

Summarised inspection findings

Sgoil-àraich Bun-sgoil Shlèite

The Highland Council

7 October 2025

Key contextual information

Sgoil-àraich Bun-sgoil Shlèite is part of Bun-sgoil Shlèite, a Gàidhlig school with an English Medium unit. The sgoil-àraich serves families across the Sleat peninsula on the Isle of Skye.

The provision is registered for a maximum of 28 children at any one time. It provides learning for children aged two years to those who are yet to start bun-sgoil - primary school. At the time of the inspection, 17 children were enrolled. There should be no more than two children aged two to three years enrolled at the sgoil-àraich. The sgoil-àraich provides Gàidhlig Medium Education, with all children totally immersed in the Gàidhlig language. No children were registered to attend the English Medium sgoil-àraich.

The sgoil-àraich delivers children's entitlement to 1140 hours through a term-time provision. It operates from 8.55 am to 3.30 pm, Mondays to Thursdays, and from 8.55 am to 12.35 pm on Fridays. The sgoil-àraich benefits from a spacious indoor playroom, a large quiet area and a secure outdoor area. Practitioners and children also access the bun-sgoil hall, playground and adjoining woodland area.

The headteacher of the bun-sgoil has overall responsibility for the sgoil-àraich. Currently, the headteacher has delegated this responsibility to a part-time acting principal teacher. The sgoil-àraich is staffed by two childcare and education practitioners and a support worker.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experience for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised. The themes are:

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

- 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 Sgoil-àraich Bun-sgoil Shlèite. 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. Most children concentrate well for extended periods with the play that they choose. They also show high levels of engagement in whole-group learning opportunities. For example, during weekly physical education sessions, and while using bikes and scooters in the playground. Children benefit from very positive relationships with practitioners. They play well with their friends, being kind and respectful to each other.
- Practitioners ensure they provide total immersion experiences in the sgoil-àraich at all times. They make well-considered and useful commentaries when interacting with children to extend curiosity and imaginative play. Practitioners' use of singing, for example while children brush their teeth, supports language development effectively. Practitioners use digital technology and stories to support children's Gàidhlig language and literacy skills for a minority of the time. Senior leaders and practitioners should evaluate their practice using bespoke resources, such as the 'Advice on Gaelic Education.'

- Practitioners assess purposefully children's learning as they observe and engage with them in their play. They involve parents in maintaining personal care plans, although this could be reviewed more thoroughly. Practitioners have collated very effective 'Top tips' to support a new adult get to know children. Every child has an online learning profile, which is shared with parents. Practitioners should now focus more on identifying and supporting the development of children's skills through these profiles. This will help ensure more precise next steps in learning. Parents receive a helpful end-of-year report on their child's progress in literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing. They also join regular 'Fan a Chluich – Stay to Play' sessions within the sgoil-àraich.
- Practitioners use floorbooks effectively to plan for children's interests. This helps to capture children's voice and supports the planning of responsive experiences. Senior leaders should continue to support practitioners to develop further approaches to planning using the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence. This will ensure children continue to access a broad, balanced and meaningful early education through Gàidhlig.
- Practitioners use local authority guidance to track children's developmental milestones. Senior leaders and practitioners have developed a useful tool to support their tracking of children's progress in numeracy and mathematics. They should work together to develop a format for tracking children's progress in literacy and Gàidhlig. This should include checking children's levels of understanding and their use of Gàidhlig language in a more thorough way across early level.
- Children benefit from well-planned transition activities with their friends at the bun-sgoil during weekly 'Còmhla 's a' Choille – Together in the Forest.' This helps children build relationships and become familiar with their new learning environment. Children have a transition week where they are in the class with their friends in the bun-sgoil. This supports well a smooth and confident move into bun-sgoil. These approaches also strengthen practitioners' and teachers' collaboration.

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- 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.

3.2 Securing children's progress

good

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success. The themes are:

- progress in communication, early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing
- children's progress over time
- overall quality of children's achievement
- ensuring equity for all children

- Children make good progress in early literacy and Gàidhlig and communication. Almost all children listen well and understand the Gàidhlig used at circle time. A few children are beginning to respond with Gàidhlig words and phrases, for example to request their lunch choices. Almost all children sing songs to aid their learning of Gàidhlig. They would benefit from developing their skills in listening to stories and rhymes being read aloud to them regularly. Almost all children recognise their name through self-registration. A few children write the letters in their name. Children enjoy mark-making experiences across play contexts.
- Most children make good progress in numeracy and mathematics through Gàidhlig. Almost all children are beginning to count and match numbers correctly to objects. Most children sort animals correctly into sets to show those with two, four or no legs. Children develop an understanding of the language of measure during loose parts play. Most children recognise colours and name common two-dimensional shapes correctly in Gàidhlig. Children should develop a better understanding of money through role-play opportunities.
- Children's progress in health and wellbeing is good. Children make friends quickly and take turns in their play. They enjoy helping each other. Children's snack and lunch experiences are relaxed. Their independent skills are developed well, for example as they get ready to go outside to play on their bikes or scooters. Children's physical skills, and understanding of managing risks are extended through daily outdoor play and weekly access to activities in the gym hall. Most children are increasing their understanding of the wellbeing indicators and ways in which to keep themselves safe. Children's leadership roles should be promoted, for example through taking more responsibility for tidying up toys.
- Almost all children make appropriate progress in their learning, since starting in sgoil-àraich. Practitioners' observations, and the information they gather on children's learning, shows this progress. Practitioners should include dates in children's records to demonstrate better the pace of progress. A few children benefit from targeted interventions and additional support, where this is required.
- Practitioners capture children's achievements within the sgoil-àraich and regularly praise children. They recognise and display children's achievements from home on a 'wow' wall display in the sgoil-àraich. Children and families value successes being celebrated in this way. This is supporting children to be successful and raises their self-esteem.

- Practitioners know individual children and families well. They provide a supportive and inclusive culture that promotes equity effectively. Practitioners ensure that there is no cost to families for children to take part in sgoil-àraich activities. They provide outdoor clothing to enable all children to benefit from playing outdoors.

Other relevant evidence

- Practitioners make good progress in implementing the 'Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education,' 2017. They provide free 1140 hours of total immersion in very well-designed accommodation and gardens. Practitioners are fluent speakers of Gàidhlig able to deliver total immersion. Almost all children continue with Gàidhlig in the bun-sgoil.

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.