

29 September 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

In August 2025, HM Inspectors published a letter on Sgoil an Tairbeirt – Sir E Scott School. The letter sets out a number of areas for improvement, which we agreed with the school and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. Recently, as you may know, we visited the school again. During our visit, we talked to children and young people 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 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 and young people's learning and achievements. This letter sets out what we found.

Senior leaders should take prompt action to improve the strategic and collective leadership of the sgoil – school. In doing so, they should strengthen their skills in identifying what is working well and what needs to improve across the sgoil. Leadership at all levels should be developed further to achieve a brisk pace of change.

There has been some progress in improving the sgoil, with very important areas still to be addressed.

Across Gàidhlig and English Medium Education, senior leaders have begun to refine the school's vision, values and aims. This reflects aspects of national guidance, the identity of Sgoil an Tairbeirt and its Gàidhlig context. Children at the bun-sgoil – primary stages have engaged in initial activities to help them understand the vision, values and aims. Senior leaders now need to ensure that all stakeholders understand clearly how the vision, values and aims inform expectations, improvement priorities and daily practice. While staff recognise the importance of the local community, the role of sustaining Gàidhlig in that community should be more explicit.

The Comhairle is providing additional temporary resources to support the sgoil. This is beginning to have a positive impact on senior leadership remits and meeting children's and young people's additional support needs. The Comhairle, with senior leaders, need to plan for sustaining improvements from additional resources. Ongoing staffing challenges, including absences and recruitment difficulties, continue to affect the pace of improvement.

The Comhairle has continued to make evaluative visits to the sgoil. For each visit, Comhairle officers identify priorities for improvement to support progress. Senior leaders manage multiple overlapping priorities. All planning should now be streamlined into a manageable number of clear and measurable priorities. Senior leaders need to adopt clearer, more consistent communication to encourage all staff's engagement in improving the sgoil. Staff,

children and young people's leadership skills are still to be used fully. Senior and middle leaders need clearer remits to work well together to lead improvements more effectively. Staff need to be part of productive working groups to secure further impact.

Senior leaders have approaches in place to improve the sgoil, but these are not used fully. All stakeholders need to be involved in these approaches to sustain change. A minority of children and young people feel their views are considered. Positive relationships across the sgoil, parents and the community are essential in taking forward changes at a quicker pace.

Senior and middle leaders, along with staff, should develop further high-quality learning, teaching, assessment and moderation. Teachers should ensure they have accurate data and use it more effectively to enhance children's and young people's progress and attainment from P1 to S3.

There has been some progress in this area, although important aspects still require improved. This is to ensure consistently high-quality experiences for all children and young people.

Across both English and Gàidhlig Medium, most children and young people are confident and interact positively with others. Children and young people are beginning to develop an understanding of their rights. They are still to be fully confident in their rights as learners and speakers of an Indigenous language. Children and young people need to make meaningful decisions, including through an effective pupil council.

Across the sgoil, most teachers provide clear explanations and instructions. Most staff and learners enjoy positive relationships, which supports a respectful learning environment. Children and young people are not always sufficiently active and challenged in their learning. While a few teachers use more complex questions effectively, this practice needs to become more consistent. In a minority of lessons, tasks do not meet the needs of all learners well enough, particularly those requiring additional support with their learning. Most children and young people develop strong digital skills when creating short films to support fluency in Gàidhlig. Teachers should ensure young people are consistently using technology, and other specialist arrangements, to support learning, assessment and access to national qualifications.

Across the sgoil, senior leaders and teachers are developing a more structured approach to assessment, including with an annual assessment calendar. Teachers need to continue developing more consistent ongoing assessments within lessons. They should increase the quality and frequency of conversations with learners on improving their progress. Teachers have an improved understanding of standards through useful moderation activities within the Comhairle. They should now use assessment information more consistently to inform planning of learning and provide timely additional support across all stages.

Senior leaders should be supported by the local authority to extend Gàidhlig Medium and Learner Education at the secondary stages. The current achievements offer through Gàidhlig should be outlined clearly, ensuring young people know how to develop their fluency both in class and beyond, year by year.

There has been some progress in improving Gàidhlig Education across the school. There remain important areas to improve.

Most children and young people who learn through Gàidhlig demonstrate positive fluency and a clear sense of pride in their language and identity. A group of specialist teachers have evaluated practice from sgoil-àraich to the àrd-sgoil stages. They have produced a helpful handbook and plan for change. These should now be used to support tangible improvements. Specialist teachers have collaborated with senior leaders so that all young people now study Literacy and Gàidhlig or Gaelic (Learners) to the end of S3. Senior leaders should continue looking at how more young people do qualifications and awards in Literacy and Gàidhlig and Gaelic (Learners) in S4-6. Children and young people take part in community events and in themed learning, such as Seachdain na Gàidhlig – World Gaelic Week. Senior leaders should continue enhancing how to increase the proportion of the curriculum delivered through Gàidhlig at the secondary stages.

All staff should ensure they refresh regularly and apply professional learning in equalities and inclusion. Senior leaders should ensure all children and young people, requiring targeted support for their learning and development, have immediate and thorough support plans and processes in place.

The school has made some progress in improving equalities, inclusion and support for children and young people, including those with additional support needs. However, very important work remains a high priority to ensure a fully inclusive environment where all learners are consistently supported effectively to succeed.

Most children and young people feel respected, safe and well supported by staff within a caring learning environment. Senior leaders and staff have taken helpful steps to improve their understanding of inclusive practice. Children and young people value improved quiet and supportive spaces to work and helpful well-being check-ins by staff. These approaches provide a positive foundation for inclusion. Staff should now build further on this by ensuring that all classrooms consistently meet all the needs of children and young people.

Staff are improving approaches to identifying and planning for additional support needs. They are increasing support for learning, with more structured planning meetings. While these are positive developments, planning for additional support is not yet consistent or timely for all learners. The pace of change is still too slow. Senior leaders now need to ensure that all children and young people who require additional support have clear, up-to-date and effective plans in place that are agreed with parents and partners. These plans should include specific, measurable targets and be well understood by all staff to support consistent use in lessons. Children and young people need to have required meetings taking place.

Senior leaders have considered what the content of a personal and social education (PSE) programme should provide at the secondary stages. This is still to be taken forward. At pace, senior leaders should ensure that PSE is a progressive and quality feature of young people's learning. Senior leaders and staff should ensure that young people learn regularly about equality, diversity, and other personal and social matters related to their situations.

Senior leaders and staff should establish a clear strategy to enhance children's and young people's progress, attainment and achievement. This strategy should build on recent improvements in S4, ensuring a broad curriculum that integrates digital technology and contributions from partners to strengthen what teachers offer. The curriculum for young people in S6 requires further development.

Senior leaders and staff have made some progress in improving attainment and the curriculum, although important areas are still to be addressed.

Senior leaders and staff have made a few improvements to the curriculum. At the bun-sgoil, staff are using clearer information on progress to support learning in literacy and numeracy through the medium of Gàidhlig and English. Senior leaders have some discussions with staff on progress and attainment. This leads to further support being put in place for a few children and young people. These approaches are not yet consistent enough across the sgoil.

By P4, most children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is positive. By P7, the majority of children attain expected levels. Staff should continue aiming for a steady pattern of raising children's attainment in the bun-sgoil. Across stages, children communicate confidently in both Gàidhlig and English. Teachers are still ensuring a sufficient focus on developing skills in debating in both languages. Most children's reading skills are developing well, although children need more support in analysing texts in greater depth. Writing is well organised. However, children should create more variety of texts. Children in Gàidhlig Medium Education use mathematical language more confidently in Gàidhlig.

Children in English Medium Education are enthusiastic about learning more Gàidhlig. They sing and perform very well at events, and benefit from learning in themes, such as Seachdain na Gàidhlig. Teachers should increase children's structured learning of Gàidhlig, aiming for children to at least achieve the second level of Curriculum for Excellence by the end of P7.

In the àrd-sgoil, young people value recent outdoor learning, through which they achieved the John Muir Award and Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Young people in S3 developed their knowledge and skills of the local employment opportunities on their island through work experience. Across S1-3, senior leaders need to make much more use of information on learners' progress to support them make progress, inform planning for learning, and target additional support for learning. Senior leaders still require a clearer overview of attainment for all young people in S1-3. This should be used to help young people make the best possible progress, with timely support put in place as required.

In S4-6, overall attainment remains broadly in line with similar schools across Scotland over time. Recent declines highlight the need for more consistent checking of progress and earlier

support so young people attain to their full potential. Senior leaders should ensure all learners, particularly in S6, continue taking the maximum number of awards and qualifications. In 2024/25 by S5, the sgoil performed significantly much higher than similar schools in Scotland for young people achieving one course at a grade A or better. Senior leaders and staff should continue being clear on a whole-school approach to raising further attainment. They should discuss these approaches with parents, children and young people to increase engagement, confidence and trust in how the school supports raising attainment.

What happens next?

The school has made insufficient progress since the original inspection. We will liaise with Comhairle nan Eilean Siar regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within 12 months of the publication of this letter. We will discuss with Comhairle nan Eilean Siar the details of this inspection. When we return to inspect the school/setting we will write to you as parents informing you of the progress the school/setting has made. As a matter of priority, senior leaders and the local authority should continue their joint working to implement an action plan that addresses areas for improvement in safeguarding requiring urgent action.

Joan C. Esson
HM Inspector

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