



**Lochyside R. C. Primary**

**School Handbook**

# INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

## SESSION 2010-2011

Lochyside R. C. Primary School  
Lochyside  
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## Lochyside R. C. Primary School

Dear Parent/Guardian

This brochure is intended to give you an overall picture of our school and its organisation, and also to familiarise you with our aims, policies and curriculum.

One of the main aims at Lochyside R. C. Primary School is to foster the intellectual, social and personal development of the pupils. Our success in this undertaking will be greater if home and school combine to form a supportive partnership while your child is with us.

We invite parents to become actively involved in the life of the school as well as in the education of their children.

Violet Smith  
Head Teacher



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## **SCHOOL AIMS**

### **School Mission Statement**

At Lochyside RC Primary School we are engaged in the pursuit of excellence. We present the children with opportunities to develop the four capacities of A Curriculum for Excellence so that they will become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

This will equip them with skills and attitudes for lifelong learning and will prepare them for life beyond school.

Our overall aim is to create a secure, happy and friendly environment where the children are encouraged to develop academically, socially, emotionally and creatively to the best of their ability.

Our commitment as a Catholic school plays a central part as we endeavour to reflect the ideals of our faith in our everyday practice, particularly in the ethos and positive attitude of the school as a whole.

We focus on the development of a community based on genuine care and understanding where each child is respected, valued and encouraged to realise his/her full potential.

This shared vision is supported by a number of strategies including our School Aims.

#### **We aim:**

- 1 To maximise standards of attainment by -
  - providing a curriculum which illustrates breadth and balance in all areas
  - ensuring a coherent and progressive approach to teaching and learning
  - enhancing the ethos of achievement through recognising and celebrating the success of all
  - regular monitoring of progress and achievement
  
- 2 To provide a quality learning environment which stimulates and motivates pupils by -
  - using enterprising learning and teaching practices that encourage enthusiasm, creativity and ambition
  - encouraging positive attitudes in the pupils towards themselves and others
  - ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils through a policy of inclusion

- promoting the health and well-being of all members of the school community
- 3 To make effective provision for pupils with Additional Support Needs by-
- identifying and meeting pupils' individual needs
  - involving pupils in the consultation process regarding IEPs
  - assisting pupils to make optimum use of their abilities and educational opportunities
- 4 To develop in pupils a knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith by -
- working in partnership with home and parish to build a sense of Christian community
  - ensuring the school environment promotes and reflects the values and teachings of the Catholic Church
  - reflecting the liturgical calendar of the Church through planned spiritual services
- 5 To encourage partnership with parents and the community to enhance the quality of pupils' learning and welfare by -
- welcoming parents as active participants in the life of the school
  - recognising the rights of parents to be informed, consulted and involved in the education of their children
  - maintaining co-operative relationships with the Parent Council
  - promoting opportunities for pupils to develop enterprising skills through links with members of the local community
- 6 To enhance professionalism of staff by -
- increasing the collegiate role of all staff
  - ensuring that all staff have opportunities for continuing professional development
  - undertaking CPD courses which respond to individual needs and school priorities
  - liaising with colleagues and staff in other schools to share good practice.

## The School: Accommodation / Facilities

Lochyside R. C. Primary, also known locally as St. Columba's, is a Catholic primary school, situated two miles west of Fort William. The children attending the school are mainly from the areas of Caol, Lochyside, Banavie and Corpach, though a small number do travel from other districts in Fort William and the surrounding area. The roll of the school at present is 89 pupils.

The school was originally a combined Primary and Junior Secondary School, and was opened on 14<sup>th</sup> September 1964. However, the Junior Secondary Department was discontinued a number of years ago, with the remaining secondary children being transferred to Lochaber High School. As a consequence we have inherited excellent space, accommodation and facilities for the primary children. This includes a spacious, well-equipped gymnasium, an art room, a music room, a large resource base, a support for learning base and a spacious library.

In addition to the large stone playground at the front of the school, we have a large grass area at the rear of the school. These are used for play by the children during morning interval and lunch breaks. The grass is also suitable for outdoor class games, as well as for football and our School Sports in the summer. The children are supervised at all times in the playground.

An Eco Garden has been developed within the school grounds. This provides an outdoor classroom for the pupils to enhance their learning experiences.



## **Staff** **Teaching**

Head Teacher	:	Miss Violet Smith
Principal Teacher	:	Mrs Moira Murphy
Class Teachers	:	Mrs Helen MacDonald Mrs Jane Hutcheson Mrs Elaine Cameron Mrs Carol Tait
Support for Learning Teacher	:	Mrs Moyra Austin

## **CCR Teachers**

Physical Education	:	Mrs Sandra Chisholm
Technology/Art	:	Mr Andrew Sturrock

## **Visiting Instructors**

Piping	:	Miss Margaret MacMaster
Brass	:	Mr Mark Reynolds
Woodwind	:	Miss Karen Thomson
Violin	:	Vacancy

## **Non-Teaching Staff**

Clerical Assistant	:	Mrs Aileen Duncan
Classroom Assistants	:	Mrs Abigail Wineberg Mrs Veronica Berrie Mrs Christine Innes
Support for Learning Auxiliaries	:	Mrs Mary Lamont Mrs Moira Faryma Mrs Nicola Michie
Janitor	:	Mrs Margaret Taylor
Dining-Room Assistant	:	Mrs Katherine-Anne Munro

## Enrolment

Lochyside RC Primary School does not have a Nursery. Children enrolling in our Primary One class come from various local Nursery Schools. Children who are due to begin school in August are usually enrolled the previous February. Enrolment of new entrants is advertised in advance. Parents who are considering enrolling their children are most welcome to visit the school to meet the Head Teacher. An appointment can be arranged by telephoning the school.

During the summer term, normally in June, a visit to the school by the new entrants and their parents is arranged. This visit gives the children and parents the opportunity to meet the Primary One teacher. The children spend some time in the classroom where they are encouraged to participate in some creative activities, while their parents are given a guided tour of the school, and are given an opportunity to view and discuss educational materials and resources. Parents are served tea or coffee at this time.

Before this visit, the Primary One teacher will have spent a day in the local Nursery Schools. This allows the teacher to meet the children within a setting they know, thus helping to promote as easy a transition into school as possible for the children. School staff liaise closely with Nursery School staff.



## Organisation of the School Day

School hours for the children are as follows:

Primary 1 - 3 : 9.00 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.  
1.30 p.m. - 2.45 p.m.

Primary 4 - 7 : 9.00 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.  
1.30 p.m. - 3.15 p.m.

- Morning Interval : 10.30 a.m. - 10.45 a.m.
- Lunchtime : 12.30 p.m. - 1.30 p.m.

The school premises are opened for the children at 8.45 a.m. and between then and 9.00 a.m. when classes begin, the children are supervised in the playground by the janitor. The children are also supervised in the playground during morning interval and throughout lunchtime by auxiliary staff.

When the weather is not good enough for the children to go outside at playtime, they remain in their classrooms for their break. This is also the arrangement during the lunch break. The vast majority of the children remain in school throughout lunchtime and, given the difficulties of close supervision of such large numbers during this period, good, responsible and sensible behaviour by the children is particularly important and is something we insist on. A copy of our Wet Weather Policy is issued to parents at the start of the school session.

## Transport

Buses travel between the school and Corpach. The times are approximately as follows:

To School : Corpach : 8.40 a.m.

Lochyside School : 8.55 a.m.

Caol (Lochy Bar) : 8.40 a.m.

Lochyside School : 8.50 a.m.



From School : Lochyside School : 2.50 p.m. 3.15 p.m.

Caol : 2.55 p.m. 3.20 p.m.

Corpach : 3.05 p.m. 3.30 p.m.

▶ A bus to Glenfinnan leaves the school at 3.15 p.m.

Class teachers escort the children to the school buses at the end of the school day.

A member of staff supervises the children at the school bus lay-by and she sees the children onto the buses.

The staff continuously stress to the children the importance of good, responsible and sensible behaviour, both while travelling on the bus and when getting off the bus and walking home. It is important that parents give similar advice to the children.

A few children living in Fort William travel by other service buses. Though arrangements for this are the responsibility of the parents, the school does what it can to assist and co-operate with these.



## School Term Dates Session 2010 - 2011

### School Opens

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2010 (staff)  
Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2010 (pupils)  
Monday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2010  
Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2011  
Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2011

### School Closes

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2010  
Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2010  
Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2011  
Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2011

- In - Service Days:

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2010  
Monday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2010  
Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2011  
Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2011  
Friday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2011  
June 2011 (date to be confirmed)

- Mid-Term Holiday

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2011  
Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2011

- May Day Holiday

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2011

## **CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE**

Scotland's education system is currently undergoing a major change. The new curriculum is called the Curriculum for Excellence.

The Curriculum for Excellence aims to provide greater choice and opportunity for pupils, and a single, coherent curriculum for all young people from 3 years of age to 18 years of age.

At Lochside R.C. Primary School our overall aim is to ensure that the curriculum takes into account the different learning styles of pupils so that they meet the four capacities of the Curriculum for Excellence.

We aim to enable all pupils to become:-

- successful learners
- confident individuals
- responsible citizens
- effective contributors

The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant educational experience for the children. We do this by means of a planned curriculum.

The curriculum is divided into eight parts:

- Languages and Literacy
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Social Studies
- Health and Wellbeing
- Expressive Arts
- Religious and Moral Education
- Sciences
- Technologies

### **Languages and Literacy**

Language development in the school includes the four elements of reading, writing, talking and listening. Talking and listening are developed in a variety of ways, in a range of contexts, at every stage in the school. They are seen as not only important in themselves, but also very closely linked to reading and writing skills.

Our approach to **READING** extends beyond teaching the children to be able to recognise and say words on the printed page. We aim to develop further skills of comprehension and reading for a variety of different purposes. Alongside this, we try, in a variety of ways, to develop in the children an enjoyment and pleasure in reading for itself.

Much of the reading and the wider language work done by the children is centred on The Highland Literacy Project which runs systematically and progressively throughout the school, from Primary One to Primary Seven. The children, beginning early in Primary One, take home books from the reading scheme for home reading. Parents are invited to share in the process of helping children to read, and the co-operation and support of parents in hearing the children read, talking with them about the stories, and encouraging them is particularly important.

In **WRITING**, a similar, broad approach is adopted. Personal, imaginative and factual writing are all developed. The children are taught to write in different forms - stories, poems, letters, reports, notes, plays, recipes and so on - for a variety of purposes.

The presentation as well as the content of writing is important, and the children are taught to write legibly and correctly. Punctuation, spelling, grammar, sentence construction and handwriting are taught systematically through the school.

In practice, the various elements of language - reading and writing, talking and listening - are often integrated; and though much is done as separate study, they are frequently developed through other areas of the curriculum, particularly in project or topic work, where the skill being developed can be given a real and meaningful context.

### **Modern Languages**

In accordance with National Guidelines, we include the teaching of a foreign language in the curriculum. The foreign language is French, and it is taught to pupils in Primaries 5, 6 and 7.

The aims are to encourage the children to have confidence in expressing themselves in a second language, and to increase their awareness of another culture.

The main emphasis is to deliver the language to the children in an enjoyable, active and motivating way. This is achieved through the provision of a wide range of activities including games, songs, role-play and story-telling as well as direct teaching of simple vocabulary and language structures.

### **Mathematics and Numeracy**

The mathematics taught in the school is wide-ranging and includes not only number, but also measure (length, weight, volume, capacity, time) and shape. Our approach stresses the importance of the children understanding mathematical concepts and ideas, developed through working with practical materials, as well as teaching skills and processes of computation. Problem solving and the relation of maths to realistic and meaningful situations is prominent. The children are given the experience of working with calculators where appropriate.

The use of computers by the children is firmly embedded at all stages. Each class has access to computers and to a wide range of software.

It should be emphasised that what parents recognise as traditional elements of primary maths - memorisation of multiplication tables and other number facts and so on - remain very important; and, again, this is one area where support at home by parents for such work and practice, often given by teachers as homework, is crucial.

The school uses a wide range of resources including the Scottish Heinemann Mathematics Scheme. The children work through a programme of work progressively, their rate of progress being determined by their ability so that those who are capable of it are being stretched, while children who need longer to learn and consolidate certain processes are not being pushed on more quickly than they can cope with, but are given more time and extra assistance.

The Scottish Heinemann Mathematics Scheme is supplemented with additional materials as appropriate.

Active maths is prominent at all stages throughout the school.

## **Social Studies**

Through our Social Studies programme the pupils develop their understanding of the world by learning about other people and their values, in different times, places and circumstances. They also develop a deeper understanding of the environment, as well as their understanding of the history, heritage and culture of Scotland. This helps to give them an appreciation of their local and national heritage within the world. Much of this work is approached through projects or topics, in which a range of subjects and skills (history and geography, reading and writing, art and craft, music and drama, etc.) will be involved in an integrated way.

As the pupils participate in experiences and outcomes in Social Studies they develop an understanding of their own

In all such studies, we are concerned not only with factual content, but also with the development of skills, ideas and attitudes through which real understanding is achieved and which will form the basis for future study.

## **Health and Wellbeing**

Health and Wellbeing is divided into physical, social and emotional health. It is delivered across the curriculum through areas such as drama, art, language, maths and moral education.

- Physical Health explores physical factors in relation to our health and looking after ourselves e.g. exploring changes in the body, identifying ways of crossing the road safely and recognizing the harmful effects of smoking, alcohol, solvents and illegal drugs.
- Emotional Health explores emotions, feelings and relationships and how they affect our mental well being e.g. learning to share and care for others and reflecting on experiences and ways of dealing with problems, e.g. loss, bullying, drug misuse.
- Social Health explores the interaction of the individual, the community and the environment in relation to health and safety e.g. dealing with litter, practicing personal safety strategies and exploring ways of helping the school to be a health promoting school.

We provide the children with a variety of health promoting initiatives including healthy fruit for Primaries 1 and 2, access to drinking fountains, a healthy tuck shop, a wide range of sporting activities and citizenship projects.

### **Expressive Arts**

The expressive arts encompass a range of activities and experiences - art and craft, music, movement and drama, physical education.

In each of these areas, the children are given a broad range of activities and experiences.

**Art and Design:** The children are taught a variety of different skills and techniques. In addition to drawing, painting and modelling there are ample opportunities for studying subtleties of colour and texture to be found in materials such as stones, bark, shells, plants, etc. Printing and collage work are also included in the art and craft programme.

**Music:** Opportunities exist for the pupils to take part in a wide range of musical activities including singing, music-making, listening to music and formal instrumental work. Instruction is available, at certain stages, for recorder, chanter, violin, brass instruments and woodwind instruments.

Various classes participate in the Highland Youth Music Initiative. We encourage our pupils to participate in the local Music Festival.

**Physical Education** : The children are given a balanced programme of gymnastics, games, movement and dance. Girls in Primaries 6 and 7 take part in local netball tournaments. The boys in the upper stages take part in the local primary football league. Children in Primary 5 are allocated weekly periods for swimming instruction at the Lochaber Leisure Centre during the spring and summer terms.

Classes have a minimum of two hours P.E. lessons per week.

The school works closely with the Active Schools Co-ordinator who provides a wide range of sporting opportunities for the pupils throughout the year.

**Drama:** Pupils in all classes are given the opportunity of participating in improvisation, role play and mime as well as scripted plays. Drama is delivered through scripted plays in reading books, dramatisation of bible stories, acting out situations e.g. calling emergency services, keeping safe near roads and a variety of situations in personal and social development. Occasionally we have the opportunity to work with the Eden Court drama outreach worker.

### **Religious and Moral Education**

Religious and Moral Education in a Catholic school such as ours is something which cannot be confined to a timetabled lesson, but forms the whole ethos and attitude of the school. The principle aim of our religious and moral education is to foster faith - to help the children towards a knowledge and sense of God in their lives and in the world. This can be done, not only by what we say to the children, but by what we do and how we live as a community. At the same time, we do have a very specific programme of religious and moral education which runs systematically and progressively through the school, and includes the elements of doctrine, sacraments and liturgy, moral education and prayer.

The teaching is based largely on the Veritas Alive-O Scheme. The children receive daily lessons in religious and moral education from their own class teacher. The children in Primary 4 are given thorough preparation for the sacraments. Our links with the local parish of St. John's are very close. We work closely with the local parish priest, who visits the school pastorally, celebrates Masses and other services with us and shares with us the joint planning of parish celebrations in which the children and staff are involved. Worship is both an end and a means of religious and moral education, and alongside daily class prayer and periodic class prayer services we have Class Masses and Masses for the whole school. At School Masses we are happy to have the participation of parents, families and parishioners.

Our approach in religious and moral education is similar to that in other areas of the curriculum, in that the teaching is geared towards the age and level of understanding of the child; it takes as its starting point the actual concrete experience of the child and moves from that to the specific religious message - from, for example, the experience the child has of the beauty of everyday things in nature to an appreciation of nature as God's creation and gift.

Although the R.M.E. in the school mainly focuses on the Christian religion as this forms a background against which a pupil can generally appreciate the social and moral values being projected by the school, we also endeavour to give the children an understanding and appreciation of Other World Religions.

The school is obliged to advise parents that they have a legal right to have their child withdrawn from religious and moral education.

### **Sciences**

Through their learning in Sciences, the pupils develop their interest in, and understanding of, the living, material and physical world.

They are presented with a wide range of investigative tasks which allows them to develop important skills to become creative, inventive and enterprising adults in a world where skills and knowledge of the Sciences are needed across all sectors of the economy.

### **Technologies**

Through their learning in Technologies, the pupils are provided with frequent opportunities for active learning in creative contexts.

They are given opportunities to develop:

- \*problem-solving skills
- \*planning and organisational skills
- \*skills in ICT
- \*skills in collaborating, leading and interacting with others
- \*skills in using tools, equipment, software and materials

The school is well-equipped with computers, printers, and an interactive whiteboard.

## **Enterprise Education**

One of our priorities is to ensure that every pupil has an opportunity to participate in at least two Enterprise Projects each year.

We aim to develop enterprising attitudes and skills through learning and teaching across the school. We encourage independent thinking, creativity and positive attitudes to entrepreneurship.

## **Equal Opportunities**

In all areas, Lochyside R. C. Primary School conforms to the principle of Equal Opportunities, and access to all subjects is provided to all pupils without reference to the sex of the pupil.

## **Multi-Cultural and Anti-Racist Policy**

Issues of multi-cultural and anti-racist education are of growing relevance in our society.

As a school, we have a special responsibility not only for combating racism but also for promoting mutual understanding and respect for other people's cultural identity and beliefs.

Our aim is to provide equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender, class or ability. We aim to create an environment in which shared cultural experiences provide the basis for mutual understanding of other backgrounds and beliefs.

Lochyside R. C. Primary School:-

- a) is opposed to all forms of prejudice and discrimination;
- b) provides equality of opportunity through its ethos and working practices;
- c) promotes understanding and respect for other people's cultural identity and beliefs;

- d) aligns itself with the Authority's Anti-Racist and Multi-Cultural Guidelines for Primary and Nursery Schools, and the Race Equality Policy.

Incidents of a racist nature will be logged and the action pursued as a result will be recorded.

### **Assessment and Reporting**

Our priorities for assessment are:

- a) To give a continuous and cumulative picture of the child's performance.
- b) To give the teacher information.
- c) To support and develop the strengths and weaknesses of the child.
- d) To give the parents information.

Assessment of the children's work and progress is done continuously by the teacher in her day-to-day observation of the class.

In addition, the class teacher may carry out routine tests in order to monitor progress, identify difficulties, recognise strengths and to plan programmes of work which take the needs of the child into account.

As part of forward planning, records are kept by staff of the work carried out in class.

Assessment records are kept as a cumulative record of each child's progress, to give teacher's information, to support and develop individual strength and weaknesses of each child and to report to parents.

At the end of the year reports are sent out to parents. Detailed pupil profiles are completed at the end of P7 for transfer to Secondary School.

## National Assessments

National Assessments are administered each year (as appropriate) as a means of confirming the teacher's judgement about a pupil's attainment.

Children are tested using National Assessments ONLY when the teacher is confident that the children have completed one level in Reading or Mathematics and are ready to move on to the next level.

The definition of levels is as follows:-

Level A : Should be attainable in the course of Pr.1 - Pr.3 by almost all pupils.

Level B : Should be attainable by some pupils in Pr.3 or even earlier, but certainly by most pupils in Pr.4

Level C : Should be attainable in the course of Pr.4 - Pr.6 by most pupils.

Level D : Should be attainable by some pupils in Pr.5 - Pr.6 or even earlier, but certainly by most in Pr.7 .

Level E : Should be attainable by some pupils in Pr.7 - S1, but certainly by most in S2.

It is important to emphasise that National Assessment is part of the ongoing process of teaching and learning, and does not disrupt the normal work of the class.

Parents are notified in the Homework Diary when their child has successfully attained a new level.

## Raising Standards - Setting Targets

The national Target Setting initiative aims to improve standards of attainment in Scottish schools.

Literacy and numeracy are priority areas because they are essential core skills for everyday life. They provide the basis for improvements in all other areas of the curriculum.

Every school is expected to make its contribution to national improvement by setting its own targets to improve within a consistent framework.

The table below indicates our school's attainment in Reading, Writing and Mathematics over the past three years.

### Percentage of pupils attaining or exceeding minimum 5-14 levels for their stage

Target Measure		Present level of performance (June 2007) % P3, P4, P6 and P7 roll attaining or exceeding minimum 5-14 levels for their stage.	Present level of performance (June 2008) % P3, P4, P6 and P7 roll attaining or exceeding minimum 5-14 levels for their stage.	Present level of performance (June 2009) % P3, P4, P6 and P7 roll attaining or exceeding minimum 5-14 levels for their stage.
Reading	School	86	88	88
Writing	School	84	79	84
Mathematics	School	93	92	98

## **Supporting the Role of Parents**

We believe that parents have a vital role to play in their children's early literacy/numeracy development.

Our aim is to raise parents' awareness of ways in which they can support the work of the school and promote learning at home.

Pupils in Primaries 1, 2 and 3 are given a Home Pack each week. The Literacy Home Pack contains a range of carefully chosen books and activities which are designed to be educational and fun. The Science Home Pack contains a simple experiment or task to be carried out at home.

Parents are encouraged to work through the Home Packs with their children, and feedback from both children and parents is welcomed. In order to further develop home-school links we deliver workshops for parents in the school at regular intervals.

## **Parents' Evenings**

Parents' Evenings are arranged twice a year (November and June), when parents are invited to view their children's work and to discuss their performance with the class teachers.

A formal written report is sent home to parents prior to the final Parents' Evening.

As we highly value parental involvement, we ask parents to contact the school at any time if they are concerned about their child's progress. An appointment can be readily arranged to consult with the class teacher or Head Teacher.

## Support for Learning

In the school all children are supported for a variety of purposes.

We are committed to meeting the needs of each child. Any child experiencing learning difficulties will be given help through "in class" support, either by the class teacher or the Support for Learning Teacher.

Our Support for Learning Teacher attends three days a week. Much of her time is directed towards working with the Primary One and Primary Two classes so as to enhance the children's early literacy and numeracy skills as outlined in the Early Intervention Programme.

She supports the other class teachers by providing help for children who may be having particular difficulties or problems in some area of their work.

For part of her time, she works in the classroom with the class teacher. When team-teaching in the classroom with the class teacher the Support for Learning teacher works with children of all abilities.

The remainder of her time is spent either working with small groups or individuals extracted from the classroom for specific reasons, or in an advisory and consultative role, - helping the class teacher to plan programmes of work for children who have particular difficulties.

Where a child appears to be experiencing more serious problems, he/she may be referred to the Educational Psychologist, after consultation with the parents. The Psychologist will come to the school to carry out an assessment of the child. She will then provide parents and school with a report which will be helpful in identifying a particular problem and indicating possible strategies which might be adopted by the teachers.

## Homework

Homework is set in every class as a matter of school policy.

Research has shown that the completion of homework has a very positive and significant effect on achievement, and it embeds positive learning habits for life long learning.

Parents, carers and other family members can and do make a real difference to children's education. When parents and schools work together children do better.

Parents who show an interest in their children's homework and talk to them about it really help them to learn. With support and encouragement, children find it easier to get into the homework habit.

### PURPOSES

- It allows consolidation of work done in school
- It allows children to prepare for the work to come
- It develops research skills such as using libraries and other resources which may not be available in the classroom
- It provides opportunities for individualised work
- It provides structured opportunities for parental involvement and support
- It provides information for parents about the on-going work of the class
- It encourages the children to develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for learning
- It develops good habits of independence and self-discipline in learning
- It trains pupils in planning and organising their time

### HOW AND WHEN IS HOMEWORK GIVEN OUT?

Pupils are given homework weekly, usually on Monday, and it should be handed in to the teacher on Friday unless the teacher informs the pupils and parents otherwise. Class teachers will always explain carefully their

personal procedures to their pupils, and parents will find a note in the child's homework diary to clarify the homework arrangements.

Homework is given as a weekly assignment to help the pupils from an early age to plan when to do their homework. It also allows flexibility if children have other activities on during the week, (for example swimming).

Homework is not usually given out during the first week of each term.

## **HOMework DIARIES**

To help both the parent and the pupil to focus on the homework each pupil has a diary with the activities noted inside.

Pupils are able to choose which activities they are going to complete each night. By planning, choosing and organising their homework activities the pupils are given an opportunity to achieve the four capacities outlined in A Curriculum for Excellence:

- **Successful Learners**
  - Enthusiasm and motivation for learning
  - Learn independently
  - Use literacy and numeracy skills
  - Determination to reach high standards of achievement
  - Take more responsibility for their own learning
  - Practise and build on what they have learned at school
  
- **Effective Contributors**
  - Develop confidence to deal with frustrations, overcome difficulties and solve problems
  - Learn how to organise and manage their time
  
- **Confident Individuals**
  - Achieve success in different areas of activity
  - Manage to organise and timetable homework activities
  - Encourage independence

- **Responsible Citizens**
  - Make informed choices
  - Develop knowledge and understanding of the world
  - Evaluate environmental and scientific issues
  - Learn and work independently in the future

The homework diary should be used by both parent and teacher to pass on any comments about homework.

It should be signed daily by the parent to indicate that he/she has overseen the child's homework and is happy with the effort that has been put in by the child.

A copy of our Homework Policy is issued to parents at the start of each school session.

## **School Rules and Discipline**

We believe that developing a responsible attitude and self-discipline is the combined responsibility of the parents and the school.

We aim at a system of self-discipline rather than enforced discipline.

School rules are mainly concerned with the safety and well-being of the children (e.g. no running in corridors, no leaving of the school grounds, no snowballs in winter).

The children are expected to behave in a socially acceptable manner, to treat other pupils with consideration and fairness, to show respect to members of staff and visitors and to respect school property.

Bad behaviour may result in the withdrawal of certain privileges. Parents will be informed of any serious breach of school rules or persistent bad behaviour.

Politeness, good manners and a healthy respect for, and commitment to, the school is encouraged by all the staff, by precept and example.

The Golden Rules are displayed throughout the school and all pupils are encouraged to follow them:-

- Do be gentle, don't hurt anybody.
- Do be kind and helpful; don't hurt people's feelings.
- Do be honest, don't cover up the truth.
- Do work hard, don't waste time.
- Do look after property, don't waste or damage things.
- Do listen to people, don't interrupt.

## **School Uniform**

The school encourages pupils to wear the official school uniform. We believe that this helps pupils to identify closely with the school and, as a consequence, develop a loyalty to it.

The following items can be purchased from the school office :

- A navy-blue school sweatshirt with a lilac emblem costs £7.00
- Hooded sweatshirts cost £9.00
- Polo shirts cost £5.00
- Fleece jackets cost £12.00
- School ties cost £3.50

We suggest that the children wear a grey/dark coloured skirt or trousers and a white or blue shirt, blouse or polo shirt.

Pupils representing the school in inter-school events or on public occasions are always expected to wear school uniform.

Shorts and tee-shirts are required for P.E. The children may wear either trainers or gym shoes in the gym, but outdoor shoes are not permitted.

Please note that the wearing of football strips is not permitted in the school.

- We recommend that parents label any items of clothing which are likely to be confused with those belonging to other children.

## **Pupil Welfare**

### **Health Care**

The school nurse, Nurse Gibson, attends the school regularly to carry out routine medical checks. She usually attends on Wednesday mornings.

The school doctor attends during the term to examine the children at certain points in their school career. Parents are notified in writing, and are requested to be present at such examinations.

The speech and language therapist works with a small number of children identified as having specific speech problems. Parents are fully consulted in such cases.

### **Injury or Illness at school**

Minor cuts or bruises are treated by members of staff in our well-equipped Medical Room.

In the event of a more serious injury occurring, the child is taken to the Belford Hospital, with the parents being informed as soon as possible.

In cases of illness, the child is taken home or to the emergency address. We emphasise the importance of supplying the school with up-to-date information regarding home address, telephone number, parent's place of work and the name and number of a friend who can be contacted if the parents are unavailable.

### **Administration of Medicines**

Some children may require to take medication in order that they can continue to attend school.

Parents are kindly requested to note that:

- a child may only take medication (including non-prescription) if the parent/guardian has given written permission

- only medication supplied by the parent/guardian will be administered to a child
- pupils will take medication only when supervised by an adult
- parents should deliver the medication to school but if this is not possible the pupil should hand in the medication to the class teacher upon arrival at the school

### **Doctor or Dentist Appointments**

If a child has to attend the doctor or dentist within school hours, it would be helpful if parents would send a note of the appointment time to the class teacher.

### **Absence from school**

Parents are expected to ensure that their children attend school regularly.

On returning to school following an absence, each child must bring a brief note of explanation advising the class teacher of the reason for the absence.

If a child is likely to be absent for one week or more, parents should contact the school and advise accordingly.

- ❖ **Parents are discouraged from taking children on holiday during term time. However, if this cannot be avoided, parents should write to the Head Teacher requesting permission.**

### **Holidays Taken Outwith The Normal School Holiday Period**

Our school has embarked on a continuing programme of raising standards of achievement, part of which is targeted at reducing absences from schools. All schools are involved, and have set targets for reducing absence.

While the vast majority of parents plan family holidays within the allocated 12 weeks during the year, there has been an increasing trend for some parents to remove pupils from school during term time.

Parents are encouraged to carefully consider the implications on your son or daughter's education if you decide to remove him or her from school for a family holiday. It is acknowledged that, for some parents, it is not always possible to plan a holiday in the designated school holiday periods. For some parents, summer is a very busy time and a holiday cannot be taken then but we would encourage you to use the two-week October holiday period if you are in this category.

When considering whether or not to exercise your right to remove your child from school for a family holiday, please be aware that such a decision:

- will result in a significant loss in classroom experience;
- will result in a pressure to 'catch up' on missed work by pupils;
- could result in pupils missing assessments with consequential impact on pupils and teachers;
- could result in the loss of curricular activities;
- will affect school attendance records and efforts to raise standards of attendance.

Under guidance from the Scottish Executive, most family holidays will be coded as an unauthorised absence; only in exceptional cases will the absence be recorded as authorised.

Parents are asked to be aware of these considerations when making decisions on planning holidays during term time. Holiday dates are included in this brochure to aid you in your planning of any holidays you may be considering. If you do decide to make holiday arrangements during term, you should confirm this in writing to the Head Teacher.

## Attendance and Absence Rates for School Year 2008/2009

The following figures indicate the Attendance and Absence Rates for Lochyside R. C. Primary School for the 2008/2009 School Year. The attendance figures are in terms of pupil half days.

### **Attendance And Absence For School Year 2008-2009**

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P1-P7
Total Number of Possible Attendances (Pupil Half Days)	5,474	3,344	4,388	7,088	4,564	5,289	6,804	36,951
Percentage Authorised Absences	4.2	2.5	3.7	5.1	3.4	3.3	1.7	3.5
Percentage Unauthorised Absences	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.2	0.8	0.1	0.4

### Minimising Overall Absence

The table below indicates the average number of half days absence per pupil for the past three sessions. We aim to minimise our overall absence to 12 half days absence per pupil by June 2010.

Target Measure		Absence recorded (2006-2007) Average number of half days absence per pupil	Absence recorded (2007-2008) Average number of half days absence per pupil	Absence recorded (2008-2009) Average number of half days absence per pupil
Absence	School	16.7	16.2	14.9
	Education Authority	17.0	17.1	17.5
	National	17.9	18.6	18.3

## **School Meals**

School meals are provided at the school. They are cooked in the kitchen on the premises. The children are supervised by the dining room auxiliary.

The cost of a school meal is currently £1.65 per day. We ask that payment is made on Monday morning for the week ahead. Cheques should be made payable to "Highland Council".

Families receiving Income Support are eligible for free school meals. Application forms are available from the school. When completed, forms should be submitted to the Regional Client Officer, Catering & Cleaning Services, 30 Harbour Road, Inverness, IV1 1UA.

## **Packed Lunches**

Packed lunches are also eaten in the dining-room. Please note:

- ❖ glass bottles/containers are not permitted under the Health and Safety Regulations
- ❖ vacuum flasks containing hot liquid are not permitted because of the danger of scalding
- ❖ water beakers are available in the dining room.

## **Health Promoting Status**

Lochyside RC Primary School is a Health Promoting School. We achieved accreditation Level 4 in February 2005, and we continue to satisfy the criteria for Health Promoting Schools.

## **Eco Schools Status**

Lochyside RC Primary School was awarded the Silver Award by Eco Schools Scotland in April 2008.

Green Flag Status was achieved in November 2008.

We are currently working towards achieving our second Green Flag.

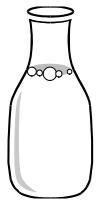
## Tuck Shop

In line with our priority to maintain health promoting status, we have made many significant changes to our school tuckshop.

The Pupil Council carried out a whole school survey to ascertain the views of all pupils on the type of items which should/should not be available in our tuckshop.

Fizzy juice has been replaced by bottled water (natural and flavoured).

Fresh fruit, dried fruit, breadsticks and yoghurts are also available daily.



Milk is on sale each day in the school dining-room.

The healthy items have proved to be extremely popular with the pupils.



The healthy tuckshop is helping to promote positive attitudes to healthy food and form healthy eating habits.

Our overall aim is to provide the children with access to a choice of foods with reduced fat, sugar and salt contents, which will satisfy their hunger as well as improving their health.

Our 'Healthy Snack Days' are Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. On these days the children should bring a healthy snack for eating at the morning interval.

Crisps, sweets and fizzy juice are discouraged on these days.

## **Highland Council Child Protection Policy**

All agencies involved in Child Protection are obliged to make the welfare of children their paramount consideration.

In terms of its Child Protection Guidelines the Authority imposes a duty on schools and on all staff to report, by way of laid down referral procedures, any incidents which may give rise to a suspicion that a pupil has been subjected to abuse in any of its forms.

Further information about Child Protection Procedures within Highland can be obtained from the Child Protection Development Officer.  
Telephone - 01463 703483.

## **Drugs Misuse Incidents**

In line with Highland Council's recommendation, Lochside R. C. Primary School endorses the Scottish Executive Guidelines for the Management of Incidents of Drugs Misuse in Schools.

Any incidents of Drugs Misuse will be reported and dealt with in line with Highland Council Policy.

## **Data Protection**

In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the school ensures that any information which parents have supplied about their children will be used only for the purpose for which it was provided and any relevant procedures following from this.

The data will be maintained in accordance with the Act and will not be passed onto any other organisation without the prior approval of parents unless there is a legal requirement.

## **Transferring Educational Data About Pupils**

Education authorities and the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) have collected data about pupils on paper forms for many years. We are now working together to transfer data electronically through the ScotXed programme.

### **What pupil data will be collected and transferred?**

Data on each pupil is collected by local authorities and SEED. The data collected and transferred covers areas such as date of birth, postcode, registration for free-school meals, whether a pupil is looked after by his or her local authority, additional support needs including disability, attendance, absence and exclusions from school. Pupil names and addresses are collected by their school and education authority but they are not passed to SEED. Your postcode is the only part of your address that is transferred. Data is held securely and no information on individual pupils can or would be published by SEED.

Providing national identity and ethnic background data is entirely voluntary. You can choose the 'not disclosed' option if you do not want to provide this data. However, we hope that the explanations contained in this message and on our website will help you understand the importance of providing the data.

### **Why do we need your data?**

In order to make the best decisions about how to improve our education service, SEED and education authorities need accurate, up-to-date data about our pupils. We are keen to help all our pupils do well in all aspects of school life and achieve better exam results. Accurate and up-to-date data allows SEED, education authorities and schools to:

- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of all pupils
- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of specific groups of pupils
- better understand some of the factors that influence pupil attainment and achievement
- target resources better

## **Your data protection rights**

The collection, transfer, processing and sharing of ScotXed data is done in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). We also comply with the National Statistics Code of Practice requirements and other legislation related to safeguarding the confidentiality of data. The Data Protection Act gives you the right to know how we will use your data. This message can give only a brief description of how we use data. Fuller details of the uses of pupil data can be found on the ScotXed website ([www.scotxed.net](http://www.scotxed.net)).

SEED works with a range of partners including HM Inspectorate of Education and the Scottish Qualifications Authority. On occasion, we will make individual data available to partners and also academic institutions to carry out research and statistical analysis. In addition, we will provide our partners with information they need in order to fulfil their official responsibilities. Any sharing of data will be done under the strict control and prior agreement of the Data Sharing Panel in SEED, which will ensure that no individual level data will be made public as a result of the data sharing and that the data will not be used to take any actions in respect of an individual.

## **Concerns**

If you have any concerns about the ScotXed data collections you can email the Senior Statistician, Peter Whitehouse, at [Peter.Whitehouse@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Peter.Whitehouse@scotland.gsi.gov.uk) or write to The ScotXed Support Office, SEED, Area 1B, Victoria Quay, Leith, EH6 6QQ. Alternative versions of this page are available, on request from the ScotXed Support Office, in other languages, audio tape, Braille and large print.

## **Want more information?**

Further details about ScotXed data exchanges are available on the ScotXed website, [www.scotxed.net](http://www.scotxed.net).

## **Filming and Photography - School Events**

The safety and protection of children are key concerns.

In line with Highland Council Guidelines we ask parents to advise the school if they do not wish their child to be photographed or filmed by any spectator or member of an audience at a school event.

If any parental objection is received, unofficial photography/filming will not be allowed.

## **School Website**

Information on various aspects of our school can be found on our school website.

The website address is:-

[www.lochyside.highland.sch.uk](http://www.lochyside.highland.sch.uk)

The website is regularly updated.

Contributions and suggestions from parents are most welcome.

## **Liaison With Parents**

Parents are encouraged to take an active interest in the work of the school.

Regular newsletters are sent to parents giving information regarding forth-coming events, holiday dates, etc.

During Parents' Evenings, we have a room in the school where parents are welcome to meet over tea or coffee. In this room, we set out a display of materials and resources which are used by the children. Parents have an opportunity to view these resources, and to discuss them with staff if desired.

In the course of the school year we have various social occasions. These include:

1. A School Fete - run by staff and parents in aid of school funds.
2. Christmas Concert - this involves every child in the school
3. First Communion/Confirmation - celebration in the school at which the whole community of school, church and parish come together.
4. Book Fairs - held twice a year.
5. Sports Day - held in the summer term.
6. School Discos.

The school is very appreciative of the support given by parents.

Parents should not hesitate to make contact with the school on any matter which they are concerned about. We always welcome communication from parents.

### **Parent Council**

Lochyside R. C. Primary has an active Parent Council.

The members of the Parent Council are:-

- > **Parent Members:**
  - Mrs Elaine Brayshaw - Chairperson
  - Mrs Anne Marie MacRae - Treasurer
  - Mrs Sandra Davies
  - Mrs Sarah Munro
  - Ms Nicola Bowie
  - Mrs Carol McDermott
  - Mrs Claire MacLeod
  - Mrs Margaret MacKinnon

- **Co-opted Members:**  
Father Roddy Johnston  
Mrs Pauline MacEachen  
Mrs Elaine Cameron - Staff Representative

### **The Role of the Parent Council is:-**

- to support the school in its work with parents
- to represent the views of all parents
- to encourage links between the school, parents, pupils and the wider community
- to report back to the Parent Forum (every parent with a child at the school.)

Meetings are held in the school every six weeks. Minutes of the meetings are displayed on the school noticeboard.

Further information about the Parental Involvement Act 2006 and Parent Councils can be found on the internet: [www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk](http://www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk)

### **Pupil Council**

Lochyside RC Primary School has an active and enthusiastic Pupil Council.

Our aim is to encourage all the children in our school to take responsibility for helping to maintain a happy, safe and caring environment - a community in which everyone tries their hardest to respect and care for each other.

Through the Pupil Council, each child knows that they have an opportunity to voice their opinion in all aspects of school life.

Pupil Council meetings are held once a month.

Agenda items are discussed. Minutes are taken and put to the classes for further discussion and consultation. Ideas are presented to the Head Teacher for discussion. Minutes of meetings are displayed on the Pupil Council Noticeboard.

The Pupil Council has two representatives from Primaries 4,5,6 and 7.  
Representatives on the Pupil Council are:-

Primary 7 : Chloe MacKay  
: Emily Cameron

Primary 6 : Jodie McDermott  
: Liam Gillanders

Primary 5 : Ryan Henderson  
: Rachel Rogan

Primary 4 : Zuzia Kruk  
: Sophie Munro

Staff Representative : Mrs J Hutcheson

### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

The pupils are given the opportunity to participate in a range of extra-curricular activities. These include netball, football, art, guitar, and Gaelic.

The activities take place either during lunchtime or after the school day.

Such activities greatly enrich the school. As well as being good in themselves for the children, they often help to build their self-confidence, and they also contribute towards the children's general commitment to the school.

Monday	Guitar	P6/P7	12.30 pm
Tuesday	Gaelic	P3 - P7	12.30 pm
	Netball	P6/P7	3.30 pm
Wednesday	Modern Dance	P5-7	3.50pm
Thursday	Art Club	P4-7	3.15 pm
	Football	P4-7	3.15 pm

## **Educational Excursions**

Educational visits and excursions are an important part of the school curriculum. They enable pupils to gain first hand experience of their environment, and to carry out practical investigations in a meaningful context.

These visits vary from local nature walks to trips further afield which involve considerable planning and preparation. Details of excursions are sent to parents before the event.

## **ADVERSE WEATHER**

### **ECS Winter Weather Website**

As you will be aware, the schools' PIN number service for adverse weather information has been running successfully for a number of years. However, with ever increasing access to ICT solutions, Highland Council has expanded its service to parents to include web based adverse weather information.

The Education, Culture & Sport Service, therefore, has now developed a new winter weather website, which parents will be able to log onto from home in order to access school closure information. There will be links to the website on both the Highland Council and the Highland Virtual Learning Community websites. You can access the winter weather website at the following web address: [www.winter.highlandschools.org.uk](http://www.winter.highlandschools.org.uk) . Please click on the relevant geographical area for local school closure information.

The winter weather website allows parents to access school closure information on the internet, thus reducing pressure on the very heavily used PIN number system. However, please note that schools will continue to update the PIN number facility as well as the new website. Our aim is to provide clear, unambiguous information to parents with regard to school closures during periods of adverse weather. I would therefore encourage you to use either the PIN number system or the new winter weather website in this expanded winter weather information system.

Please also remember that the local radio stations will continue to provide regular winter weather updates with regard to school closures.

Finally, please remember that it is ultimately the responsibility of parents or carers to decide if a pupil should attempt to travel to school, by transport or on foot, in adverse weather conditions. The Education Authority encourages full attendance at school, but in severe weather conditions the safety of pupils is much more important. Parents should therefore continue to use good judgement in deciding whether it is safe to send a child to school.

### **Budgeted Running Costs For Financial Year 2009 - 2010**

The following figures indicate the Budgeted Running Costs (2009-2010) for Lochside R. C. Primary School:-

<u>School Roll at September 2008</u>	:	96
<u>Total School Running Costs at April 2009</u>	:	£387,231.00
<u>Cost per pupil</u>	:	£4034.00
<u>Regional Average cost per pupil (Highland)</u>	:	£3,863.00
<u>National Average cost per pupil (Scotland)</u>	:	£3,948.00

### **School Fund**

From time to time we must raise funds to supplement the capitation allowance.

Each year we engage in at least one or two fund-raising events, such as a Sale of Work or a sponsored activity. The fund is held in a bank account.

The School Fund is used to provide a wide range of 'extras' for the children. These include class and school trips, Christmas parties, visits by theatre groups, celebrations at times of First Communion and

Confirmation. The Fund also contributes towards extra library stock and computer equipment.

We are greatly encouraged by the outstanding support given by parents and families.

### **Transfer to Secondary School**

On completion of their primary school career, children normally transfer to:

Lochaber High School

Camaghael

FORT WILLIAM

PH33 7ND

Telephone: 01397 702512

During the fourth term, Primary Seven pupils are invited to spend five days at Lochaber High School. They are introduced to staff members and shown around various departments. They follow a timetable for the induction days.

Members of the Guidance staff also visit our school to talk to the children and to answer any questions which they may have. This helps to ensure that transfer is achieved smoothly. Children with additional support needs are seen in advance by the Secondary Learning Support Teachers.

When a pupil transfers from Primary School to Secondary School, a folder containing copies of the pupil's School Reports is delivered to the Head Teacher of the Secondary School.

### **Standards and Quality Report**

A copy of our Standards and Quality Report (August 2009) is available from the school on request.

The Report outlines our school's successes and achievements over the past year.

## **Inspection of Standards and Quality in Lochyside RC Primary School**

Lochyside RC Primary School was inspected in September 2002 as part of a national sample of primary education.

The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school at all stages. It evaluated how well pupils were performing, the effectiveness of the school and how well the school was managed.

Copies of the report are available from the school.

### **Complaints Procedure**

It is hoped that parents will have little or no reason to complain about either the standard of the education offered or the manner in which it is taught. On occasions parents may feel that they would like to discuss some matter regarding their child's education more thoroughly with either the class teacher or the Head Teacher. Parents are always welcome to make an appointment - please contact the School Office in order that a suitable time may be found for both parties.

When the complaint is made the following action will be taken by the school -

- Any investigation will be carried out or evidence gathered immediately.
- The Class Teacher will be informed if the issue relates to a specific class.
- The school's response will be relayed to the parent wither by letter, by a telephone call or by a further appointment with the Head Teacher, Class Teacher and parents and pupils.
- Formal documentation will be kept of each complaint and its resolution.

We want to reassure parents that we take seriously any complaints and endeavour to resolve them as expeditiously as possible. If need be then subsequent meetings will be arranged in an effort to resolve the situation to everyone's satisfaction.