

SMITHTON PRIMARY SCHOOL



2022-2023

“Believe and you will achieve”

Head Teacher Aileen Mackay

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The current pandemic has affected the normal running of schools in many ways. This Handbook reflects the way the school *usually* runs but does not cover all of the changes that we have made because of the pandemic. Our arrangements have changed in many ways this session, and may well change again, depending on how the pandemic develops. For the most up-to-date information about any aspect of the work of the school, please make contact and we will be able to tell you about our current arrangements. For the latest information about how the pandemic affects children, young people and families across Scotland, please visit the [Scottish Government website, which has helpful information about Coronavirus and its impact on education and children](#).

Every endeavour has been made to ensure the accuracy of this document at the time of printing but parents should note that changes may occur throughout the session. Please consult our school blog for up to date information.

Smithton Primary School
Smithton
Inverness
IV2 7PD

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to Smithton School. I do hope that your child will be happy in our school.

We aim to provide a safe and secure environment through which our children strive to be the best they can be and given a wide variety of opportunities to achieve their potential.

Our school community promotes healthy attitudes to education and stresses the importance of healthy minds to allow literacy and numeracy to develop naturally through play, activity and recorded in a variety of ways using IT as well as conventional methods. Other areas of the curriculum are inter related throughout the day and the staff is dedicated to encourage learning suitable for 21st century living. We currently have approximately 348 children in P1-7 and 69 in our Early Learning and Childcare centre (nursery)

Parents, carers and friends of the school are important to us. Please don't hesitate to contact the school about anything which concerns you or pleases you. Parents are very open at Smithton and we regularly receive feedback. You are part of the Parent Forum from which the Parent Council is formed. Your views about the school in general as well as the education of your child sought on a regular basis. Expect to take a full part in your child's education while attending the school.

This booklet is updated annually and you can find the latest version on the school website www.smithtonprimary.wordpress.com or just ask for one. You are kept informed about the life and work of the school through the weekly newsletters. The newsletter is available on the website with

alerts sent to individual phones when it is posted. Paper copies can also be requested from the school office.

Read on to get a flavour of the school where your child will be nurtured, encouraged and expected to grow and develop physically, mentally and developing a positive attitude to lifelong learning.

Yours sincerely

Aileen Mackay
Head Teacher



Our Values, Vision and Aims



Our Vision: Believe! You will achieve!

Values

Honesty Respectful Friendly Caring Positive

These are summarised by Paul Dix, a book studied by all staff in the school 2017, as Ready, Respectful and Safe. August – October 2020 we revised these with the Learning Council and discussed at the Parent Council AGM later publishing for the wider community on the school blog and we extended the values to make sense at all levels what this looked like and sounded like across the nursery and school. January 2021 the logo was revised to include the roots of relationships being our fundamental goal.

Smithton Primary School and community is a place where

- Everyone has a sense of belonging
- Experiences and opportunities develop skills for lifelong learning
- Everyone is inspired to be ambitious and to achieve their best
- Expectations are high
- Everyone is supported and listened to, confidence and resilience instilled

Our Aims

In partnership with the parents/carers and the wider community, we aim to

- Value, respect and include everyone
- Nurture and support each individual
- Work together to help children reach their full potential
- Challenge and motivate children in their learning
- Provide wide and varied learning experiences

In fulfilling these aims we are doing so through the context of national and international priorities: Getting it Right for Every Child, Curriculum for Excellence and the UN Rights for the Child. Global Goals 2030 and OECD Learning Compass 2030 through Developing the Young Workforce will start to shape our curriculum and contexts for learning as we all 'reboot' after lockdown in 2020.

We continue to promote a sense of community through:

- Children's Services Worker (based at the school but employed by Social Work)
- Positive links between Residence Association, local churches and visitors to the school
- Extracurricular clubs run by volunteers – almost all run for no cost to pupils

- Citizenship groups that meet weekly involving children from P4 – P7 in their local as well as global community to take pride in taking part and knowing that their ideas are taken on board. Nursery – P3 hold weekly citizenship sessions in their classes.

STAFF (In bold = full time)

Management Team

Head Teacher Aileen Mackay
Depute Head Teacher Mr Jim Lyon

Class Teachers

Miss J Blair P1
Miss K MacKay (Principal Teacher) P1
Miss E Scott P1/2
Mrs J Morison P2
Mrs R Tough P2/3
Ms A Mackay P3
Miss C Noble P4
Mrs J Murray/Miss L MacDonald P4
Mrs L Mitchell P5
Mr R Jamieson P5
Miss E O'Donnell P6
Mrs D Robertson P6
Mr S Hardie P6/7
Miss A Nicol P7
Mrs Munro, Mrs Davidson (both part time) ASL

Various other people are employed in the school to help in the education of our pupils. They work alongside class teachers, sometimes with the whole class, sometimes with groups and sometimes with individuals. They offer support to children of all abilities.

Support Staff

CCR

Mrs Goodall, Mr I Grandison (PT)

Pupil Support Assistants

Miss S Bills, Ms S Miller, Miss N Matthews, Mrs D Stevenson, Mrs S Bell, Mrs J Cranstoun, Mrs P Lambert, Mrs C Fraser, Miss S Bennett, Mrs M Bigham

Children's Service Worker

Miss M Boyle (Monday, Wednesday and Friday)

SMT on duty daily 8.45am and PSA's throughout the day in the playground

Active Schools Coordinator **Mrs L Fraser**

Clerical Assistant **Mrs N Cornish**
Mrs M Matheson

Facilities Assistant **Mr D Aitchison**

Early Years Education Support Officer Mrs C Blair

Early Years Practitioners **Mrs Harvey, Ms Macleod, Mrs Cassie, Mrs Brand, Mrs Hendry, , Miss A Stewart, Mrs McNeil, Miss Hall, Mrs Cranstoun**

Early Years Support Worker Mrs Blanchard

Smithton Family Team

The Scottish Government is addressing the attainment related poverty gap by using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) to identify children and families who require extra support. Each school is given extra money to support families in this bracket. At Smithton we have created The Smithton Family Team with three social care workers, direct access to the Transitions Coordinator, direct access to Primary Mental Health Team Leader and a Seasons for Growth Children's Services Worker. These all work in conjunction with the school staff and work directly with families in their homes, in the community and with the children in the school. If you require support with family budgeting, housing issues or some support to try different parenting and family techniques please contact the head teacher in the first instance. We have a range of support activities from wellbeing walks, family walks in the woods on Saturdays, breakfasts and workshops based on parental suggestions. See the Smithton Family Board in the foyer or look out for blog posts.

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE(ELCC)/NURSERY

The ELCC has been a feature of our school for over a generation now and can provide up to 84 places throughout the day. As it is the foundation of learning in Smithton you will find information about the setting throughout this handbook. You will also find information on the school website under [Early learning and Childcare](#) with information such as what you can do at home to help, suggested activities, photos of our youngsters in action, links to helpful websites, etc.

At Smithton we aim to provide all children with the opportunity to access Early Learning in a caring, happy and safe environment. Children learn through play and activity and each child comes with a slightly different experience. We get to know them very well as individuals, learning about their strengths and building on them.

Places are available for both three and four year olds, children are eligible to receive 30 hours funded per week from the term after their third birthday. However, parents may choose to pay for nursery provision from the week after their child's 3rd birthday.

Our nursery is inspected regularly by the Care Inspectorate, a body set up under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001, to regulate care services throughout Scotland.

ELCC - Opening hours

We are open between 8.30am until 4pm and there is certain flexibility for 1140 within these times. Additional hours over the 30 funded hours can be booked and are charged at £4.40 per hour. Information packs on registration, bookings and payment can be obtained from the school office. Please note bookings and cancellations have to be done 48h in advance.

ABSENCES

During the current pandemic we may need to amend our approaches to recording attendance, for example if it becomes necessary for pupils to work from home. For more details please contact the school

If your child is absent please call the school on 01463 791606 or the school absence number on 01463 796722. If we do not hear from you and your child does not attend we will contact you to ensure all is well.

If your child becomes ill or has an accident while attending nursery we will contact you immediately by phone. If we cannot contact you we will ring your emergency contact number. Please let us know if you change any contact numbers.

SCHOOL TIMES

P	1-3	P1 – P3 9am – 12pm
		P1 – P3 1pm – 2.45pm
	4-7	P4 – P7 9am – 12.35pm
		P4 – P7 1.20pm – 3pm

ATTENDANCE/ABSENCE

Good attendance is vital if pupils are to achieve their full potential. If a pupil is absent from school, a parent or guardian should phone the school on the first day of absence, on either the school absence number 01463 796722 or the school number 01463 791606.

Please note that it is vital to keep your child at home if there is sickness and diarrhoea for 48 hours from the last bout – not the first bout. Children can appear to be well but actually the bugs are still in their system leaving them still prone to catching it again and spreading to others. We can provide work or ideas for activities if your child appears well but needs to stay at home for 48 hours.

Permission to leave during the school day: If a pupil needs to leave during the school day for an appointment etc, pupils need to bring with them a note from parent or guardian or a parent/guardian has to call the school. Pupils must report to the school reception and 'sign out', if returning the same day, they must report again to the reception and sign in. Where at all possible, medical and dental appointments should be made out with school hours.

If pupils fall ill during the day, parents are contacted for them to collect their child, therefore it is essential that we have up to date day time contact numbers and emergency contact numbers for all pupils.

Schools are required to keep an attendance register by law. We have a responsibility for the care and welfare of all pupils during the school day therefore need to know the whereabouts of absent pupils.

When parents are considering whether or not to remove their children from school for a family holiday, they should 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 the guidance issued at a national level, most family holidays will be coded as unauthorised absence, only in exceptional cases will the absence be recorded as authorised.

In conclusion, we would ask parents to be aware of these considerations when making decisions on planning holidays during term time. We have enclosed a link to the school term dates on the Highland Council website to aid parents in planning any holidays they may be considering

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/32/school_term_dates

If parents decide to make holiday arrangements during school term, this should be confirmed in writing to the Head Teacher.

Procedures

If your child is absent you must inform the school immediately. When your child is absent from school without notice, a staff member will contact you to find out why your child is not in school. This is to ensure your child is safe. **If after the third day we cannot contact you we will follow Highland Council Procedures and contact the Police.** Please make sure that you contact us to let us know of your child's absences as soon as you can.

TRANSFERRING EDUCATIONAL DATA ABOUT PUPILS

The Scottish Government and its partners collect and use information about pupils through the Pupil Census to help to improve education across Scotland. This note explains why we need this information, how we use it and what we do to protect the information supplied to us.

Why do we need your data?

In order to make the best decisions about how to improve our education service, Scottish Government, education authorities and other partners such as the SQA and Skills Development Scotland 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 examination results. Accurate and up-to-date data allows us 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 which influence pupil attainment and achievement
- ❖ Share good practice
- ❖ Target resources better
- ❖ Enhance the quality of research to improve the lives of young people in Scotland

Data Policy

Information about pupils' education is collected through our statistical surveys in partnership between the Scottish Government and Local Authorities through the Scotxed Programme which aims to help schools and Local Authorities by supporting efficient collection, processing and dissemination of statistical information. The Scottish Government then provides analysis of the data to support research, planning, management and monitoring of education services as well as to produce National Statistics publications.

Education data within Scottish Government is managed effectively by secure systems and is exploited as a valuable corporate resource, subject to confidentiality restraints. As part of its data policy, Scottish Government will not publish or make publicly available any information that allows individual pupils to be identified, nor will data be used by Scottish Government to take any actions in respect of individuals. Data is held securely and no information on individual pupils can or would be made publicly available by Scottish Government.

The individual data collected by Scottish Government through Pupil Census is used for statistical and research purpose only.

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 safe guarding the confidentiality of data. The Data Protection Act gives you the right to know how we will use your data. Fuller details of each individual ScotXed survey, including the purpose of each and the published data, can be found on the ScotXed website (www.scotxed.net).

Scottish Government works with a range of partners including Education Scotland, Skills Development Scotland and the SQA. On occasion, in order to help meet our aim of improving the life of young people in Scotland, we may make individual data available to partners such as the National Registers of Scotland to carry out research relating to the national population census and also academic institutions and organisations to carry out additional research and statistical analysis to meet their own official responsibilities. Any sharing of data will be done under the strict control of Scottish Government, and will be consistent with our data policy. This will ensure that no individual level data

will be made public as a result of the data sharing and that these data will not be used to take any actions in respect of an individual. Decisions on the sharing of data will be taken in consultation with relevant colleagues and individuals within and out with Scottish Government. At all times pupils' rights under the Data Protection Act and other relevant legislation will be ensured.

Concerns

If you have any concerns about the ScotXed data collections you can write to the ScotXed Support Office, Area 2D, 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.

Equality and Inclusion

Please <http://www.highland.gov.uk/livinghere/equalopportunities/> see for up to date information, in summary, our activities in school should ensure that we eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, to promote good relations. Activities should not discriminate against any of the following "protected characteristics" age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity.

Policies

Please see policies on these two websites:

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/schools/policies> for Highland Council wide policies and

- <http://smithtonprimary.wordpress.com> for key policies of the school. Other policies are held at school and can be available on request to the head teacher. Any new policies are worked through in conjunction with the Parent Council, for example the school has worked with young people and Parent Forum on our latest positive relationships policy. Here is a link to the Highland Council one

https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19358/anti_bullying_-_guidance_for_schools

IF YOUR CHILD CHANGES SCHOOL

There are new regulations also if your child leaves a school to go to another. Parents must meet with the head teacher before removing the child from school and must provide their new address and the name and address of the receiving school.

COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

We hope you will enjoy your child's time at Smithton 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, then please follow the procedure outlined below.

You should contact the school by letter or telephone outlining the concern. If you prefer, you can make an appointment to speak to the head teacher. Your concern will be investigated and the head teacher will get back to you as soon as possible.

From here, if necessary, the matter will be brought to the attention of the Area Education Manager who will decide what the next steps should be. Parents will be kept fully informed at each stage and will be invited to attend any meetings being held.

Should you feel unable to speak to the Head Teacher you are entitled to contact the Area Education Manager, Fiona Shearer at the Area Education Office, Head Quarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness IV3 5NX.

PLACING REQUESTS – PARENTAL CHOICE

Each school serves its own particular catchment area. Pupils whose homes are located in that area will have priority in being allocated a place in the school. However, parents have the right to specify the school in which they wish to place their child. Application must be made to the Area Education Manager Fiona.shearer@highland.gov.uk placing request forms can be obtained from

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/887/enrol_your_child_for_school

Transportation to and from school, for placing request pupils, is a parental responsibility.

If pupils live out with the school catchment area and their parents wish them to attend Smithton Primary they can contact the head teacher to arrange a visit.

SCHOOL UNIFORM / CLOTHING ALLOWANCE

Nursery children should come in comfortable, old play clothes as they will be encouraged to learn outside as well as exploring sensory play inside (e.g. water, shaving foam, paint and salt dough). There is no expectation that they will wear the school uniform but some do as they have older siblings and want to be the same as them. We encourage independent skills as much as possible e.g. going to the toilet so jogging trousers are great, skinny jeans are more tricky!

All school pupils are encouraged to take pride in their appearance and their school, and to this end the following items of school uniform are recommended:

Blue Smithton School Sweatshirt, Blue/Yellow/White Smithton School Polo Shirt, Blue Smithton School (quarter zip), Fleece and Blue Smithton School (full zip fleece). Navy/grey trousers/skirt, blue/grey/white shirt/blouse.

The above are printed with the school badge – and can be purchased at National School Wear, The Longman, Inverness, Telephone 01463 717182. Myclothing.com for online orders via Tesco.

School tie purchased in school £3.00

The following items may be kept at school:

- Gym/shoes / Shorts for PE
- Indoor shoes for changing into (gym shoes, slippers, etc).
- Cast off shirt for art / craft work to protect clothing.

All clothing should be clearly labelled with the child's name and class. You can imagine how difficult it is to find the correct sweatshirt from over 300 on a PE day if names are not clearly marked! Lost property is stored in the entrance corridor.

CLOTHING ALLOWANCE AND FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Some families may be entitled to an annual clothing allowance. Application forms are available on the Highland Council Website and we can help you with this from the school office.

LUNCHES AND MILK BAR (Snack Shack)

School Meals

Meals are cooked on the premises and served in the dining hall where packed lunches may also be eaten. The school meals department provide a varied midday meal at a cost of £2.30 daily. All children in Nursery – P3 are entitled to free school meals. Children who require special diets may be catered for by consulting the school cook, Mrs Nicol. Pupils are supervised by staff in the dining room and where eating problems exists, parents are informed. Menus are available online <http://www.highland.gov.uk>

Collection of School Meal Money

A member of staff collects money for school meals on the first day of each week, normally Monday. Those taking school meals regularly should pay the total amount for that week, currently £11.50. Parents paying by cheque should make the cheques payable to "The Highland Council" and not to the school. If possible children taking occasional lunches should order and pay for them at the beginning of the week eg a child wishing lunch on Wednesday orders and pays for it on Monday. In emergencies lunches may be ordered on the day-the child taking £2.30 to the kitchen at break time. If a child forgets money or packed lunch may be provided but parents must pay for these by Friday of the same week.

Free School Meals

Remember all children in Nursery – P3 are entitled to a free school meal. Parents who think they may be entitled to free school meals should contact the school office for detailed information about eligibility and to obtain an application form **because this will give you a clothing allowance.** Completed forms should be sent to:-

The Client Officer, Limetree Avenue, Inverness, IV3 5AU.

Forms require to be resubmitted at the beginning of each school year. The school cannot issue free meals to children until the application has been approved by Highland Council and the Head Teacher has received confirmation of approval. **It is extremely important, therefore that parents ensure that forms are submitted in good time before the commencement of the new session so that their children may receive their free lunch at the start of term.**

Packed Lunches

All food must be carried in a semi rigid container with a secure lid and these should be clearly marked with the name of the pupil. Glass bottles and containers are not permitted under the Health and Safety Regulations. Similarly drinks in cans are not allowed. The Authority cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage to packed meals or their containers. Please refrain from including nuts in your child's packed lunch as we avoid this food in nursery and school due to allergies in some of our children and young people.

Snacks

ELC provide water, milk, fruit and other healthy snacks as there is a hot lunch on offer daily. They are also involved in baking, cooking, setting table, using good manners, etc. School children are able to access milk, toast and fruit at 10.25 daily at cost of 15p per item. If you are providing the snack for your school child we suggest a small item such as fruit or similar snack that does not contain sugar.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Emergency Closures

It is important that parents let us know of friends or relatives who can, if the parent is unavailable to take responsible care of your child if he or she is ill or injured at school. This must be a local contact and one we can reach by telephone. This information should be given at the time of enrolment or as soon as possible thereafter. Our emergency contact records are updated every year.

EMERGENCY CLOSURE - SNOW/POWER CUTS

During days of very heavy snowfalls it be maybe necessary to send children home early. If this happens parents will be contacted by telephone. If your child is at school and the weather deteriorates where you live, please come and collect him/her at once. The safety of the children is what is important.

PROCEDURE

For the most part school will be closed first thing in the morning and you should consider any of the four communications below. Please remember that the dial in the service will incur a cost to you.

1. The school has a dial in service if there is a risk of closure due to adverse weather.

Please phone the Highland Council number 0800 564 2272. Then enter Smithton School's own pin number 04(2960).

2. If the school is to close an announcement will also be made on Moray Firth radio. This may happen first thing in the morning before school begins or during the day if we have to close early unexpectedly information will be available on the school website.

The highland council website will be updated with information for individual schools.

Best place to find the information will be the school website – sign up to the blog as soon as you can for all up to date information <https://smithtonprimary.com/>

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Child Protection / Illness

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 have to report such incidents to social work services which can lead to a joint social work/police investigation. All agencies involved in child protection regard priority. 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 – Tel No 01463 703483. Parentline is an excellent website to consult for many issues: <https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/parentline-scotland/>

Illness

Pupils feeling unwell should not be sent to school. If a pupil becomes ill during the school day the parent is contacted and the child sent home. The school must be informed of any medical condition that may put the pupil at risk in any school activity eg if the child is asthmatic, epileptic, etc.

Medical

Minor Injury – Minor cuts and bruises, bleeding noses or upsets will be dealt with by a member of staff. We have one trained first aider whose qualifications are up to date.

Serious Injury – We endeavour to contact parents immediately. The child, if necessary is taken to hospital. Our policy is “better safe than sorry”. Please note however, that we are not medically trained and have to rely on our common sense.

Headlice

Unfortunately, nits and lice (which like clean heads) are still around in all schools throughout the UK and we, in Smithton, are no exception. It is important that parents check their children's heads

regularly and if there is evidence of lice infection given the appropriate treatment to the person infected.

Please also let close family friends and all close contacts of the child know as they will also need their hair checked. The school would also appreciate notification. Confidentiality is assured in respect of individual children.

School Dentist

All children can be treated by the school dentist. The dentist is at Culloden Dental Surgery on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Culloden Dental Surgery 792554.

WET WEATHER CONDITIONS

As there is limited shelter provision at the school and staff are not available to supervise pupils out with school hours please, on wet weather days, do not send your children to school early. It is preferable that pupils are a little late than wet. On wet weather days during the morning playtime, all children are kept indoors. At lunch times only those having a meal in the school can be supervised. Home lunch pupils should return to school about five minutes before the bell. We do try to have the children outside so please make sure that they are suitably dressed for drizzle and occasional rainy weather.

FIRE SAFETY AND LOCK DOWN PROCEDURES

There are regular fire practices throughout the session in order to familiarise staff and pupils with procedures in the event of fire. The fire safety policy is on the school website and is reviewed at least monthly at the moment with the current pandemic situation, etc.

BICYCLES

Bringing bicycles to school is encouraged as we have bike racks and want to promote a healthy lifestyle. Please make sure your child wears a helmet and has a secure locking system for the bike. The racks are located at the entrance to the school.

MONEY

Large sums of money sent to school should be accompanied by a note saying how much and the reason for sending it. Money and valuables should not be left in the cloakroom areas but should be handed to the class teacher for safe keeping.

PARENT FORUM / PARENT COUNCIL SECONDARY EDUCATION, COMMUNITY INVOLVMENT

The current pandemic has affected the way in which we are able to engage with parents, and this may change further depending on how the pandemic progresses. For the latest information, please contact the school.

Fiona Devlin is the current Parent Council Chairperson and there are regular meetings. Many meetings are open to all the parent forum and all parents are invited to make contributions to the school.

All parents are invited to contribute to the life and work of the school and community. Ideas are taken on board and parents are consulted with the school improvement plan through the blog section of the website, questionnaires, open meetings, newsletter questions, etc. We use your information to inform the improvement plan and after questionnaires the results are compiled and shared among the parent body.

While this is an 'open school' your family's confidentiality is important to us. Please make us aware of anything in writing regarding your family circumstances that you want us to know. While we endeavour to answer your calls or meet with you within 24 hours there are certain times in the year when it could be difficult. Please know that we communicate as effectively as we can.

Parent Council email @ smithonpc@gmail.com

FaceBook @smithtonprimarypc

PARENTS/GUARDIANS/CARERS AS PARTNERS

We believe that much of the strength of the school lies in the positive relationships between staff, pupils and their parents. These relationships must be nurtured by a healthy exchange of information between teachers and pupils, between home and school. We always welcome parental interest in the welfare of our pupils. Whatever the nature of the issue, you can be assured of our help.

The school works very hard to keep parents informed regarding their child's progress and any key decisions being made about their education. This includes:

- Parents' Evenings
- Sharing Folders
- Target Setting
- Child Plan meetings
- Information on the school website and blogposts for what's happening in the minute

The support of parents in their children's education is key to the success of young people. Taking time with them, discussing work, practicing language, helping them manage their homework and encouraging responsibility are important ways of supporting children's learning.

The school always seek to involve parents in any key decisions about their child's education and keep parents informed about progress.

Parental information is obtained from questionnaires issued regularly at Parents evenings and from Parent Forums. We have focus group meetings usually twice a year and the Parent Council is trialling a focus group four times a year this year.

A member of the Senior Management Team is in school most evenings for parents to contact with any issues.

Parent Council is a group of parents selected to represent all parents of children at the school. Any parent who wishes to raise an issue for the Parent Council to consider can do so by contacting Fiona Devlin Chair Person preferably through the Facebook account @smithtonprimarypc

Useful information for parents and how to get involved in your child's education, how to support the school, information on curriculum developments can be found at Parentzone: www.parentzone.gov.uk

MILITARY FAMILIES

Our school welcomes and supports families, their children and young people from Forces families: serving, veteran and reservists.

We understand some of the challenges that mobility of service life can bring and we look forward to working with you to ensure a smooth transition for your child/young person coming into or moving on from our school. Please get in touch with us as soon as you can so we can work with you to ensure the transition is as smooth as possible.

Highland Council have proudly committed to the Armed Forces Covenant and as such support our veteran and reservist families as well as those currently serving. There is a dedicated Highland Council Military Liaison Group (MLG) which has been formed to promote and ensure equality and equity for your children and young people in their education.

Visit the Highland Council Armed Forces Website for lots of helpful information and support

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools_-_additional_support_needs/833/armed_forces_-_support_for_families_and_schools

Please get in touch with your child's named person or the Head Teacher if you have any concerns.

TRANSITIONS

HOME TO NURSERY

We acknowledge the learning and hard work you have put in as a parent before your child even comes to us. It is important that we listen to you and your child prior to coming into the setting. The time when a child starts is usually a very exciting time for them but can also be an anxious time for parents as they take their first independent steps! We want parents to feel as part of the Smithton family as your child does. To this end we ensure that there is a clear transition pathway for coming into nursery: you will receive a letter inviting you and your child to come for a short play. You will be invited to have

a presentation with some of the staff around expectations in the nursery. You will then be contacted directly by an early years practitioner so that you have a point of contact. There will be regular 'stay and play' opportunities for you and there is always a friendly face at the door each morning should you require any information.

NURSERY TO PRIMARY ONE

The ELC is very much part of the whole school and during their time with us the children have many opportunities to be used to the school building, the playground and the wider school community. We have a comprehensive transition plan that is available for all children and enhanced for those who require extra support moving to primary one. We are also fully aware that parents may feel anxious about the transition. We're here to listen and support all parents and carers.

SECONDARY EDUCATION

Pupils transfer to Culloden Academy. If you wish to contact this school, the official address of the Head Teacher is:

Dr James Vance, Head Teacher, Culloden Academy, Culloden, Inverness. Telephone 01463 790851

Liaison exists between Culloden Academy and its associated Primary Schools (Smithton, Duncan Forbes, Balloch, Cradlehall, Ardersier, Croy) and meetings of the Culloden Are Group take place throughout the session. Throughout the year Academy staff and Primary staff work closely together to ensure continuity of education by providing adequate information about our pupils in Primary 7 at the transfer stage.

Parents of P7 children meet with Culloden Academy Staff in Smithton School during Term 3 and later in the Academy in the summer term. In June, P7 pupils spend a few days in the Academy, working in various departments, in order to familiarise themselves with the Academy prior to actual transfer. The children enjoy their visit and feel rather more confident about the next stage of their school career.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Our liaison police officer visits from time to time to talk to pupils on relevant matters such as bullying, say no to strangers, etc. Other visitors talk to pupils about such things as the work of 'Tapes of the Blind', Dr Barnados, Healthy Eating, etc. Parents and community helpers volunteer their services from time to time to share their particular interests and talents. With continued support Smithton will remain a happy environment for young and old.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

All Primary Schools in the Highlands have been appointed an Active Schools Coordinator to work within their cluster/community group. Jointly funded by Sport Scotland and Highland Council the vision of Active Schools is to encourage all children to become more physically active by participating in safe, enjoyable, physical activities and to promote healthy lifestyles. The specific aim is to get more

children, more active, more often with a target of 80% of primary school children being physically active for one hour a day. Mrs Lynne Fraser is based at Culloden Academy.

We usually have a full programme of extra curricular but due to COVID-19 this has been put on hold. We hope to start adding in clubs after rigorous risk assessments after January 2021.

THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

There are many changes which have taken place in Scottish education through the 'Curriculum for Excellence' focus. What remains consistent is that all children need to know how to read, write and count!

From day one in our nursery we actively encourage learning through play and curiosity. Nursery and P1 have a clear play based learning strategy and our main focus, through Curriculum for Excellence is to plan through interactions, experiences and spaces ([from Realising the Ambition](#))

They need to be inquisitive, enthusiastic about learning and see its purpose. We try to engage the learners to think for themselves and to take ownership for their learning. We try to help the learners see the connections between different areas of the curriculum so that they can transfer their skills and knowledge with ease. This is no mean feat, especially when you consider that the children are in school for less than a fifth of their day! That's why we need to work together at home and school. Homework is encouraged to let you see what your child has been doing, encourage talk about school and learning in the home and consolidate learning for the child. Please put it in writing if you would not like your child to complete homework.

We encourage reading by taking each class to the local library regularly and the expectation is that you will read with your child at home. From nursery to P7 the environment provides simple access for reading – signs, shops, packaging, newspapers, internet ... and so the list goes on. Maths and number work can be practised at home through weighing, gardening, shopping, money ... again the list goes on. Writing can be encouraged through taking notes at home, thank you letters to family, shopping lists, emails ... you get the picture. All of these activities encourage consolidation of learning and connections are made between learning in school and the purposefulness of using this learning in the real world. Read our [Curriculum Rationale](#) on the school website and read our HT [Learning Summaries](#) weekly.

Through the curriculum we expect children to achieve in a variety of ways and attain standards expected of their ability. Progress is monitored by class teachers and the senior management team. Support is available to children in a variety of ways and we stress importance on supporting children to achieve and attain. Inclusion and equality are expected and using the Getting It Right For Every Child helps to keep all agencies to an action plan for children and families. Just ask to see the staged approach to supporting children in their learning.

All children need support to help them learn. Some children require more help than others. We follow the Highland Practice Model stages approach to assessing, identifying and supporting additional support needs. In this model every child has a 'named person' who is responsible for making sure that the child or young person has the right help to support his/her development and wellbeing. If you

have a concern about your child in primary school please contact your child's class teacher in the first instance or the 'named person', who is the head teacher at Smithton Primary.

Sometimes a Child's Plan may be put in place to help organise, monitor and regularly review your child's progress.

If you wish to find out more about the Highland Practice Model or the Child's Plan you can access more information at: [http://www.highland.gov.uk/learning here/supportfor learners/generalguidance/planning/](http://www.highland.gov.uk/learning%20here/supportforlearners/generalguidance/planning/)

There are also information sheets available at: www.chipplus.org.uk click on Education.

We are creating a framework for learning based around the new curriculum starting with the core elements of numeracy, literacy and health and wellbeing and social sciences and science have been developed for each class in the school and nursery. Languages, art, music and technology are being addressed but the emphasis is on inter connecting these aspects of learning. Resources are bought according to need.

We have an annual programme of social skills running through the whole school which classes and all staff promote. Values are explored in school through a variety of methods and children are expected to think for themselves as well as practise empathy and consideration for others. We promote citizenship through pupil led activities in P4-P7 on a weekly basis and through themes and projects in the nursery to infant classes.

Underpinning the learning at school is the learning for life philosophy – it has a purpose, stimulates living, encourages good mental health and wellbeing and creates rounded, social, positive attitudes towards themselves and each other. We ensure all sensitive aspects of learning e.g. relationships and sexual health, parenthood and substance awareness are given notice to parents beforehand. Special arrangements will be made for pupils whose parents do not wish them to participate in religious observance.

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

Nationally, we follow this guidance: [**https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/learning-in-scotland/assessment-and-achievement**](https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/learning-in-scotland/assessment-and-achievement)

Every nursery child has a 'Sharing Folder' i.e. individual progress evidence with targets, photos of learning activities, termly summary report and an all about me section. All of these sections can be accessed and we encourage all parents and carers to be involved in keeping this file updated. There is also a development overview ([first year of nursery](#) and [second year of nursery](#)) and we link our practice to [Highland Council's website](#). The website [Bumps to Bairns](#) is full of practical help for both parents and professionals. Do have a look.

As a school, we seek to provide information to pupils, parents and staff to assist in the effectiveness of the learning and teaching process and in raising attainment.

Teachers will use the assessment process as an evaluative, diagnostic and formative tool to provide evidence of pupil attainment and progress and to inform learning and teaching approaches and pupil targets.

Pupils should view the assessment process as a motivating experience which takes place within the overall context of a supportive school. Pupils should make use of feedback, in all its forms to inform next steps for the improvement of their own learning.

Parents will receive feedback on their son or daughter's progress through pupil reports, progress checks, and target setting information.

Pupils will reflect on their progress, achievement and best work in their Sharing Folder at least twice a term. This folder is shared between home and school and records progress in achievements both in school and wider achievements that you are asked to share with us. Please include any photos or certificates which can be copied and put into the folder.

Progress

Parents wishing to enquire about a pupil's progress are invited to get in touch with the class teacher in the first instance and then support for learning and the head teacher may get involved.

The Curriculum for Excellence teacher led annual assessments fall in line with the national SNSA P1, P4 and P7 annual diagnostic tests and we are slightly above our comparator school. No room for complacency so we strive on to meet the needs of all young people. Staff have planned moderation tasks throughout the year and verify assessments across the school and Culloden area with colleagues to ensure valid judgements. At this level we assess to find next steps, develop learning attributes and to build foundations in skills for life long learning.

At school level, this year, because of the pandemic, all schools in Highland are focusing on certain key priorities as followings:

- 1. Health and wellbeing**
- 2. Recovery of learning, teaching and assessment**
- 3. Attainment in session 2020/21 (focusing on identifying new or widened gaps caused by the Covid-19 situation)**

You will find the Standards and Quality Report and the School Improvement Plans on the school blog (use the search engine) or in full on the website. We also have a summary of both as a banner in the foyer of the school.

Hopefully this has given you a flavour of life at Smithton Primary. Please consult our Standards and Quality Report which is published annually which will give more detail about the workings of the school. Our website is updated regularly so please ask to see the head teacher for more information. aileen.mackay@highland.gov.uk is her direct email address.