

BALLOCH SCHOOL NURSERY



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

2009-2010

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1. WELCOME TO BALLOCH SCHOOL NURSERY

Balloch School Nursery is accommodated in an attractively refurbished part of the Old Balloch School building and provides a high standard of facilities. Here pre school education is provided for three and four year olds in the Balloch area and occasionally for children outwith the area.

The Nursery is managed by the school. The pre school education offered is based on the 3-5 Pre-School Education Curriculum Guidelines issued by the Scottish Executive. We are also beginning to introduce ideas from the new Curriculum for Excellence. This curriculum is distinct from that of the primary school and should not be seen as an early start for Primary 1.

At Nursery we aim to provide all children with equal opportunity to access pre school education in a caring, happy and safe environment and to guide and help pupils in all aspects of development during this crucial pre school period.

We hope that this booklet will provide you with useful information on day to day aspects of the Nursery as well as informing you of what actually happens at Nursery School.

2. NURSERY STAFF

At present we have three permanent members of staff.

Our Nursery teacher, Mrs. Fiona Flyn is in overall charge of organising the day to day running of the Nursery. She is assisted by Mrs. Avril Grant and Mrs. Heather Millar. They are very well qualified in pre school education.

The staff work very much as a team, liaising regularly with the Depute Head who is Mrs. Clare Petrie.

We are now part of a Nursery Cluster. This means that we have closer association with Balloch Playgroup, Tiny Tots Nursery and Les Enfant which can liaise with Mrs. Flyn and call upon her advice and expertise as required.

3. CONTACTING US

Both the Nursery staff, the Depute Head and the Head Teacher are pleased to answer any queries you may have about the Nursery. Please do not hesitate to contact us.

Our address is:

Balloch Primary School
Culloden Road,
Balloch
Inverness IV2 7HQ
Telephone - 01463 790287

4. NURSERY HOURS

At present the Nursery operates two sessions at the following times:

09.15 - 11.45

12.30 - 15.00

Please try to be punctual in delivering and collecting your child. All children must be brought to the Nursery and collected by an adult known to the child, for child protection purposes. Please let us know beforehand if your child will be collected by someone unfamiliar to Nursery staff.

Your child will attend either morning or afternoon sessions. We try to accommodate parents choice of session but this is not always possible. We normally find that most parents want a morning session and despite our best efforts, we have been unable to find an allocation system acceptable to all. We have discussed the fairest means of allocation with parents from time to time and try to take their views into account whilst adhering to Highland Council Guidelines. (which may vary from time to time)

Our Policy for allocating places this session

- ❖ Allocation of requests from families within the catchment area will be given priority.
- ❖ Afternoon places will be allocated as requested.
- ❖ Requests for morning sessions will have to be accompanied by a brief explanation of why this is preferred. You will be asked for your reasons at enrolment.
- ❖ The Head Teacher will then allocate places according to Highland Council Guidelines.
- ❖ We are aware that the policy does not take into account the needs of Mums/Dads who stay at home to look after children. Where at all possible any remaining places will be allocated with this in mind.
- ❖ Requests from outwith the catchment area will then be considered and places allocated if available.
- ❖ Please note that pupils placed in Nursery from outwith our catchment area are not guaranteed a place in Primary 1 at Balloch School.

5. HOLIDAY DATES

2009/2010

	<u>School Opens</u>	<u>School Closes</u>
TERM 1	18 th August	9 th October
TERM 2	26 th October	23 rd December
TERM 3	11 th January	26 th March
TERM 4	12 th April	2 nd July
May Day Holiday	3 rd May 2009	
In-Service Training Days	26 th , 27 th + 28 th October 2009. 16 th + 17 th February 2010.	
February Holidays	12 th and 15 th February 2010	

6. NURSERY AIMS

Balloch School Nursery aims to:

1. Provide a safe, happy well resourced environment for pre-school children.
2. Provide a broad range of appropriate pre-school experiences for children through play activities which will develop their creativity.
3. Deliver pre-school education experiences in line with National and local advice including:
 - ❖ Emotional Personal and Social Development.
 - ❖ Communication and language.
 - ❖ Knowledge and Understanding of the world.
 - ❖ Expressive and aesthetic development.
 - ❖ Physical development and movement.
4. Offer parent/carers opportunities to become involved in their child's pre-school learning and development.
5. Provide parents/carers with regular information about their child's progress and development.
6. Arrange appropriate professional development and training for all staff.
7. Meet the National Care Standards (set out by the Care Commission)
8. Ensure that no one is denied opportunities because of race, gender or disability.

7. NURSERY EDUCATION AND YOUR CHILD

Nursery Education is about the development of individuals. We will work with each child building on skills already acquired, helping them to develop these and also learn new skills.

We hope that our Nursery pupils will learn to become caring, thinking and responsible individuals ready to get the most from the more formal setting of Primary School and into the future.

To this end we aim to promote your child's ability to:

- Develop strategies for learning.
- Make the most of learning situations, learning to choose and plan their own activity and so begin to take some control of their own learning.
- Co-operate and reflect with others, sharing thinking and ideas.
- Acquire knowledge, skills and understanding which they can use in new situations.
- Communicate effectively with both peers and adults.
- Learn to express themselves through a range of activities - art, music, drama and movement.
- Develop self esteem and tolerance towards others.
- Be able to make the most effective use of this learning situation, be happy interacting with others and have fun!

The wide range of activities planned for and offered to the children frequently arise directly from the children's current interests. As well as allowing for an element of free choice, they offer opportunities for pupils to develop skills they have learned in an independent and creative way.

Your child's natural creativity will be encouraged throughout their time in Nursery. Please praise and celebrate the 'creations' your child brings home. Ask your child to tell you the 'story' of their work - your child's interpretation of their piece of work can often be very different to yours!

8. THE NURSERY DAY

The Nursery day revolves around play.

Although activities are structured to some extent, the children are also encouraged to choose from a range of activities which have been planned for them to do on a particular day. These will vary from day to day so that there is always something new and interesting to catch their attention and stimulate imagination and develop creativity. All play activities offered have an underlying educational purpose.

For children of this age, play is the means by which things are taught and can be learned.

WHY PLAY?

- ◆ Through play the mind and body are stimulated and active.
- ◆ Play helps build confidence.
- ◆ Play allows the child to experience new things in a familiar situation.
- ◆ Play can provide an escape, relieve boredom, allow for relaxation and even the opportunity for solitude.

- ◆ Play helps the child develop social skills and understand how to relate to people in a wider circle.
- ◆ The opportunity is there to practise skills as often as necessary for confidence to be developed.
- ◆ Through play, opportunities are provided for sensory experiences which are the foundations for intellectual development.
- ◆ Play provides reasons children can understand for acquiring skills and knowledge which adults value.

NURSERY ACTIVITIES WILL INCLUDE

Sand and water play
 Junk modelling
 Cooking
 Playdough
 Baking
 Painting
 Colouring
 Cutting / gluing / tracing
 Jigsaws
 Construction toys
 Climbing toys
 Sit on wheeled toys
 Imaginative play
 Home corner / hospital / shop etc.
 Dressing up / role play
 Enjoying tapes and stories
 Drama and movement
 Computer activities
 Outdoor activities
 Musical activities
 Language activities
 Story time
 Health and well being

WHAT WILL CHILDREN LEARN IN NURSERY

Through their play children learn to:
 Co-operate with each other
 Share
 Listen
 Talk
 Think
 Organise
 Develop independence
 Become more self confident
 Control their bodies
 Develop their creative skills
 Use appropriate vocabulary
 Behave appropriately
 Basic Mathematical skills
 Basic Language skills

All the work in the Nursery is carefully planned by the staff. Records of progress are kept and passed on to the Primary 1 teacher in order to help your child make a smooth transition from Nursery to Primary School.

Your child will have had many opportunities throughout the Nursery year to visit the main school e.g. for PE, Music and Drama activities. Older primary pupils also help out in the Nursery from time to time. Organised visits to P1 take place in the 4th term to give the children the opportunity of being in a P1 classroom prior to them starting in August.

We also have a 'Buddy' system which starts in the fourth term of Nursery and carries on until the October holidays. This means your child will know their Primary 7 Buddy before starting school. The Buddies help out at playtime and lunchtime ensuring all children have a playmate and do not feel isolated or alone in the playground.

Formal activities such as learning to write are not currently part of the Nursery Curriculum. However, we are aware that some of our pupils are very interested in 'writing' and parents have mentioned that their child loves to copy print and pretend to write at home.

Any kind of 'mark' making is to be encouraged but please speak to the Nursery staff who can give you simple but helpful advice about writing and letter formation. Pre writing activities to develop hand control will be going on in Nursery but handwriting as such will be taught in Primary 1.

9. SNACK

There is no need for your child to bring anything to eat at Nursery, as a small snack will be provided. Often the children will be involved in the preparation of this food through baking and cooking activities under supervision.

Snack time offers an opportunity to develop a range of social skills and acquire knowledge about health.

Parents pay 50 pence per day towards snack. This is collected by the Nursery staff and is most conveniently paid on a termly basis. Any surplus from snack money will be used to buy equipment and materials exclusively for Nursery use.

If your child needs to avoid any foods for medical or religious reasons please remember to let the staff know.

10. CLOTHING

No uniform is required. Children should wear comfortable play clothes. Although overalls are provided for more messy activities, clothes may get dirty from time to time.

Each child must have a pair of clean shoes or gym shoes to wear in the Nursery. Please help by ensuring that these are clearly marked with your child's name.

Please provide a change of clothing at the beginning of the session in case of 'accidents'. The Nursery will provide named change bags on each child's peg.

11. ILLNESS / ATTENDANCE / VACCINATIONS / HEALTH VISITOR

In order to make the most of Nursery Education it is important that your child attends five sessions per week if at all possible. Obviously if children are at all unwell they should stay at home. Parents are asked not to bring into Nursery any child who has been vomiting or had diarrhoea until at least 48 hours has elapsed since the last attack - NHS Highland Guidelines.

Should your child become ill during Nursery time we will make every effort to contact you. Failing that we will telephone the emergency number which you will be asked to supply at enrolment.

If either your home or emergency contact number should change during the session it is important that you let us know immediately.

Due to the relatively short period of each Nursery session we do not anticipate that there would be any need to administer medicine in Nursery. In an exceptional case arrangements can be made with the Nursery teacher.

Is your child up to date with their vaccinations?

Children receiving out of home care, including at Nursery and Playgroup, have more opportunities to come into contact with infections, so it is especially important to make sure that they have had all the vaccinations due.

It is never too late to have your child immunised. If they have missed one, you do not have to start the course from the beginning again. Contact your health visitor / GP for further advice.

The Nursery has a link with a Health Visitor with whom the Nursery and parents can liaise. This is part of the latest UK Health Programme and aims to strengthen links between services so that children and families are well supported by services. (See Appendix 3)

12. CHILD PROTECTION

The school takes this matter very seriously.

From time to time incidents can occur within the school setting which cause concern and could indicate that a pupil is suffering some form of abuse.

In terms of Highland Child Protection Committee Inter-agency Protection Guidelines, Education Service staff must report such incidents to Social Work Services which can lead to a joint Social Work/Police investigation.

All agencies involved in Child Protection are obliged to make the welfare of children their paramount consideration and this will be the priority for Education Service staff.

More information about Child Protection Procedures within Highland can be obtained from the *Child Protection Development Officer, Mrs. Susan MacLaren, Highland Child Protection Committee, Kinmylies Building, Leachkin Road, Inverness, IV3 8NN - Telephone (01463) 703483 - Fax (01463) 713237.*

13. ABSENCES

If you know that your child will be unable to attend Nursery for any reason please contact the Nursery (telephone 798744) before 10.00am on that day. If your child does not arrive and you have not contacted us the school will call you at home or work to check why your child has not attended. This is a safety measure for children. (See Appendix 4)

14. PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographs of children at their activities are often used as part of Nursery displays at the entrance hall, in Nursery and in albums of work. If you have any objection to your child being photographed in Nursery, please let the Nursery teacher know in writing.

You will be asked to complete a form about photography when your child starts Nursery.

15. DATA PROTECTION ACT

Any information you have supplied, any information gathered from or about pupils will be used only for the purpose for which it was provided and any relevant procedures following from this.

This data will be maintained in accordance with the Act and will not be passed on to any other organisation without your prior approval unless this is a legal requirement.

16. SECURITY

The main school and Nursery building have a secure entry system in operation. The Nursery doors are opened at the beginning and end of each Nursery session. If you call at any other times you will need to ring the bell. Should you need to visit the main school, entry is at the main door only, again by using the bell.

The top playground gate is open for entry at morning session only. It is open again at 2.30pm. At other times you should enter the playground by the gate near the car park.

17. ROAD SAFETY

Cars

Concern has been expressed over the childrens' safety in the public car park adjacent to the school. There is neither finance nor space to increase the size of the car park and only continued vigilance by parents can prevent an accident.

With the safety of the children in mind, the BFG (Balloch Fund Raising Group) have drawn up a suggested safety code which we would ask all parents using the car park to adopt.

Safety Code

Driver:

1. **SHARE** or even leave the car at home whenever practical.
2. **DRIVE SLOWLY** in the car park - particularly in icy conditions.

3. **OBSERVE** the one way system.
4. **ESCORT** children to and from your car.
5. **EXERCISE CARE** particularly when reversing.

In the interest of the safety of the pupils using school transport, please **do not** park on the area designated for the school buses on Cherry Park.

18. EARLY CLOSURE

If for any reason it becomes necessary to close the Nursery earlier than usual you will be contacted by telephone. The Education Department advice regarding bad weather is issued to parents annually.

You may also make use of the school 'messaging service' to check whether a school closure is likely - for instructions please see Appendix 2.

19. OPEN DAYS AND PARENTS MEETINGS

There will be occasions throughout the year when you will be invited to attend parent meetings/consultations with the Nursery teacher, or open sessions. These will be intimated on the Nursery notice board and through newsletters.

Please attend them if you can as they are designed to give you more information about what is happening in Nursery, how this affects your child and how your child is progressing.

In addition a written resume of your child's progress will be issued towards the end of the final term. You will have an opportunity to meet formally with the Nursery teacher, twice a year - normally in November and again at the end of May.

If you are concerned about your child's progress at any time during the session you should arrange to speak with Mrs. Flyn. Likewise she will arrange to speak with you if the need arises. Should she not be available when you call, Mrs. Grant or Mrs. Millar will try to help you and will pass your concern on to the Nursery teacher.

20. STAY AND PLAY

During the year you will be invited to spend time in the Nursery to see how an ordinary session operates. This will provide a valuable opportunity to become more familiar with day to day activities in Nursery and to see how your child responds within the setting.

We have had very positive parental response to this initiative and hope you will be able to take advantage of this opportunity.

21. VISITS OUTWITH NURSERY

Taking children out and about is an important feature of Nursery activities. Details of any visit further afield will be intimated on the notice board and you will be provided with all necessary information.

However, it is also likely that impromptu outings will take place as appropriate. When your child starts Nursery you will be asked to sign a consent form giving staff permission to take your child out of the school grounds e.g. for a nature walk. Adequate supervision will be provided at all times.

In accordance with Care Commission guidelines, staff carry out a risk assessment for each outing.

22. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Balloch Nursery is an equal opportunities Nursery in terms of culture, race and gender. We aim to create an ethos where all children are valued and are aware of this. We adhere to Highland Council Multicultural and Anti-racist Guidelines.

Toilet Training

Please note the following quote from Highland Council Guidelines:

- ❖ 'Highland Council has an equal opportunities policy and children cannot be refused admission to Nursery because they are not toilet trained. Talk to parents to ascertain their view of their child's toilet needs. Staff should inform colleagues that they are going to change a child. When possible, staff should make sure that they are in sight and hearing of others. Only Nursery staff should be involved in changing a child. A parent who is visiting the Nursery can only change his/her own child.'

23. CARE COMMISSION

This body has been set up by the Scottish Executive to regulate care services in Scotland, including Early Education and Childcare. We are asked to display information about the Care Commission on our notice board. This includes our Nursery's comments and complaints policy as well as the Care Commission's procedures for complaints.

Under the requirements of the Care Commission you should also be aware that all Nursery policies are available to you should you wish to read them - though be warned this is a mountain of paper work!

24. NEWSLETTER

A Nursery Newsletter will be issued by the Nursery teacher from time to time. In addition you will receive the monthly Balloch School Newsletter which will keep you informed about events, important dates etc.

25. BALLOCH FUND RAISING GROUP

As parents of a Nursery pupil you are also welcome to join the BFG. This group of parents provides valuable support to the school and therefore your child, through fund raising and social events. Please support them. The names of the current BFG committee members are listed in Appendix 1.

Agendas and Minutes of meetings and other items of interest regarding the BFG are displayed on the notice board near the school entrance.

From time to time the Nursery may organise their own fund raising e.g. to provide gifts at Christmas.

26. BALLOCH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL

A Parent Council has been set up consisting of volunteers from the Parent Forum (all parents).

The BSPC has a number of functions and duties, some of which include promoting contact between the school, parents and the community, ascertaining the parents' views and reporting to parents about the various activities being carried out. Other duties include participation in the selection of senior staff.

Agendas and Minutes of meetings and other items of interest regarding the BSPC are displayed on the notice board near the school entrance.

The names of the current BSPC members are listed in Appendix 1.

Finally may I remind you that we are here to help you and to ensure that your child has an enjoyable and fruitful experience in our Nursery. We ask for your support in working with us to nurture your child's interest in learning and self discovery and sincerely hope that the Nursery year will be the beginning of a positive partnership between the school and your family.

CHRISTINE SCOTT (HT)

DECEMBER 2008

Parent Council

Chairperson:	Stephen Sheridan
Vice Chairperson:	Nick Green
Treasurer:	Evelyn Gray
Additional Parent Members:	Karen Halkett Brigette Johnstone Jane MacLennan Lynda Thomson Gillian Spalding Frank Finlayson Steven Maclean Mary Fraser Anne MacPherson Kathleen Mathers Euan Murray Eric Robertson Shirley McKenzie Sheila McKandie
Teacher Representative:	Mrs. Watson + Miss Fordyce + Clare Petrie
Adviser:	Head Teacher - Christine Scott

Balloch Fundraising Group

Chairperson:	Catherine MacKintosh
Vice-Chairperson:	Fiona Thomson
Secretary:	Christine Taylor
Treasurer:	Kathy Henderson
Tracksuit Organiser:	Sarah Crawshaw
Ticket Secretary:	Lorna Murdison
Buyer:	Elaine Wilkinson
Ordinary members:	Helen Macdonald Sheila McKandie Wilma Mackay Jill Robertson Hanna Falkingham Julie Burnside Julie Murphy Liz Stuart Lorna McDermott
Staff Members:	Christine Scott, Clare Petrie, Emma Patience, Judy Naismith

Statement for use by pre-schools

GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY CHILD: Working together

This pre-school education centre works closely with other agencies so that the resources we have will bring the most benefit to families.

The aim is to ensure we have the right services for your child at the right time.

We have a Link Health Visitor, who visits the centre at least once a term. Her/his main role is to offer advice on children's development and to be the lead person if your child requires any extra support. She/he will also liaise with your own Family Health Visitor.

Our centre's Link Health Visitor is: **PAM SAYER**

Telephone number: **01463 706700**

If your child would benefit from help from other agencies, you will usually be asked for permission so that relevant information can be shared. This enables staff to get a rounded picture of your child and means you will not keep being asked for the same information by different people.

If it is believed your child's immediate safety is at risk, we can share their information without consent, enabling us to deal quickly with any potential situation e.g. child protection issues or emergency medical procedures when parents are not present.

(Agreed by Highland GIRFEC + Early Years working group. October 2007)

Pam Sayer is currently on secondment and her post is covered by Shona Davidson