

EXTERNAL EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENT INSPECTION REPORT

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides details of all external education establishment inspection reports received across Argyll and Bute Education Service during the period December 2024 to March 2025.
- 1.2 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee notes:
- a) The contents of this report;
 - b) This quarterly report will be presented on an ongoing basis to the Community Services Committee detailing all establishment inspections conducted and published by Education Scotland within that period, and
 - c) That Ward members will receive copies of school inspection reports for schools within their area as published by Education Scotland.

EXTERNAL EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENT INSPECTION REPORT

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 This report provides details of all external education establishment inspection reports received across Argyll and Bute Education Service during December 2024 to March 2025.

2.2 As required for the National Improvement Framework, HMIE report on and provide grades for the following Quality Indicators (QIs) as part of full model inspections (which typically take place over a full school week):

QI 1.3 – leadership of change;

QI 2.3 – learning, teaching and assessment;

QI 3.1 – ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion; and

QI 3.2 – raising attainment and achievement

In addition, they include a focus on the following themes from other QIs:

QI 2.2 curriculum: learning pathways

QI 2.7 partnerships: parental engagement

2.3 Short model inspections (typically over two and a half days) focus on two QIs:

QI 2.3 – learning, teaching and assessment; and

QI 3.2 – raising attainment and achievement

HMIE continue to have a focus on safeguarding in every inspection. An inspection advice note issued in January 2024 advised that Inspectors intended to strengthen the evidence they gather about relationships and behaviour in schools and settings during inspections notified from week beginning 15 January 2024. This evidence is being gathered in a range of ways, including through an updated child protection and safeguarding evaluation form. In addition to the inspection advice note, schools have been provided with supporting local authority guidance.

- 2.4 In inspections of early learning and childcare settings, HMIE use the equivalent QIs from *'How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare?'*

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Community Services Committee notes:

3.1 The contents of this report;

3.2 This quarterly report will be presented on an ongoing basis to the Community Services Committee detailing all establishment inspections conducted and published by Education Scotland within that period, and

3.3 That Ward members will receive copies of school inspection reports for schools within their area as published by Education Scotland.

4.0 DETAIL – School Inspections

- 4.1 Colgrain Primary School and ELC was inspected week beginning 9th September using the full model of inspection. The ELC inspection was a joint inspection with the Care Inspectorate. The school received positive feedback from the Managing Inspector with specific reference to: The shared professional values of the staff teams across the school and nursery who work collaboratively to improve children's experiences. Led ably by the senior leadership team, staff work very well together to implement ongoing improvements to the quality of learning and teaching. The very effective partnerships that staff have developed with the local community, parents and outside agencies. Through these partnerships, staff improve the learning experiences and wellbeing of children and their families. The highly effective approaches staff in the school and nursery take to meet the needs of children who require additional support with their learning. They implement and deliver well-planned interventions which help children who require additional support to make good progress. The high levels of attainment across the school and nursery and the worthwhile opportunities children have to achieve and apply their learning in different contexts. Senior leaders and staff have robust processes to track children's attainment which enables them to evidence clearly the progress children make over time.

The link to the published letter and Summary of Inspection Findings (SIF) can be found below:

[Colgrain Primary School | Inspection Report | Education Scotland](#)

- 4.2 Dervaig Primary School was inspected week beginning 23rd September using the full model of inspection. The school received positive feedback from the

Managing Inspector with specific reference to: Children are well-mannered, respectful, welcoming and proud of their school. They demonstrate the values of the school in their interactions with others. Senior leaders and staff work effectively to foster positive, respectful relationships with children and wider school community. This effectively supports an inclusive and nurturing ethos in the school. Senior leaders and staff work effectively with colleagues across the cluster schools and wider island to share practice and to moderate attainment of learning. This impacts positively on outcomes for children. Children make good progress in literacy and numeracy.

The link to the published letter and Summary of Inspection Findings (SIF) can be found below:

[Dervaig Primary School | Inspection Report | Education Scotland](#)

- 4.3 A joint review, with HM Inspectors and the Education Service, focussing on the two remaining areas for improvement at Campbeltown Grammar School took place in October 2024. This was a very positive engagement, with HMIE disengaging from further visits and the Education Service taking forward identified continued improvements and providing a progress report within twenty-four months.

The school received positive feedback from the Managing Inspector with specific reference to: The headteacher has been in post since August 2023 and was appointed on a permanent basis in May 2024. During her time in post, she has provided effective strategic leadership with important contributions from the local authority. The improved curriculum offer has enhanced opportunities for personalisation and choice, increased individualised pathways and ensures aspirational coursing for all young people. All classes demonstrate a positive ethos and relationships. Moderation activity in the BGE has had a positive impact on ensuring increasingly robust teacher judgements. We are confident that the headteacher will continue to provide strong, strategic leadership in order to secure further improvement. We have shared this progress report with Education Scotland who have confirmed that they are confident that Campbeltown Grammar School has the capacity to continue to improve.

The link to the published letter can be found below:

[campbeltown-grammar-school-pv-031224 \(1\).pdf](#)

The link to the published progress review report can be found below:

[CGS progress review report](#)

- 4.4 Tarbert 2-18 was inspected the week beginning 24th February 2025 using the full model of inspection.

The link to the published letter and Summary of Inspection Findings (SIF) will be accessible when these documents have been finalised and are available on Education Scotland's Website.

4.5 A summary of all external school inspection audit reports published by Education Scotland across Argyll and Bute Education Service establishments during the period December 2024 to March 2025 is provided in **Appendix 1**.

4.6 A summary of the inspection outcomes per establishment detailing strengths and areas for improvement is provided in **Appendix 2**.

5.0 DETAIL – National Thematic Inspections

5.1 In addition to visits to schools and settings, HMIE also carry out national Thematic Inspections.

5.2 The most recent phase of national Thematic Inspection which took place in October 2024 focused on *Local Authority Approaches to School Improvement* and focused on the following four themes:

1. How do local authorities support schools to improve the quality of education through implementing effective improvement planning and standards and quality reporting?
2. How do local authorities support schools to improve the quality of education through self-evaluation and quality assurance?
3. How do local authorities support schools to improve the quality of education through professional learning?
4. How do local authorities deliver universal support and challenge for all schools, and/or targeted support for specific schools to improve the quality of education?

5.3 Overall findings will be shared through a national report expected to be published early in 2025. The link to the published report will be made accessible when it is available on Education Scotland's website.

5.4 During the academic year 2023-2024 HMIE visited a number of settings and schools across Scotland to complete a Thematic Inspection *on Enhancing the quality of mathematics education in Scotland*. A number of Argyll and Bute establishments participated in the Thematic Inspection with Rockfield Primary School and ELC class / Bun-sgoil Achadh na Creige and Sgoil àraich being highlighted to the Education Service as having a number of approaches in place that were recognised as good practice.

5.5 The school hosted Janie McManus, HMIE Inspector, to launch the Thematic Inspection report in November 2024 and Education Scotland has requested an additional visit during session 2024-2025 to examine further the interesting practice identified within Maths and Numeracy at Rockfield Primary School and ELC class / Bun-sgoil Achadh na Creige and Sgoil àraich.

- 5.6 The full Thematic Inspection report can be accessed below with any further information specific to Argyll and Bute schools and establishments being detailed in future committee reports.

[Enhancing the quality of mathematics education in Scotland | National thematic inspections | HM Chief Inspector reports and guidance | Inspection and review | Education Scotland](#)

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 In summary, two published reports are available from the three inspections which took place during the period of September 2024 to March 2025.
- 6.2 The Education Service will continue to use the outcomes of establishment inspections to work collaboratively with our Head Teachers to target support and challenge to secure improvement for our children and young people.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Policy – The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 places a duty on Education Authorities to provide children and young people with school education and (in terms of raising standards) requires Authorities to endeavor to secure improvement in the quality of that school education.
- 7.2 Financial – None
- 7.3 Legal – None
- 7.4 HR – None
- 7.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: – None
- 7.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – None
- 7.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – None
- 7.5.3 Islands – None
- 7.6 Climate Change - None
- 7.7 Risk – Reputational risk to the Education Service following a weak report.
- 7.8 Customer Service – The outcome of establishment inspections of the Education Service of Argyll and Bute Council may significantly enhance or detract from the Council's reputation and attractiveness as an area to work and live in.

- 7.9 The Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
Article 28 – I have the right to an education
Article 29 – I have the right to an education which develops my personality,
talents and abilities

Douglas Hendry - Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Audrey Forest - Policy Lead for Education

Jennifer Crocket
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January 2025

Appendices
Appendix 1 - Overview of Inspection Outcomes
Appendix 2 - Summary of Inspection Outcomes

Appendix 1 - Overview of Inspection Outcomes

			Leadership of Change	Learning, Teaching and Assessment	Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion	Raising Attainment and Achievement
Establishment	Sector	Date of Inspection	1.3	2.3	3.1	3.2
Colgrain Primary	School	September 2024	5	5	5	5
Colgrain ELC	ELC	September 2024	5	5	5	5
Dervaig Primary	School	September 2024	3	4	3	4
Tarbert Academy	School	February 2025	not yet published	not yet published	not yet published	not yet published
Tarbert Academy Pre-5	ELC	February 2025	not yet published	not yet published	not yet published	not yet published

The Six-point Scale for Inspection Grading

Excellent	6
Very Good	5
Good	4
Satisfactory	3
Weak	2
Unsatisfactory	1

Appendix 2 – Summary of Inspection Outcomes

Report Title: Colgrain Primary School and Pre-Five Unit
Inspection Agency: Education Scotland
<p>Key Findings:</p> <p>The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The highly trusting and respectful relationships, based on the school and nursery values, that are evident across the school community. Children flourish within the stimulating and nurturing learning environment and are confident and successful learners.• The shared professional values of the staff teams across the school and nursery who work collaboratively to improve children's experiences. Led ably by the senior leadership team, staff work very well together to implement ongoing improvements to the quality of learning and teaching.• The very effective partnerships that staff have developed with the local community, parents and outside agencies. Through these partnerships, staff improve the learning experiences and wellbeing of children and their families.• The highly effective approaches staff in the school and nursery take to meet the needs of children who require additional support with their learning. They implement and deliver well-planned interventions which help children who require additional support to make good progress.• The high levels of attainment across the school and nursery and the worthwhile opportunities children have to achieve and apply their learning in different contexts. Senior leaders and staff have robust processes to track children's attainment which enables them to evidence clearly the progress children make over time. <p>The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from Argyll and Bute Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to develop leadership opportunities for younger children across the school.• Increase opportunities for children in the nursery to explore and expand their learning in the local community.• Streamline approaches to analysing assessment data and as planned, continue to develop creative approaches to high-quality learning and teaching
Date of Inspection: September 2024
Lead Officer to take forward improvement: Lesley Watt – Headteacher (acting)
Central Officer to support improvement: Simon Easton – Education Manager

Report Title: **Dervaig Primary School**

Inspection Agency: **Education Scotland**

Key Findings:

The inspection team found the following **strengths** in the school's work.

- Children are well-mannered, respectful, welcoming and proud of their school. They demonstrate the values of the school in their interactions with others.
- Senior leaders and staff work effectively to foster positive, respectful relationships with children and wider school community. This effectively supports an inclusive and nurturing ethos in the school.
- Senior leaders and staff work effectively with colleagues across the cluster schools and wider island to share practice and to moderate attainment of learning. This impacts positively on outcomes for children.
- Children make good progress in literacy and numeracy.

The following **areas for improvement** were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from Argyll and Bute Council.

- Senior leaders and staff should continue to develop approaches to evaluate the quality of the school's work. As they do so, they should involve children, parents and other partners in decisions regarding school improvement.
- Senior leaders and staff should improve approaches to planning for children who require additional support for their learning. They should ensure they set clear, measurable targets. This should help all children to make the best possible progress in their learning.
- Senior leaders and staff should work with the whole school community to review the curriculum on offer. In doing so, they should ensure that it aligns with Curriculum for Excellence and reflects the unique features of the school and its setting.

Date of Inspection: **September 2024**

Lead Officer to take forward improvement: Richard Gawthrope – Headteacher (acting)

Central Officer to support improvement: Rachel Binnie – Education Manager

Report Title: **Campbeltown Grammar School Progress Review**

Inspection Agency: **Education Scotland**

Key Findings:

A sample of the **strengths** identified by the inspection team within the progress report:

- Significant changes have been made to the structure and logistics of the curriculum, resulting in increased opportunities for breadth and depth.
- Senior leaders are continuing to build productive partnerships with local businesses in order to extend the curriculum offer.
- The improved curriculum offer has enhanced opportunities for personalisation and choice, increased individualised pathways and ensures aspirational coursing for all young people.
- There are clear opportunities for wider achievement linked to the local context and external partners are used effectively to enhance the experiences on offer.
- The school's approaches to the design and creation of bespoke curricula for identified young people is developing.
- All classes demonstrate a positive ethos and relationships.
- Engagement with the quality assurance calendar is improving middle leaders' capacity to support improvement in learning, teaching and assessment through observations and evaluation of the 'Introduction-Engage-Evaluation' approach.
- All school improvement priorities for this session have a sharp focus on intended impact on attainment.
- In 2024, there have been improvements in BGE attainment across all organisers in comparison to 2022-23.
- Staff have an increased focus on how best to improve young people's attainment and support all young people to achieve their maximum potential.
- Senior leaders have developed more robust approaches to coursing young people in the senior phase.

A sample of the **areas for improvement** identified by the inspection team within the progress report:

- Senior leaders should now formalise the learner pathway policy and procedures.
- The school should continue with plans to consult upon and develop its Curriculum Rationale, giving consideration to local labour market data in order to ensure that the curriculum on offer is relevant and appropriate to the needs of local communities.
- As planned, teachers should continue to work collaboratively to develop consistent, high quality approaches to learning, teaching and assessment.
- Senior and middle leaders should continue to implement consistent approaches to observing and evaluating learning, teaching and assessment across the school
- Staff now need to ensure that improvements in attainment within the BGE are built upon in order to deliver higher levels attainment for all young people within the senior phase.

Date of Inspection: **October 2024**

Lead Officer to take forward improvement: Kirsty Donnelly - Headteacher

Central Officer to support improvement: Brendan Docherty – Education Manager