



Helmsdale Primary School



School Handbook 2022-2023

Old Caithness Road

HELMSDALE

KW8 6JW

Email: helmsdale.primary@highland.gov.uk

Tel: 01431 821 244

November 2021



Dear Parents & Carers

Welcome to Helmsdale Primary School

The ongoing pandemic continues to affect 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 since March 2020, 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](#)

Please accept this copy of our School Handbook, which is designed to tell you all about what happens in our school. It will help you and your child to get the most out of what the school has to offer and help you participate in your child's education.

This handbook will also give you a clear idea of our aims and expectations. Education of children should be seen as a partnership between parents, the school and the community at large, each contributing different aspects and values in different ways, but supporting each other at the same time.

Also available for viewing is a copy of Helmsdale Primary Standards & Quality Report, This can be requested from the school office or can be found on the Highland Council website.

It is important that lines of communication are kept open and I would like to think that you will feel confident and happy about contacting, us, whether by phone, letter or visit.

There will be many opportunities for you to visit the school and meet the staff, but particularly on Parents' Nights and Open Days. Even if you have no real concerns regarding your child, we will still be happy to see you for a chat.

If you do have any concerns, it is important that you discuss these at an early opportunity. Please phone or drop us a note to highlight any concerns and these will be dealt with verbally or written. Your concerns will be recorded and the outcome noted as quickly as possible. It should be possible to nip many potential problems in the bud because you, as responsible parents, have alerted us. We need your help.

Lastly can I assure you that we are here to do our best for your children.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S Taylor

Acting Head Teacher

Our School Aims

Our main aim in Helmsdale Primary School is to try to provide an **education for life**.

Our curriculum and approach is based on providing our children with high quality teaching, using various approaches to produce high quality learning.

We strive to present a differentiated curriculum, taking account of national and local guidelines, to the pupils in an interesting and imaginative way, thereby hoping to develop children into being successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

We also strive to make our school a safe, caring environment with relationships based on mutual respect, allowing children to develop a feeling of being valued and self-worth. We also endeavour to create a safe school where there is a caring environment, based on mutual respect.

As the children progress through the school, continuous, formal and informal assessment procedures will be used to measure progress, provide feedback and to aid future planning.

We believe in a partnership with parents in the education of the children. A good flow of helpful information and mutual support is an essential part of this partnership at individual and at school level.

We hope not only to help them at their own level in society today, but also to equip pupils with the skills, attitudes and expectations necessary to prosper in a changing society.

School Ethos

Link to the school's Equality and Diversity Policy –

www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/id/11627/promoting_diversity_and_equality_policy.pdf

Link to the school's Bullying and Positive Relationships Policy –

www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19358/anti_bullying-guidance

Helmsdale Primary is very active in the local Community. We have an active Rotary link with Rotakids, support the local Hub, take part in local church service, organise village Christmas Craft Fair other annual events

Current school roll 48 pupils in P1-7 and 5 in nursery

Our School Day

Primaries 1, 2 and 3 9.00am – 2.55 pm (Mon/Tues)
9.00am - 2.50pm (Wed/Thurs)
9.00am – 12.15pm (Fri)

Primaries 4, 5, 6 and 7 9.00 am – 3.30 pm (Mon-Fri)
9.00am – 12.15pm

Morning Break 10.30am - 10.45am
Lunch 12.30pm – 1.15pm
12.15 (Grab & Go only)

Meet the Team

The present teaching staff is as follows –

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Acting Head Teacher | Mrs S Taylor |
| Primary 1/2/3 | Mrs A Henderson |
| Primary 4/5 | Mrs S Taylor |
| | Miss R Buckley Management Cover |
| Primary 6/7 | Mrs D Kingston |
| Support for Learning | Ms C Ross |
| Nursery EYP | Mrs R Taylor |
| | Miss L Keith |
| Nursery Support Worker | Vacant |
| Physical Education | Mrs P Sutherland (visiting) |
| Chanter and Bagpipes | Mr S Murray (visiting) |
| Drumming | Mr R Hamilton (visiting) |
| Strings | Mr Adams |
| School Clerical | Ms M Cowie |
| Pupil Support Assistants | Miss A Cormack |
| | Mrs M Mackay |
| | Miss T Rapson |
| | Mrs F Cowie |
| Playground Supervisor | Mrs F Cowie |
| Road Crossing Patroller | Mr M Jamieson |
| FM Team | Mrs F Cowie |
| | Mrs G Innes |

Helmsdale Primary School has no provision for Gaelic education, French and BSL are covered in the upper stages.

Our Nursery

The nursery is part of our school and welcomes all children from the age of 3. There are 3 intakes per session August, January and April, information on which intake your child is eligible for can be found on the Highland Council website or at the school office. Here children can develop their motor and co-ordination skills, their social interaction and their concepts and knowledge of the world in an informal atmosphere through a play based approach.

Each child is entitled to 30hours per week during term time should their parents wish for them to do full days. The current role is 5 children (2 x N4 and 3 x N3). More specific information on nursery education/childcare can be found in the nursery handbook

Nursery opening times

| | |
|-----------|----------------|
| Monday | 8.30am-3.30pm |
| Tuesday | 8.30am-3.30pm |
| Wednesday | 8.30am-3.30pm |
| Thursday | 9.00am-3.00pm |
| Friday | 9.00am-12.00pm |

School Uniform

Available to order via the school office, all come with embroidered school logo. A limited amount of stock is also held within the office.

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Sweatshirt, navy | from £8.75 |
| Cardigan, navy | from £9.50 |
| Hoodie, navy | from £10.95 |
| School polo shirt, navy / white | from £7.50 |
| T-shirt, navy / white | from £5.00 |
| School Fleece, navy | from £12.00 |

Please encourage your child to wear school uniform at all times as it creates an image of the school, it gives the children a feeling of belonging to the school, it gets round constant negotiation and argument about choice of clothes between child and parent and prevents peer-group one-upmanship with other children but, most of all, it makes the children look smart, well-kept and tidy.

Wearing school clothing also helps to act as a 'buffer' against commercial and media pressure on your child to always wear the latest and expensive fashion clothes. That pressure will always be there, but school dress helps to make this more manageable for parents.

We would ask you to try to avoid sending your child out in jeans although we understand your need to wrap up your children warmly in the bad days of winter; try not to make it the norm.

Another thing to be kept in consideration is footwear, the playground can become very wet and muddy in bad weather, also the long grass can be difficult to negotiate so warm, sturdy footwear is essential.

Children of parents on Income Support or Income Based Job Seekers Allowance may receive funding towards uniform. (Forms can be obtained from the School Office or the Head Teacher.)

School Transport

Children residing more than 3 miles from the school and children under 8 years of age living more than 2 miles from the school, are provided with transport to and from the school. Information on applying can be found on the Highland Council website.



Guidelines regarding adverse weather conditions are included in this booklet. Please familiarise yourself with them to prevent any anxiety and problems when any of these conditions prevail.

School Meals

In line with the Scottish Government initiative all children in Primary 1-4 are entitled to a free school meal. The school meals facility is run with set menus, rotating through 4 weeks, providing meals which are considered well balanced. Children are encouraged to aim towards eating a balanced diet, fresh fruit, raw and cooked vegetables and salads are always available.

All classes have a choice of the same menu. This is £2.30 per day for P5-7 pupils and can be paid for weekly. Menus can be viewed online;

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/9/school_meals

Children of parents on Income Support or Income Based Job Seekers Allowance may receive free lunches. Applications can be made online;

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/899/schools-grants_and_benefits/10/free_school_meals_and_assistance_with_clothing

There is always staff on duty in the canteen to help children who have difficulties. We try to encourage the children to have a healthy eating outlook.

Snacks like toast, bagels, fresh fruit and drinks are also on sale at the morning interval.

Enrolment/Placing Requests

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 Care and Learning Manager, Alison Donald. 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. Parents of children with Additional Support Needs, including those who have Co-ordinated Support Plans, can make placing requests to any school in Scotland including schools outside of the local authority are they live in. All appeals about placing requests to special schools will be referred to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal.

School Improvement Plan

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)

Outdoor Learning will be a key part of improvement 1

Parents/Guardians/Carers as Partners

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.

We believe that much of the strength of the school lies in the positive relationships between staff, pupils and their parents. These relations 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 – November and May
- Progress checks
- Target Setting
- Information on the school Facebook page

Details of where information regarding the school's performance at local and national level can be obtained e.g. by signposting to a website where this information is posted. Schools may wish to include a link to the most recent Education Scotland inspection information for the school and to the Education Scotland Parentzone School information Dashboard.

<https://education.gov.scot/inspection-reports/highland>

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/my-school/school-information-dashboard/>

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.

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 the Chairperson, Mary-Anne Cowie.

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

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone>

Visiting our School

At the moment we have two Parents' consultations per year in November and May. These meetings allow the class teacher time to discuss some of the practical aspects of the classroom work of the session with parents and give parents an opportunity to ask questions about their child's forthcoming classroom work and a chance to view displayed classwork and materials.

We also hold open days and class assemblies/productions during the year. Parents are encouraged to come into the school and see their child in their learning environment.

Parents need not feel themselves restricted to Parent's Evenings to enquire about their child's progress or to discuss some matter in connection with their child.

We would like you to feel that you may approach the school at any time during the term. It is advisable, however, to enquire of a suitable time from the Head Teacher, to ensure that your enquiry receives its proper attention. This is important as it is rather difficult for a teacher to have a discussion with a parent when the teacher concerned is trying to keep an eye on his/her class at the time. Usually immediately at the end of the school day is a useful time.

Child Protection

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 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. Copies of Child Protection Policy Guidelines are available from:

www.highland.gov.uk/info/1361/childcare_and_family_care/438/child_protection

All agencies involved in Child Protection **are obliged to make the welfare of children their paramount consideration and this will be the priority for Education Service staff.** More information about Child Protection Procedures within Highland can be obtained from the Child Protection Officer, Mrs Eliz MacKintosh, Highland Child Protection Committee, Kinmylies Buildings, Leachkin Road, Inverness, IV3 8NN. Telephone 01463 703483, Fax 01463 713237.

Additional Support Needs

Class teachers, in conjunction with Additional Support Needs Teachers monitor the progress of pupils with additional support. The needs of such pupils are generally catered for within the normal curriculum but with specialist advice and support as required. If necessary, a child's plan may be put in place to help plan, organise, monitor and regularly review a child's progress. Parents and pupils will be involved in these procedures and in reviews. More information can be found about the Highland Council model for support and child's plan at:

http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/230/highland_practice_model_-_delivering_additional_support_for_learners

www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/11/co-ordinated_support_plan

Sometimes a Children's Service Worker will be involved in supporting a child. They will:

- work in collaboration with the support team in school
- work to support families in their own communities
- work with individual pupils and small groups – offering a further level of support

Parents/Carers will always be involved in discussions about any additional support being suggested for their child and any need may be identified within the school. Highland Council would seek to work in partnership with parents at all times, but sometimes you will have a concern that you don't feel is being addressed, or will want to talk to someone outwith the school. Should you have any concerns that your child's additional needs are not being met, you should contact your child's named person, Dawn McKenzie, in the first instance. If your concerns continue, there are a number of means of resolving difficulties and disputes and information on this can be found at:

www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools-additional_support_needs/1/support

Here at Helmsdale Primary Ms Ross is with us on a Wednesday and provides learning support for both children who are experiencing difficulties in the learning process and those whose work will benefit from extra individual time. Her support for each child can be short term or longer term depending on the degree or nature of the difficulty encountered. The work Ms Ross does is usually focussed around literacy.

Ms Ross also provides support for the school by carrying out assessment tests which helps the staff obtain objective feedback on a child's or children's progress.

Support for Pupils

All children need support to help them learn. Some children require more help than others. We follow The Highland Practice Model staged 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 well-being.

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 will usually be the head teacher. In a secondary school, the named person will usually be the Principal Teacher Guidance/Pupil Support.

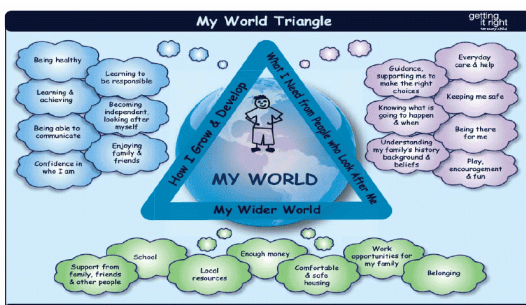
Sometimes a Child's Plan may be put in place to help organise, monitor and regularly review your child's progress.

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/learninghere/supportforlearners/generalguidance/planning/>

There are also Information sheets available at: www.chipplus.org.uk click on Education. Organisations specified by Scottish Ministers which provide advice, further information and support to parents of children and young people with ASN. These organisations are identified under The Additional Support for Learning (Sources of Information) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2011 as:

- Children in Scotland: Working for Children and Their Families, trading as "Enquire – the Scottish advice and information service for additional support for learning", a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC003527; <http://enquire.org.uk/>
- Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC033576; and
- Scottish Child Law Centre, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC012741."



Some useful links;

[Support for Learners Website](http://enquire.org.uk)
<http://enquire.org.uk>

The Curriculum

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)

At Helmsdale Primary we aim to ensure that all our pupils develop the knowledge and understanding, skills and attributes they will need if they are to flourish in life, learning and work, now and in the future. Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) provides a coherent, flexible and enriched curriculum for our pupils.

The Curriculum encompasses learning through:

- the ethos and life of the school
- curriculum areas
- interdisciplinary projects
- opportunities for personal achievement

The eight curricular areas in a Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) are:

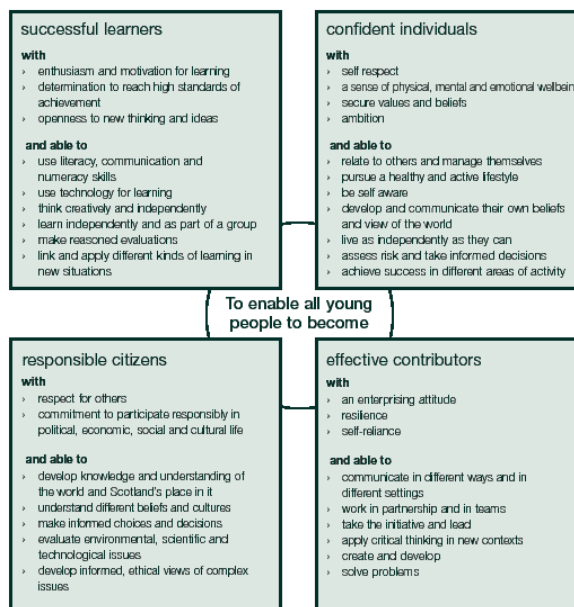
- Literacy and Languages
- Numeracy and Mathematics
- Sciences
- Health and Wellbeing
- Social Studies
- Expressive Arts
- Religious and Moral Education
- Technologies

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Levels of Achievement

| Level | Stage |
|------------------|---|
| Early | The pre-school years and P1 or later for some |
| First | To the end of P4 but, earlier or later for some |
| Second | To the end of P7 but, earlier or later for some |
| Third and Fourth | S1 – S3 but earlier for some |
| Senior Phase | S4 to S6 and college or other means of study |

A Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) encourages schools and parents to work together to help all children become:

- Successful learners
- Confident individuals
- Responsible citizens
- Effective contributors



Literacy & English

Our aim in our literacy work is to develop in a child, language, as a tool or medium to be used in all school curricular areas and for the enrichment of life through the development of the varying uses of our language in society through listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Along with most other schools in Highland, we have implemented a revised approach to the teaching and learning of Reading, entitled the *Highland Literacy Project*.

The aims of Highland Literacy are:

- To develop more competent and competent readers
- To increase pupils' enjoyment of reading
- To create independent learners
- To foster lifelong learning skills

Written skills need to be highly developed to meet the demands of the increasingly complex society in which we live.

When we talk about 'writing' we are talking about two things. One is the ability to use a pen or a pencil – the secretarial skills - and the other is what the child is trying to communicate through his writing – the composing skills. We aim to teach our children to write legibly, with fluency and speed at all stages of instruction.

Children, throughout the school, are given opportunities to write in different ways for different purposes. Each class has a structured, weekly writing lesson, taught by the class teacher. At all stages writing is presented as a meaningful and purposeful activity and children are given many opportunities to practise their writing skills.

Today SPOKEN LANGUAGE is given a central place in the primary school curriculum. Society no longer holds the view that children should be seen and not heard. We encourage children to talk as we believe that it is important that children can express themselves clearly and intelligibly in an acceptable form. Pupils are given many opportunities to discuss their work, in all subjects. They are invited to present prepared talks to their classmates. They are encouraged to put forward their views and opinions on varied topics and issues and are given opportunities to question other speakers and the validity of what is being said to them.

Listening is also important and pupils are encouraged to look for meaning in what they hear and to be critical of what is expressed in vague terms. They are encouraged to hold polite conversations and discussions and are taught the techniques of good listening.

Mathematics

In a broad sense, education is the process of helping the child to understand his/her environment. Mathematics is an integral part of the environment in which we live and children are taught appropriate work within realistic contexts geared to their age, aptitude and abilities.

It is widely recognised that children should always be given work that is appropriate to their level of ability, and that success in mathematics, as in other activities, generally leads to further success. Children who have difficulty with mathematics make most progress when the work they are asked to do is set at an appropriate level. Equally other pupils make most progress when they are being stretched as far as possible with levels of success.

In mathematics, there is an important emphasis on practical work – the handling of real things and problems – and an understanding. Children learn best by being involved in many mathematical activities dealing with number, money, measurement, shape, position & movement, handling information and problem solving. Material for the study of mathematics is found everywhere in the child's environment – the children count real things, they weigh out real objects, they go out and measure real distances, use money in realistic situations and use clocks and timetables to understand how time is important in our lives. Working through practical activities, the concept of number, shape, volume, weight, time, length, etc. are established.

At the same time, we recognise the importance of developing the mental agility of pupils and whole class or group interactive teaching forms a major part of a child's work in this curricular area.

At all stages teachers are making assessments on how well the children have understood the work taught. Because children do not all develop at the same rate, the teachers gear their work to meet the needs of groups of children and individuals, building on what has gone before.

Health & Wellbeing

Physical Education: provides experience for the children in body and space awareness, gymnastics, apparatus work, swimming, games skills both indoors and outdoors, athletics and sporting activities. They may do creative movement to music, learn national dances or compose their own routines.

Mental/Emotional/Social: includes, on the one hand, developing pupils' independence, self-awareness and self-esteem, and on the other, promoting amongst the pupils a growing realisation of their inter-personal relationships and inter-dependence with those round about in school, the community and the wider world. Rather than being taught as a separate subject, PSD is embedded in the curriculum through the life and work of the school.

The school follows the Curriculum for Excellence health Programme of Study from P.1-P.7. Topics include keeping safe, healthy eating, P.E., mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing. As part of the Health Education Programme P.6 and P.7 classes receive education on drugs, alcohol, sex and relationships, peer pressure and smoking. Parents can access the content of these subjects on the Curriculum for Excellence websites

Interdisciplinary Learning

Usually called IDL or topic work, involving Science, Social Subjects (History, Geography and Modern Studies) and Technology (designing and making).

Children need to learn about the world in which they live – its history and geography and the scientific aspects which affect it. In a sense the total school curriculum is environmental studies. All school activities are related to the environment and children are encouraged to make observations and investigations of their surroundings. Television, video and holidays abroad make the world a more accessible place to our pupils than it was in previous generations. We aim to foster in the children a desire to learn more about the world they live in and teach them the skills they need to interpret it.

Much of the work is approached through themes (projects). This is sometimes referred to as 'project work' or 'topics'. Content includes local studies together with the history and geography of places near and far. The study of these themes obviously presents meaningful opportunities for work in other areas of the curriculum, e.g. Mathematics and English Language.

When making choices, teachers bear in mind the need for balance within the curriculum at each stage, and from stage to stage. Wherever possible, pupils are provided with first hand experience working outside the classroom as well as inside it. Children are encouraged to make physical contact with their surroundings:

- living things – plants, animals and people;
- inanimate object of the physical environment – buildings, rocks, soil, etc.;
- learning about the man-made world;
- Investigations of how things work.

Expressive Arts

An appreciable part of the school curriculum is devoted to the expressive arts; namely music, art & design, drama and physical education (which includes dance). These are integrated where appropriate into other areas of the curriculum to provide a rich and varied experience for the pupils. Other subjects in the curriculum can be brought to life through the media of Expressive Arts.

During **Music** lessons children will frequently sing songs linked to a theme being studied. They will also listen to music and compose their own pieces, using untuned and, in the later stages, tuned percussion, which can be performed in front of an audience.

Art and Design work is always included in any area of study and children are taught various techniques using a wide variety of materials. Activities range from drawing, painting, modelling and printing to collage, pen and ink work, marbling and fabric dyeing.

Drama is an important part of the curriculum. Pupils can identify themselves with people, real or imagined, by acting out situations within their experience or their imaginative range. By expressing in movement and/or speech the feelings of themselves and others, the children can enlarge their experience and learn in ways natural to them. Imagination is stimulated and powers of discrimination, observation and awareness are increased.

Religious and Moral Education

Through Religious Education we aim to foster an interest in religion and to help children appreciate that religion is concerned with relationships which have implications for the value one sets on people for personal behaviour. Religion is explored both implicitly and explicitly.

In implicit studies we try to illustrate and use human experience to highlight the areas of life studied with RME and to encourage children to search for the truth, values and meaning in life. In all aspects of school life, we encourage our pupils to be sensitive towards and tolerant of others.

In explicit studies we explore the ways in which Jesus is central to Christian belief and worship. We also endeavour to develop some understanding of the place of religion in the development of Scotland's history, society and culture, while acknowledging the wider social and cultural impact of various religions on our own multi-cultural society. Other principal world religions (Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism) are also studied, often with a comparative angle which explores common themes between these and Christianity, e.g. birth, marriage and death rituals, harvest and light festivals, key figures of each religion, etc.

Please note that parents have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education. Any parent who wishes to do so should contact the Head Teacher who will make the necessary arrangements. Pupils who are withdrawn from RE are given alternative work to do during this time.

Technologies

The school recognises that ICT (Information and Communications Technology) plays an increasingly significant role in all aspects of society. Pupils therefore need opportunities to develop confidence and competence in this area. High priority is given to ensuring that ICT is stimulating, challenging and a creative experience for all pupils.

Pupils in P6 & 7 now have chromebooks which are used in class and at home for various research, coding and homework activities.

Homework

As a school we believe homework is important in your child's progress.

- It encourages children to be responsible for their independent learning
- It allows parents to see what kind of work their child is doing at that particular time
- It provides extra practice for the child
- It encourages children to work on their own
- We value and promote parental involvement in supporting their children at home in a range of contexts, including reading for enjoyment and reading for information.
- It helps the child to catch up on unfinished work.

Please take an interest in your child's homework by giving your child encouragement and by setting aside a regular time to do it each evening.

We also understand that fitting in everything at home can be difficult so work is a manageable amount and for those who struggle to find the time there is a homework club available on Thursday lunchtimes.

| | Reading | Literacy | Maths | IDL/Topic |
|---------------|--|---|--|---|
| P1/2 | Given daily with instructions written in their Reading Record. | New Sounds (Jolly phonics) given weekly to P1 Spelling/phonics for P2 | Maths given when appropriate to enhance learning in class | Changes termly dependent on class focus. |
| P3/4 | Given regularly with instructions written in their Reading Record | Spelling on a Monday returned on Thursday with a spelling test on Friday. Activities reflecting classroom work | Maths given weekly- to further develop work done in class. | Topic work given to fit with class topic, as required. |
| P5/6/7 | Reading given out twice a week dependent upon which group, detailed in Reading Record. Individuals are encouraged to read for enjoyment. | Spelling activities issued on a Monday via Google Classroom to be completed by Friday. | Maths given weekly- either in written form or through Education City/other sites accessed through Chromebooks. | Termly topic homework grids to fit with the theme being covered in class. |

Swimming Instruction

By the time each child leaves our school we aim to have him/her a competent swimmer.

The more able swimmers aim at developing their skills and probably would receive some life-saving instruction. It is most helpful that parents should encourage their child in learning to swim, especially those who are apprehensive of water.

Such a child may make substantial progress in his/her 6-week spell only to again start at the beginning during the swimming block the following year.

Instrumental Tuition

All pupils will be offered the opportunity to present themselves for assessment of their suitability to play a musical instrument. This normally starts around the P4/5 stage. Instruments offered include violin, chanter and drumming.

Pupil's Progress

Children's progress is monitored by the teacher and information on this is given through the child's termly Progress Report Form and also their formal report after Easter. Work is sent home termly for parents to comment on and be part of the assessment process. As a school we are working on recording and profiling and having parents involved.

Progress is constantly assessed by, hearing children read, set exercises, questioning, discussing and providing set assessment tests. The staff may on occasion give other assessment tests to monitor overall or individual progress. We also currently use Scottish National Standardised Assessments computer generated testing at P1, P4 and P9 (See section on assessment)

All children are treated as individuals with views and opinions which are listened to respectfully by staff and peers alike. We wish our pupils to be responsible, to think, to make decisions and to act upon them. We wish every child to have independence, to have the ability to work on his/her own and to share ideas with others. We wish our pupils to have inquiring minds and encourage this through practical activities in all areas of the curriculum. We encourage a lively curiosity. Children learn through doing, through questioning – they make discoveries and are keen to learn. Much use is made of the wider environment in helping pupils learn.

Assessment and Reporting

As a school, we seek to provide information to pupils, parents and staff to assist in the effectiveness of 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 child's progress through pupil, reports, progress checks and target setting information. Pupils will reflect on their progress, achievement and best work on their e-portfolio. Parents wishing to enquire about a pupil's progress are invited to get in touch with Dawn McKenzie, Headteacher.

Further to this the class teacher gives more formal assessment of progress through teacher-generated tests, set tests and on occasions, standardised tests. Each term there is a literacy assessment, numeracy assessment and a KAT (key assessment) carried out in class.

The school has also built up a range of other assessment instruments which are used selectively according to the perceived need of the child. This is done to give us a clearer understanding of a child's difficulties so that we may put into effect a programme to aid a child conquer the difficulty or provide a strategy to get round the difficulty.

Discipline

We believe that a school should have a happy working atmosphere and should provide an environment which is safe and where effective learning can take place. We promote positive behaviour and use positive behaviour strategies in the classroom. Positive behaviour is also reinforced at Assemblies and promoted in school newsletters. We aim for a nurturing, supportive environment and give help when needed through classroom work or individualised support. The pupil council voted for a time out bench - where time is deducted for pupils who need to come away from a situation. We work with families to keep them informed and so we can work together.

Attendance/Absence

Good attendance is vital if pupils are to achieve their full potential. But if a pupil is absent from school, a parent or guardian should phone the school on the first day of absence. When returning to school after an absence, the parent or guardian must give written reason for time of absence.

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/guardian. Where at all possible, medical and dental appointments should be outwith 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 daytime contact numbers and emergency contact numbers for all 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 assessment with consequential impact on pupils and teachers
- could result in 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. If parents decide to make arrangements during school term, this should be confirmed in writing to the Head Teacher.

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.

Minor injuries

School will only deal with minor cuts and bruises, these will be cleaned and a plaster applied. If your child is injured, falls or becomes unwell during the school day you or the emergency contact you have provided, will always be contacted and you may be advised to collect your child from school.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Staff will support the emotional development and wellbeing of pupils through formal and informal curricular activities. Any concerns about a pupil's wellbeing can be discussed with the named person. School have access to Highland Council's Primary Mental Health Worker Service and consultation and advice may be sought if there are concerns that might require more targeted support. Parents would generally be involved in discussions beforehand, however a young person over the age of 12 can ask for support themselves.

Psychological Service (Education)

The Council helps the staff in a supportive role by providing further assessment for any child we feel may have learning difficulties, through the Psychological Services. With the help of our Support for Learning Teacher, we now carry out various specialist assessment techniques to pinpoint particular difficulties. We are always in close contact with our Psychological Service to discuss the review test results and child progress.

Speech & Language Therapy (Health Board)

In the Nursery and school we have the services of Ms Sharon Philip, our Speech and Language Therapist, who provides screening and follow-up of our children. She works closely with Class Teachers and PSAs.

Administration of Medicines

National Guidance on the Administration of Medicines in Schools has been issued by the Scottish Government. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/supporting-children-young-people-healthcare-needs-schools/>

This guidance is based on a number of common principles that will be consistently applied when identifying, supporting and reviewing the healthcare needs of children and young people in Highland schools to enable them to make the most of their learning.

Under Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, all children have a right to the highest attainable standard of health and to health care services that help them attain this. Article 7 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states that children with disabilities have the right to express their views freely on all matters affecting them. The arrangements for each individual will therefore take account of the health professionals' advice, the pupil's views and, where appropriate, their parent's views.

NHS Highland, Highland Council and school staff will work collaboratively to ensure that pupils receive the service they need in the way most appropriate to their personal circumstances.

We will work with pupils and parents/carers to support the healthcare in our school, making reasonable adjustments that children and young people with healthcare needs might need and require.

Where appropriate, we will make arrangements for staff providing healthcare to pupils to receive appropriate training from a health professional, or other accredited source in the care they are providing.

Assistance with intimate care may be needed by children in any school and this will be provided if required to support these needs quickly and with respect for children's privacy, dignity and rights.

If your child requires medication, please note that this will only be administered by staff when there is clear written guidance from a parent/carer, providing:

- The name of the medicine, the quantity of the medicine to be given, the time it has to be given.
- As far as possible prescriptive medication should be given at home by parents/carers. If it is required to be given in school, the medication should be unopen, clearly marked with the directions from the pharmacist and administered as part of an agreed medical protocol.

Where a pupil has had sickness or diarrhoea they must stay at home for 48 hours after the final episode, this is to restrict the spreading of illnesses.

If a pupil becomes ill, informs a member of staff they feel unwell or has an accident at school, parents or the emergency contact will be notified immediately.

We are involved in the Childsmile programme, children have regular visits from Childsmile staff about dental hygiene, good practice and tooth brushing, as well as fluoride varnishing.

Any parent who wishes to opt out of any part of the health provision for their child must contact the Head Teacher.

Complaints and Requests for Service

Complaints should initially be brought to the attention of the class teacher or the child's named person – who is usually the Head Teacher. The school will always endeavour to resolve issues by listening to parents and seeking solutions in partnership. Should a situation not be resolved, the matter can be raised with the Parent Council or ultimately the Area Care and Learning Manager, Alison Donald.

Please note that transport is not a school responsibility and any queries should be addressed to the Transport Development Officer, Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, IV3 5NX, or public.transport@highland.gov.uk.

Arrangements for parents to record concerns and how these concerns will be dealt with. Also link to Parentline: <https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/parentline-scotland>

Attendance and school data

Information on the above is available at the school office on request.

Community involvement

We have close links with many local bodies including the Free Church and the Church of Scotland, the local Minister and Reverend will often participate in school assemblies throughout the session. Pupils will also visit the Churches for special services i.e Harvest, Christmas and Easter.

Timespan offer workshops and excursions to the pupils from time to time, depending upon their current projects. They also run a Youth action group on a Friday afternoon for pupils to attend.

Classes visit the local Health and Well Being HUB in the community centre.

Helmsdale Primary Parent Council

All parent/carers are automatically members of the Parent Council and are free to attend Parent Council meetings. The following are the Members of the Parent Council for 2021/2022:

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Chairperson – | Mary-Anne Cowie |
| Secretary – | Shelly Taylor |
| Treasurer - | Rachel Shaw |
| Committee – | Caroline Cowie, Kelly Booth, Racheal Taylor, Terri Rapson, Amy Withey |

The Parent Council is a vital part of school life and where parents are able to raise issues, through the Chair, that concern them.

We would really like to see you at their meetings and hope that you will feel that in time you too would have something to offer within this body. The meetings are held termly on a Thursday evening.

Helmsdale Primary Children's Councils

During some of the school session we run Pupil, Eco, Health and other various committees. These give children a chance to have a say in the life of their school.

Primary 5/6/7 also run a Rotakids group.

Access to Pupil Records

The Pupils' Educational Records (Scotland) Regulations 2003 extend to parents the right of access (within certain specific exceptions) to any record held by the Authority in relation to their child. Parents may make application to the Head Teacher.

Data Protection Legislation

Information on pupils, parent and guardians is stored on a computer system and may be used for teaching, registration, assessment and other administrative duties. The information is protected by data protection legislation and may only be disclosed in accordance with the codes of practice.

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. Further information can be obtained from: www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/ScotXed

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 LA's 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 the 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 the Pupil Census is used for statistical and research purposes only.

Information on why we collect data about pupils and who we share this data with can be found in Highland Council's Privacy Notice which is available at:
www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/1095920/enrol

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

Your data protection rights

The collection, transfer, processing and sharing of ScotXed data is done in accordance with data protection legislation. We also comply with the National Statistics code of Practice requirements and other legislation related to safeguarding the confidentiality of data. Data protection legislation gives you the right to know how we will use your data. This note can give only a brief description of how we use 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.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/ScotXed/SchoolEducation

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 this 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 email the Head of Schools Analysis at ScotXed@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or 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

For up-to-date information please see:

www.highland.gov.uk/info/751/equality_diversity_and_citizenship/313/equal_opportunities

In summary, our activities in school should ensure that we:

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, 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

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](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.

HELMSDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL
TELEPHONE INFORMATION SERVICE

GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS

Schools now have a dial-in service if there is a risk of closure due to adverse weather. This allows parents to listen to a recorded message from the Head Teacher.

When severe weather warnings are received your school will endeavour to keep the system updated. It is an enhancement to the present service and does **not** replace existing methods of giving out information, such as radio broadcasts, described in the schools Adverse Weather Guidelines.

How to use the service.

- Dial Highland Council's access number - 0800 564 2272
- Now enter your own school's pin number **04 2180**
You have two attempts to enter the pin number and you will be disconnected after a second failed attempt. If this happens, check the number and redial. If you still have a problem check with your school.
- You will now hear the school's name. Ensure that this is correct before going on.
- You will now be taken to the MAIN MENU where you will be given 4 options:

Press 1 to hear your school's message about the adverse weather for example whether or not the school is to close or if transport arrangements have been affected.

Press 4 to enter the pin number for another school within the authority. Parents may have children who attend different schools. This option allows you to move from one school's messaging service to another without having to dial in again.

Where possible we will update the school Facebook page. MFR will also have information being broadcast if the school has to close as well as the information being available online at Highland Council website. <http://www.highland.gov.uk/schoolclosures>

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Our extra-curricular activity programme is currently on hold due to restrictions.

Secondary Education

Our children normally transfer to Golspie High School at the end of Primary 7. In the months leading up to the transition, much communication takes place between the P7 Class Teacher and both the Pastoral Care Department and Support for Learning Departments of the High School.

In the summer term, P7 pupils will have a visit from a member of the Guidance Team and a visit from a senior pupil, before spending 3 Familiarisation Days in the High School. We organise transition activities along with Secondary Departments. Any pupils with additional support needs will have extra transition arrangements put in place.

Golspie High School Telephone (01408) 633451

I hope you have found the information in the brochure useful. It is reviewed and revised periodically and although the contents are correct at the time of publication, there may be subsequent changes as the year progresses.

If you are unsure of anything or would like further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Shelly Taylor
Acting Head Teacher

PLEASE RETAIN FOR REFERENCE

Term dates are available to view online [School term dates | School term dates | The Highland Council](#)