ask your child about the bridge challenge and building obstacle courses'. This enables families to engage in learning conversations with their children and encourages them to extend the learning at home. Parents benefit from sessions with the family learning worker. Most recently they were offered a session on supporting numeracy at home and given home learning bags to experience with their children.
- Children under three enjoy an appropriate range of sensory learning experiences. However, staff are not yet confident in planning or implementing a curriculum for very young children. Further professional learning is planned. This should increase staff's knowledge and understanding and ensure the curriculum for two-year olds better meets their needs. The staff team need to develop further their use of digital technologies with children, to encourage creativity as well as building their knowledge. As staff continue to develop the curriculum, they should ensure that they are taking account of the learning needs of all children, including those who need further support or challenge.

Learning, teaching and assessment	satisfactory
This quality indicator focuses on how children benefit from access to high quality spaces and well-established routines that help them feel secure and ready to engage. It explores how children are supported to build positive relationships, regulate their emotions, and purposefully participate in a wide range of motivating learning experiences. It demonstrates the importance of staff having a high level of skill supported by strong pedagogical leadership. This includes a clear understanding of pedagogy, the concept of play, how children learn, children's rights and children's behaviour. It places value on high quality relationships, consistent expectations, and skilled interactions that enable children to sustain engagement, follow routines, and build independence in their learning. This indicator highlights the importance of observing and interacting sensitively with children to plan and assess their learning. It recognises the value of involving children fully in planning their learning indoors, outdoors and within the local community. This quality indicator emphasises the importance of robust tracking and monitoring of children's progress to ensure practitioners know all children very well as learners. The themes are: • children's learning and engagement • interactions to support learning • planning and assessment • tracking and monitoring	

- Staff have developed warm, nurturing relationships with all children and their families. Almost all children are happy and settled in nursery. Most enthusiastically explore the open-ended experiences indoors and outdoors. Children connect with the natural environment through visits to the forest, fostering their curiosity and resilience. A minority of children engage in play for short periods of time. However, only a few sustain concentration long enough to enable deep learning. A minority of children, at times, display disruptive and dysregulated behaviour. Staff should consider how they redirect them, introducing adult-initiated experiences to spark their curiosity and engagement. Staff should improve the flow of experiences across the day, by limiting interruptions and introducing fresh stimulus to children's investigations. This approach should enable children to engage in play for extended periods of time. Younger learners would benefit from a dedicated space in the playroom. This should offer them opportunities to rest, explore developmentally appropriate resources, and enjoy sensory play experiences.
- All staff know children and their families well. Where practice is strongest, staff interact sensitively with children, listening and responding to their needs and interests. However, this good practice is not consistently strong. Staff should continue to develop their understanding of early years pedagogy, in particular how young children learn. Staff should enrich their interactions with children using questions and commentary, extending their thinking and language. Children currently have limited opportunities to explore digital technologies.
- Staff have worked together to develop a consistent approach to document observations of children's learning and experiences. These are recorded regularly and shared with parents on a digital platform. Staff should ensure that observations capture children's individual, significant learning. Staff plan to share these with children. This should support children to

reflect on their learning and plan future explorations. Staff have developed a shared approach to planning for children's learning. They meet regularly to consider spaces, experiences and interactions. Staff have begun to add new resources in response to children's developing interests. As a result, children increasingly contribute their ideas to staff. Children's wider achievements are displayed and celebrated in the nursery. Staff should provide opportunities for children to reflect on the skills they are developing and use this information to build on children's progress.

- Led by the principal teacher and teacher, staff use a range of local authority assessment tools. They use these tools to assess and track children's progress in relation to their age and stage of development. Staff use this information to plan group times and targeted interventions to meet children's individual needs. Children's holistic developmental needs could be better supported. For example, through developing opportunities for children to engage in relevant spaces and interactions in shared sustained play experiences. Staff's plans to engage with children to consider their identified next steps will provide children with increased leadership of their learning. Children who require additional support have relevant plans in place. Parents and carers contribute to these plans regularly.

Wellbeing, inclusion and equality	good
This quality indicator highlights the importance of positive relationships and children's wellbeing. It recognises the importance of providing high quality, inclusive, and appropriate rights-based support. These approaches result in improved outcomes for children's learning, wellbeing and participation. It takes full account of children who may require additional support to access and benefit fully from their entitlement to high quality ELC. This includes identifying and assessing their learning and wellbeing needs in a timely manner and providing personalised and targeted support. This quality indicator recognises that strong, collaborative partnership working between those supporting children is essential. It highlights the importance of meaningful engagement with children and families to inform decisions about how children's needs should be met. This quality indicator emphasises the important role senior leaders play in ensuring all staff have relevant and worthwhile professional learning to meet the diverse and sometimes complex needs of children. The themes are: • positive relationships and wellbeing • universal support • Identifying and assessing learning needs and targeted support • inclusion and equality	

- Staff promote positive relationships and nurturing approaches across the setting. These support children to settle well in a safe and secure environment. All staff demonstrate and model respect, kindness and consideration for children, families and colleagues. Overall, children's attendance at nursery is good. Senior leaders have appropriate processes in place to monitor children's absence, including regular contact with parents and health visitors.
- Staff support children to manage their emotions. They respond well to situations where children need support to learn how to share, be kind or show respect to others. This approach could be extended to offer children opportunities to share how they are feeling throughout the day. This will help support children when their frustrations are evident. Staff should build on their initial success in using books and puppets to increase children's understanding of their feelings. As planned, these approaches could now be linked to increasing children's understanding of their rights.
- Strong partnerships with parents help staff to recognise and support children's social and emotional needs. Staff could now work to identify and review children's wellbeing targets with parents. Staff are beginning to share children's individual targets across the team, to ensure that children are supported in a consistent manner. Staff skilfully identify individual learning needs early, helping to improve outcomes for all children. All staff adhere fully to legislative requirements and regularly refresh their knowledge and skills to support all children.
- Most children engage confidently in active physical play outdoors as they climb, slide, balance and develop their throwing and catching skills. Children show independence as they prepare

snack foods, serve themselves and tidy up. Staff should improve lunch arrangements to avoid lengthy waiting periods. Staff embed inclusive practice across the setting, with all children supported to feel included within day-to-day experiences.

- Staff support children who may face barriers to their learning well. This ensures children access experiences which are developmentally appropriate for them, such as targeted interventions for groups and individuals. These approaches are improving outcomes for the few children who need them. When appropriate, staff work closely with families and support partners, to take account of the diverse range of children's individual needs. They plan and record key information, helping all children to make progress in their learning. Staff value contributions from outside agencies and recognise the positive impact of collaborative working on children's experiences. Staff should now engage in learning conversations with all children, to help them understand themselves better as learners. All staff are fully aware of issues related to the cost of the school day. Where appropriate they sensitively support families and signpost them to sources of support. They ensure that every child can participate fully in nursery experiences and events.
- Staff treat children and families with kindness, respect and fairness, in line with the setting's values. They successfully promote inclusion and should continue to develop children's awareness of their rights in a meaningful way. While children celebrate a few festivals throughout the year, staff are aware that diversity could be strengthened to enrich their experiences. This will help children understand aspects of life and the wider world beyond their own lived experiences.

Safeguarding

- The setting 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 setting and the education authority.

Quality of provision of Gàidhlig Medium Education

Context

Sgoil-àraich Bhràghad Albainn – Breadalbane Early Learning and Childcare opened in April 2021 as a Gàidhlig – Gaelic Medium total immersion provision. The sgoil-àraich enrolments have doubled since 2021. The sgoil-àraich is staffed by fluent speakers of Gàidhlig for most of the time. It has teaching input from a specialist teacher of support for learning. A principal teacher has day-to-day leadership responsibility.

Curriculum

- Staff have worked collaboratively within the sgoil-àraich and with parents to design a visual curriculum rationale. This is based on the campus values, local and national policy. The rationale is resulting in a clearer, shared understanding of most elements of the purpose and direction of the curriculum. Staff are improving the rationale to be developed specifically to Gàidhlig language, culture and immersion as a responsibility for all.
- Staff deliver the curriculum through immersion to enable children's learning of Gàidhlig through play. They plan individual and group activities to support children's intentional learning. At times, staffing gaps negatively affect the consistency and quality of immersion, reducing opportunities for rich language interactions. Staff are very aware of children's interests and allowing these to be very well represented in day-to-day learning. Staff should ensure consistency in delivering high-quality immersion so all children experience rich Gàidhlig language immersion. This will help children to become more fluent and make better progress.
- Staff design the curriculum effectively to focus on literacy, subjects and situations that enable natural interactions in Gàidhlig. Adults decide what children will learn, as well as children following their interests. Children are creative, curious and perform well in role plays. Staff follow local authority guidance on what should be taught and by when. As a next step, staff should use guidance on what progress looks like specific to literacy and Gàidhlig. This will strengthen all staff's understanding of expected progression and ensure appropriate challenge for all learners.
- Staff provide opportunities for children to learn in the community and with partners. Children benefit from woodland experiences, playing in the garden, as well as in the community. These meaningful real-life contexts are developing children's confidence, independence and understanding of their local environment. Children apply their learning on keeping safe by walking in the community and assessing risk. Staff have extensive knowledge of Gàidhlig within the local community. They have developed a range of partnerships that add depth to children's learning and strengthen immersion. Parents are very supportive of children's learning of Gàidhlig, immersion and playing in the outdoors. This enhances continuity of learning between home and the sgoil-àraich. Senior leaders should continue with their plans to develop an adjacent outdoor area to increase children's free-flow access and enhance further outdoor learning opportunities.
- Staff ensure transitions are well-planned with the Cròileagan (0-3) and then from the sgoil-àraich (3-5) to the bun-sgoil (5-12). These processes result in children being confident and well-prepared for the next stage of learning. A few children begin Gàidhlig Medium Education in P1, with others joining from other settings across the catchment area. Parents are very

proactive in supporting these transitions. They take forward at home their own learning of Gàidhlig and that of children.

- Parents are having more regular and productive meetings with the headteacher to take forward quality Gàidhlig Medium Education from stage to stage. As an important next step, senior leaders need to continue closing gaps in the 3-18 curriculum as a way of increasing numbers learning Gàidhlig. Additionally, it would be useful for senior leaders to make clear what constitutes all of children's learning through Gàidhlig. This should include the range of achievements and work with partners from which children benefit. This will ensure families and partners understand the full progression pathway in Gàidhlig Medium Education.
- Staff are clear on developing Gàidhlig as a skill for life and learning. Staff are at the early stages of embedding digital skills across the curriculum. This emerging work has the potential to deepen children's creativity and broaden their connections beyond their immediate experiences.

Learning, teaching and assessment

- Children enjoy a warm, caring, supportive and immersive environment within the sgoil-àraich. They have an effective start to a pathway in Gàidhlig by attending the sgoil-àraich. This is accelerating their fluency and ability to use Gàidhlig to access learning across CfE. Children are happy, settled and confident. They engage well in a range of motivating play, both indoors and outdoors. Children have an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning experiences.
- Almost all children concentrate well for extended periods with play that they choose. They also show high levels of engagement in whole-group learning opportunities. For example, during àm còmhla – group time, children engage deeply in singing and playing language games to extend their communication and improve their grammar. Children play well with their friends. They are kind and respectful to each other and with adults. The environment is calmer at times when a smaller group of children attend the sgoil-àraich. This calmer environment also supports high-quality immersion. When bigger numbers of children are in the sgoil-àraich, adult interactions are less frequent, with the result that children's play could be more challenging. At these times, and when the context is not sufficiently planned, children are less engaged in their play and learning.
- Staff ensure total immersion experiences in the sgoil-àraich for almost all of the time. They make well-considered commentaries when interacting with children to extend curiosity and imaginative play. Staff's use of singing supports language development effectively. Children should have more opportunities to learn through story-telling, songs and rhymes. A few children use digital technology very well for research and to follow their interests. Staff should continue to extend children's use of technology to develop their skills in Gàidhlig language and literacy. Senior leaders and staff should continue developing their playroom immersion pedagogy using the 'Advice on Gaelic Education'.
- Staff assess purposefully children's learning as they observe and engage with them in their play. They involve parents in maintaining personal care plans that are connected to children's rights. Staff should raise the profile of children's rights connected to the learning of Indigenous languages and culture. All children have an online learning profile, which is shared

with parents. Staff should now focus more on celebrating children's understanding of Gàidhlig through immersion, as well as the language that children use. Staff identify next steps with children. However they would benefit from engaging in more conversations with children on what and how well they have been learning.

- Staff use big books successfully to plan for children's interests. This captures children's voice well, their developing fluency in Gàidhlig and supports planning of responsive experiences. Senior leaders should continue to support practitioners to develop further approaches to planning using the experiences and outcomes of CfE. This will ensure children continue to access a broad, balanced and meaningful early education through Gàidhlig.
- Staff use local authority guidance to track children's developmental milestones. Senior leaders and staff track children's progress in literacy, numeracy and mathematics and health and wellbeing. They have data on children's progress for the duration of their time in sgoil-àraich. Staff are improving the way they track children's progress in Gàidhlig. Senior leaders should ensure that developmental milestones are articulated further to total immersion through Gàidhlig. This should include checking children's levels of understanding and their use of Gàidhlig language in a more thorough way across early level.

Wellbeing, equality and inclusion

- Staff enjoy trusting and nurturing relationships with children and families. Children are supported well to manage their emotions, with regular check ins where they freely talk about how they feel. Children are starting to use the wellbeing indicators, which, through time, will widen their awareness of the totality of what supports their wellbeing. For most of the time, children are calm as they move freely between play activities.
- Children respond well to established routines and take increasing responsibility for themselves and their learning. For example, they are becoming more confident and independent when preparing to go home. Children could be encouraged further to keep their environment tidy and to develop a stronger sense of promoting safety. Staff should monitor how well transitions are managed across the day to maintain a calm atmosphere.
- All children are valued and included by staff. A majority of children participate well in the life of the setting. They engage well in making straight forward decisions and make choices.
- Staff have a well-developed understanding of statutory duties and keep up to date with most guidance and advice. They are clear about their responsibilities to keep children safe and ensure the care and wellbeing needs of all children are met. Staff work closely with a range of specialist partners and teachers to ensure the right support for children at the right time. Staff identify children with an additional support need early through transition processes and observation. They create individual plans with targets for those children who require these. Staff use appropriate interventions and resources but should ensure these are consistently through Gàidhlig.
- Senior leaders and staff increased impact for equalities in Gàidhlig by establishing a sgoil-àraich. This supports very well meeting objectives with the Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education, 2017. There has been a significant increase in sgoil-àraich enrolments in 2025-2026. Senior leaders should ensure that the benefits of enrolling in the sgoil-àraich are

promoted effectively. The campus website should be clearer on how to enrol in the sgoil-àraich, the curriculum available and the available family and community networks. The local authority should continue to support the sgoil-àraich with employing Gàidhlig-qualified staff. A few staff are learning Gàidhlig. They should be offered more accelerated ways of learning the language so they can impact more on high-quality immersion.

- Staff treat children and families with fairness and respect. Staff know their children well and value their contributions to the life of the setting. Staff should explore further ways to support diversity and equality within the sgoil-àraich. This would include clarifying how Gàidhlig contributes to diversity and equality.
- Staff support families well to make use of their full entitlement of 1140 hours to support their acquiring fluency in Gàidhlig. They work effectively to address any barriers to attendance.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard HMIE.K 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.

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