



# **NURSERY HANDBOOK**

## **2011**

**MOUNT PLEASANT PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Castletown Road, THURSO, Caithness KW14 8HL



## **A NOTE FROM THE HEAD TEACHER**

Welcome to Mount Pleasant School and Nursery. We hope your child will have a happy and successful time here and will enjoy making new friends and facing new challenges. Our aim, at all times, is to ensure your child thrives and prospers in a caring and supportive environment. We hope he or she will come home at the end of each session ready to tell you all about what they have been doing that day.

Your child is at the beginning of a long learning adventure in which the nursery, the primary and, subsequently, the secondary school will play their part. This journey will be happier and more successful if we all work together to help him or her. Partnership between school and home makes a very important contribution to future success.

In this introduction, I merely want to assure you that we will do everything in our power to make this possible. Should you ever have any concerns, or should there be any issues you wish to discuss, please do not hesitate to call in at school. I am generally available immediately but, if I am unavailable for any reason, an appointment can always be made.

I look forward to meeting you and your child in the near future.

Miss Suzanne Fraser  
Acting Head Teacher



## CONTENTS

### **Educational Information**

Mission Statement, Aims, Values	page 4
Accommodation	page 6
Curriculum	page 6

### **Administrative Information**

Staffing	page 8
School Year	page 8
In Service dates	page 9
Admissions Policy	page 9
Enrolment	page 9
Coming to Nursery	page 10
Snack Fees	page 10
Clothing	page 10
Contact with Parents	page 11
Newsletters	page 11
Emergency Contact	page 11
Fire Safety	page 12
Absences	page 12
Parent Council	page 12
Medication/Inhalers	page 13
Equal Opportunities	page 13
Vaccinations	page 13
Head Lice	page 14
First Aid	page 14
Medical Conditions	page 14
Child Protection Policy	page 14
Adverse Weather/School Closure Procedures	page 15
Moving On	page 15
Data Protection	page 15
Access to Personal Records	page 16
Comments and Complaints	page 16



## EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

### Mission Statement

Mount Pleasant Primary School and Nursery strives to equip children with all the qualities necessary to thrive in a changing society and admits no obstacle as sufficient to prevent achievement.

### Values

Every child, every family and every member of staff will be supported within our community of learners. Every classroom will demonstrate our values and beliefs in all aspects of its life.

### Aims

1. Mount Pleasant Primary School and Nursery aims to be a happy and dynamic learning environment in which pupils are encouraged to achieve their full potential. Every member of our school community should be treated equally and with respect.
2. Learning and caring are at the heart of school and nursery activities, both formal and informal. We aim to promote a positive attitude to learning, to encourage pupils to be proud of their school, to celebrate their own efforts and achievements and those of others and to feel that all their contributions are valued.
3. Through effective learning and teaching we aim to raise attainment by providing a variety of challenging experiences that cater for all our pupils' needs and prepare them to take an active role in their life long learning.
4. We want our pupils to become active and caring citizens who respect the needs and feelings of members of their own community and understand the responsibility they have within the wider community. Our pupils are encouraged to be involved in the community and we welcome members of the community into school. We value the contributions they make and the example they set in providing positive role models.
5. We value the role parents play in encouraging pupils to become independent and enthusiastic learners. With open and honest dialogue we will work together to support our pupils and provide good quality resources to enhance their learning.



### Aims (Continued)

6. We aim to provide a professionally fulfilling environment for all staff, teaching or ancillary. All staff are encouraged to work together as an effective team within an atmosphere of mutual support. Opportunities for professional development are given a high priority.
7. We aim to work closely with other agencies in order to meet the needs of every child and, with them, help overcome obstacles to learning and successful development.

### **Specifically the nursery aims to**

- Provide a happy, stable, safe and caring environment.
- Complement the experiences of home by building from the child's own knowledge and skills.
- Encourage children to explore the world providing opportunities to stimulate interest and imagination through play and other activities motivating them to acquire new skills and learn in line with the Scottish Executive 3-5 Curriculum document.
- Carry out self evaluation procedures using the Child at the Centre document.
- Meet the National Care Standards (ref: National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16)
- Provide opportunities for the child to learn and develop communication skills.
- Establish good patterns of behaviour (caring, co-operating, sharing) and to nurture feelings of self-esteem, build confidence and independence.
- Encourage the child to show pleasure, enthusiasm and confidence in expressive activities such as art, music and drama.
- Foster good relations between staff and parents with regular opportunities for both formal and informal communications.
- Ensure the Nursery is a welcoming place for parents and to encourage them in recognising that they have an important role in the education of their children.



## **ACCOMMODATION**

The Nursery for four year olds was established in 1975. It moved into the main school building in 1997 and then as our numbers grew, to more suitable classrooms within the school building in 2006. The two large classrooms have carpeted areas for games, toys, role play and quiet corner and wet areas for painting, sand, water, baking, messy play etc. There is a large outdoor play area with a variety of outdoor equipment. We also make use of the school library, gym and music room.

Children are encouraged to communicate with other adults in school, eg messages to office and cook. To develop a sense of community in the school, nursery children occasionally join in school assemblies and are involved in a variety of whole school activities.

## **CURRICULUM**

At the present time our School and Nursery is moving towards the implementation of a Curriculum for Excellence, the new Scottish 3-18 Curriculum.

Progression through the curriculum will be described using the levels below:

Early Level:	Nursery to P1
First Level:	P2-P4
Second Level:	P5-P7
Third Level:	S1

These are the levels against which we will start to report to you, as parents, from 2010-11.

The Curriculum will also be shaped slightly differently. Subjects will now be grouped as follows:

- Mathematics and numeracy
- English and literacy
- Health and wellbeing
- Expressive Arts
- Sciences
- Social subjects
- Religious and moral education
- Technologies



This new curriculum aims to better prepare children for the challenges of the future and places a far greater emphasis on not just acquiring skills but being able to use them effectively and creatively. It places literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing at the heart of the curriculum.

We continue to aim to plan and deliver a broad and balanced curriculum which will ensure our children achieve their full potential. Children are taught using a variety of teaching methods, in small groups, individually or as a whole class depending on the activity or on the needs of the children involved. The four capacities of 'A Curriculum for Excellence' are linked to Assessment for Learning and through this children are encouraged to be active participants in their learning and apply collaborative strategies to reflect on their progress.



## **ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

Places are available for children to attend five sessions a week. The sessions run from 9.00-11.30 am or 12.15-2.45 pm. Parents can indicate their preferred session however, if for example the mornings are oversubscribed we have guidance from Highland Council to follow. Sessions are mixed for 3 and 4 year olds.

### **Staffing**

Mrs K Gunn	Nursery Teacher
Mrs F Malcolm	Nursery Nurse
Mrs D Boulton	Nursery Auxiliary

### **Contact Information**

Mount Pleasant Nursery  
Castletown Road  
THURSO  
Caithness  
KW14 8HL

Tel: 01847 893419  
Fax: 01847 892601  
E-mail: [mountpleasant.primary@highland.gov.uk](mailto:mountpleasant.primary@highland.gov.uk)

### **SCHOOL YEAR 2011-2012**

#### **SCHOOL CLOSES**

Friday, 7 October 2011  
Thursday, 22 December 2011  
Friday, 30 March 2012  
Friday, 29 June 2012

#### **SCHOOL OPENS**

Tuesday, 16 August 2011  
Tuesday, 25 October 2011  
Monday, 9 January 2012  
Tuesday, 17 April 2012

**February long weekend** - The school will be closed to pupils on Mon 13 Feb and reopens on Monday 20 February 2012

**May long weekend** - The school will be closed to pupils on Monday, 7 May 2012.



### **In-Service Training 2011/12**

Staff meet regularly throughout the year at *Collective Activity Times* both within the nursery and with the whole school staff. These sessions are organised to allow staff to take forward the developments in the School Improvement Plan.

In addition to these meetings and to enable teachers to take part in more intensive training sessions dates are set aside for In-service training either in school or in other venues in Highland Region.

The following are the In Service dates for the session 2011-2012.

Monday, 15 August 2011  
Monday, 24 October 2011  
Wed, Thurs, Fri 15, 16 and 17 Feb 2012

### **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

Parents are eligible to apply for a Nursery place if their child is in their pre-school year.

The Nursery will prioritise children who live within the school's catchment area. Should any places remain, they will be given to any other applicant out with the school's catchment area with preference being given to children in their pre-school year.

### **ENROLMENT**

Enrolment normally takes place in February of each year for entry in August, January and April and is in response to an advertisement placed in the local press by the Area Education, Culture and Sports Manager, Graham Nichols. Letters confirming or refusing a place usually go out within three weeks of the end of the enrolment period.

Information regarding the entry arrangements is sent to parents in late May. At this time, parents and children are invited, separately, to the Nursery to meet staff and other parents. At this meeting, parents will receive final details for their children starting nursery in August. The first few sessions in August are usually shortened to help the children gradually settle into their new routine.



It must be stressed that being offered a place in Mount Pleasant Nursery does not ensure a place within the primary school for children outwith the school catchment. This is dealt with by placement request. Available places can vary annually.

### **COMING TO NURSERY**

Children should always be brought to and collected from the Nursery by an adult. If parents arrange for someone to collect their child, he/she must be a responsible adult who is known to the child and the nursery staff should be informed of the change. In an emergency, parents should always telephone the school office to advise of any change in arrangements. We are not authorised to release children into the care of taxi drivers.

Children who bring bikes, scooters etc to Nursery must follow the school rules in doing so. They must be escorted by an adult; bikes/scooters must be stored at the cycle storage area in the infant playground and children must wear a helmet. Children not complying with these rules are not permitted to bring a bike/scooter into the school grounds. No skateboards are permitted in the school grounds.

If bringing or collecting children by car, parents are requested to use the car parking facilities in Castle Terrace and cross Castletown Road at the crossing patrol area.

### **SNACK FEES**

There is no fee for Nursery provision, but parents are asked to contribute £1.50 a week towards the cost of providing their child's social snack, parties outings etc. This can be paid weekly/monthly/termly by arrangement with the Nursery staff. Payment must be made even if your child is absent as Nursery staff buy snacks etc in advance.

### **CLOTHING**

Children should all bring gym shoes or indoor trainers for wearing in the Nursery. School polo shirts or house Team t shirts are available from the school office. As we aim to participate in outdoor play on a daily basis children are also required to have appropriate outdoor clothing and footwear.



## **CONTACT WITH PARENTS**

An open evening is held in June for you to visit the Nursery before your child begins so that you can look at the accommodation and resources available, have a chance to talk to the staff and ask any questions you may have. Parents are always welcome to visit the Nursery.

Two opportunities are given for you to make a daytime or evening appointment to talk confidentially to the Nursery Teacher, one near the beginning of the year in November and one in May/June after you have received your child's written report.

Workshops for parents are held throughout the year and all Nursery parents are welcome to attend.

Parents are, of course, welcome to talk to the staff at any time, and to discuss their child's progress or any problem that may arise. If anyone wishes to make an appointment to have a further discussion, a suitable time may be arranged with the teacher or through the school office.

## **NEWSLETTERS**

Newsletters are issued regularly to the eldest child in each family in school. This school-bag mail is intended to keep parents up to date with holiday dates, pupil achievements, school events etc. Newsletters/notes will be issued via your child's pigeon hole outside the Nursery.

## **EMERGENCY CONTACT**

From time to time minor emergencies may arise such as a fall in the playground or gym. Parents are all too aware that children can become ill quite quickly. For these reasons it is essential the school is able to contact a parent, or an appointed emergency contact, at any time during the school day. The school will issue Emergency Contact Forms annually to keep records up to date and we ask that parents inform us as soon as possible of any change in circumstances.

In the case of an emergency, medical services will be contacted and if necessary the child will be transported to the nearest Health Centre or Hospital as appropriate. Parents will be contacted at the earliest opportunity.



## **FIRE SAFETY**

Regular Fire Drills are held in school and Nursery to ensure all pupils and staff are familiar with the school's evacuation procedures.

## **ABSENCES**

**Parents/carers must inform the school of the reason for absence of their child(ren) on their first day of absence.** If no contact has been made then the school has a responsibility to contact parents to find out the reason for the absence, this is in line with Highland Council policy. **If the Head Teacher cannot make contact with the parents/carers within a reasonable time then she has an obligation to pass this information to Social Services, the police and the Area Education Manager.**

## **PARENT COUNCIL**

The Parent Council is a group of parents selected by members of the Parent Forum to represent all the parents of children at a school. The type of things a Parent Council could get involved in include:

- Supporting the work of the school;
- Gathering and representing parents' views to the Head Teacher, education authority and HMIE;
- Promoting contact between the school, parents, pupils, providers of nursery education and the local community;
- Fundraising;
- Being involved in the appointment of senior staff.

We are lucky enough to have a very active Parent Council who support the school. The AGM is held during the first term in the school year.



## **MEDICATION/INHALERS**

Teachers are not obliged to administer medication to children and it is preferred that parents make arrangements to ensure they are able to administer medication to their own children. Where this is not possible some members of staff are willing to carry out this duty on a voluntary basis. Any medication should be delivered to and collected from the school office by an adult. **Children should not transport medication to and from school.** A pro forma for written instructions is available from the school office. This must be completed and signed by a parent/carer. Any medication must be in its original container, this should not be glass. All medication, other than inhalers, is stored in the school office area.

**It is essential that children who require inhalers have them in school every day.** Children should be aware of maximum dosages. Arrangements are in place for inhalers to be stored in classrooms for Nursery pupils for easy access during the school day. **Parents are responsible for ensuring their child has an inhaler for out of school activities such as school trips.**

**Parents should take note of the expiry date of any medication to be kept in school for a period of time to ensure it does not go out of date.**

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Boys and girls participate equally in the full range of nursery experiences. Care is taken to ensure that particular activities do not become associated with girls or boys. Books, pictures, jigsaws, etc are selected to show positive images of different races and cultures.

## **VACCINATIONS**

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

It is never too late to have your child immunised. If they have missed one you don't have to start the course from the beginning again. Contact your health visitor or GP for further advice.



## **HEAD LICE**

From time to time some pupils may suffer from outbreaks of head lice. Effective treatment is available from the local Chemist. If you are in doubt regarding the condition please ask the school for a leaflet about head lice or to be put in contact with the school nurse.

Should a member of staff discover a child with head lice the parents of that child will be informed immediately. All communication regarding this problem will be treated in the strictest confidence. Alert letters are no longer issued routinely to parents.

## **FIRST AID**

At the moment we have four members of staff in school trained in first aid. In the event of a serious accident every effort is made to contact parents and if necessary a child will be transported to the nearest health centre or hospital. Minor incidents such as grazed knees, etc are dealt with by the staff trained in first aid. Usually incidents like these only require a plaster or an ice pack.

## **MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

Any medical condition likely to affect your child's learning or well being must be notified to the school.

## **HIGHLAND COUNCIL CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

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 a priority for Education Service staff.

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



## **ADVERSE WEATHER/SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCEDURES**

From time to time it may be necessary to close the Nursery and/or school. This would usually only happen if the heating should fail or in severe weather conditions when it may be unsafe for staff or pupils to attend.

We have three methods of informing parents of school closures. The first is by using Moray Firth Radio who regularly provide up dates of school closures throughout Highland and Moray. The second is by using the messaging service provided to all schools in Highland. Parents are issued with an information booklet, usually in the first week of the second term. This booklet provides parents with a telephone number (0870 054 6999) and a pin number (042640) to use to find out up to date information. The final method is the recently launched winter weather website - [www.winter.highlandschools.org.uk](http://www.winter.highlandschools.org.uk).

Should it be necessary to close the school during the school day it is essential we have emergency contact information for every child. It is the parents/carers responsibility to ensure such information held by the school is kept up to date and that we are informed in writing of any changes at the earliest opportunity.

## **MOVING ON**

Throughout their year in Nursery children are provided with opportunities to become familiar with the main school building and to meet with other children and adults in the school. Towards the end of the Nursery year these opportunities are increased. Special arrangements are made for children with additional support needs.

Enrolment for Primary One generally takes place in February. Information regarding enrolment will be provided to all Nursery parents by the school.

## **DATA PROTECTION**

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.



### **ACCESS TO PERSONAL RECORDS**

Parents will have ready access to the files and records of their own children, but will not have access to information about any other child.

### **COMMENTS/COMPLAINTS**

We hope you will enjoy your child's time at our Nursery and welcome comments or suggestions which could help us to improve our service. However, we are aware that difficulties can occur from time to time and if you feel you have reason to complain, please follow the procedure outlined in the Nursery Comments and Complaints Policy.

Parents/carers are also able to contact the Care Commission directly with a complaint, if they so wish. The local address and telephone number for our centre is:

Care Commission  
First Floor,  
Castle House,  
Fairways Business Park,  
Inverness  
IV2 6AA  
Tel: 01463 227630

The Care Commission publication "How to use the Care Commission Complaints Procedure" is also available on request. You will find a copy of this displayed on our Nursery Notice Board.