

# Macdiarmid Primary School

Handbook



2023-2024



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## **Contact Details**

Macdiarmid Primary School

Carbost

Skeabost

Portree

Isle of Skye

IV51 9PD

Tel: 01470 532229

e-mail: [macdiarmid.primary@highland.gov.uk](mailto:macdiarmid.primary@highland.gov.uk)

## **Welcome**

Dear Parent/ Carer,

A very warm welcome to Macdiarmid Primary School.

This handbook is intended to inform you of our values, aims, organisation and the work we do in school. We hope that you will find this booklet both useful and informative, that it will encourage and enhance your involvement in the partnership between home and school and that you will share our values.

Macdiarmid Primary School is a non-denominational two teacher school within the community of Skeabost. We are a tri-cluster partnership with Knockbreck and Edinbane Primaries. We aim to provide a happy and welcoming atmosphere, in which all children will learn and be able to equip themselves for life outside the school environment.

At the time of publishing this handbook in December 2022, MacDiarmid, Edinbane and Knockbreck Cluster Primaries are awaiting the appointment of their new Head Teacher to commence later in the month. As point of contact for MacDiarmid Primary and Nursery in the interim period, please get in touch should you have any questions or queries.

Kind regards

Samantha Muir, Head Teacher  
Carbost and Dunvegan Primary Cluster

## **Useful Names and Addresses**

### **Area Care & Learning Manager, Education, Education and Learning– Ross, Skye and Lochaber**

Ms Mhairi MacDonald

The Fingal Centre

Viewfield Road

Portree

Isle of Skye

IV51 9ET

Tel: 01478 614814

[mhairi.macdonald3@highland.gov.uk](mailto:mhairi.macdonald3@highland.gov.uk)

### **Executive Chief Officer for Education and Learning**

Ms Nicky Grant

[nicky.grant@highland.gov.uk](mailto:nicky.grant@highland.gov.uk)

### **ASN Manager**

Ms Fiona Wallace

[fiona.wallace3@highland.gov.uk](mailto:fiona.wallace3@highland.gov.uk)

## School Times

### Nursery:

Monday-Friday 9.00-3.00

### P1-3:

|           |             |
|-----------|-------------|
| Session 1 | 9.00-10.45  |
| Break     | 10.45-11.05 |
| Session 2 | 11.05-12.15 |
| Lunch     | 12.15-1.20  |
| Session 3 | 1.20-3.00   |

### P4-7:

|           |             |
|-----------|-------------|
| Session 1 | 9.00-10.45  |
| Break     | 10.45-11.05 |
| Session 2 | 11.05-12.40 |
| Lunch     | 12.40-1.20  |
| Session 3 | 1.20-3.00   |

## **Visitors to the school**

All visitors are required to enter the school by the front door in the main building. A Controlled Door Entry system operates at the Front Entrance Door. There is a sign-in book for visitors and contractors and all visitors must wear an authorised lanyard issued by the school office.

## Term Dates

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/32/school\\_term\\_dates](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/32/school_term_dates)

## **Enrolment**

Parents wishing to enrol their children for the new session should watch local press (The West Highland Free Press newspaper/online notifications) for advance notice of enrolment date.

In the Highland Council Area this is usually in January or February. Parents should then contact the school to make arrangements for enrolment, or follow instruction to enrol online.

On entry parents will be asked to give consent to various aspects of school life e.g. trips, photos, e-mail, internet, Twitter etc.

## **PLACING REQUESTS – PARENTAL CHOICE**

Each school serves its own particular catchment area. The delineated area for Macdiarmid primary extends from Glenhinnisdal to Knott, including Peiness/ Garalapin. 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 & Learning Manager, Education, Education and Learning**, Mhairi MacDonald.



. Placing request forms can be obtained from Transportation to and from school, for placing request pupils, is a parental responsibility.

Placing request applications are made online at:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/887/enrol\\_your\\_child\\_for\\_school/2](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/887/enrol_your_child_for_school/2)

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

If pupils live outwith the school catchment area and their parents wish them to attend Macdiarmid Primary School, they can contact the school to arrange a visit.

Parents of children with additional support needs, (including those that have Coordinated Support Plans) can make placing requests to any school in Scotland including schools outside of the local authority area they live in. All appeals about placing requests to special schools will be referred to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal.

### **Nursery Admission 2022-23**

3 Year Olds-Three year olds are eligible for funding from Highland Council as follows:-

| <u>Third Birthday</u>     | <u>Funding From</u> |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 March – 31 August       | August              |
| 1 September – 31 December | January             |
| 1 January – 28 February   | April               |

### **4 Year Olds**

Pre-school children are fully funded by Highland Council.

Children are able to start Nursery a day after their second birthday, the current charge per session is £4.70 per hour until they are eligible for a funded place.

Birth Certificates need to be checked at enrolment.

### **School Nurseries – English Medium**

Those enrolling should all live within the catchment area of the school.

There are however certain circumstances in which an enrolment could be accepted for a child out with the catchment area. These are:-

- 1) No school nursery provision in the child's own area.
- 2) When the parent has domestic or work arrangements that you judge are reasonable grounds for granting a place in your nursery e.g. the child is regularly cared for during the day by a relative or child-minder who lives in your area.

In allocating places priority should always be given to children in the catchment area for Macdiarmid.

**NB** Enrolments should not be accepted for children on the basis that a placing request is to be made for them in your school for next year when they enter Primary1. In this instance they would still be expected to access their local primary school nursery.

### **School Nurseries – Gaelic Medium**

Enrolments may be accepted for children from any catchment area that does not have Gaelic nursery provision.

### **Partner Centres**

Those enrolling should be from areas where there is **no school nursery provision** unless:

- 1) The child is being provided with day care of 4 hours or more per day in your centre.
- 2) The child is regularly cared for by a relative or childminder who lives in your area.
- 3) Partner Centres offer Gaelic medium provision that is not available at the school nursery.
- 4) The parent has some other domestic or work arrangement which you judge to be reasonable grounds for granting a place e.g. the parent requires provision split between two centres to fit in with work patterns.

**NB** Enrolments should not be accepted for children on the basis that they are to submit a placing request next year for the child to attend the school in your area. In this instance they would still be expected to access their **local** primary school nursery.

Please ask us for details of partner centres.

### **Admission to P1**

Admission to Primary 1 is arranged by enrolling your child at the school. There is one intake of pupils, in August each year. These children are usually five years of age by the end of the following February. Proof of birth date is a requirement of enrolment.

The children's ages range between 4 and 12, from P1-P7.

During the spring or summer term, before admission to P1, parents are invited in as a group to meet with the class teacher, to be introduced to aspects of school life and are welcome to make separate appointments should they wish to discuss anything on an individual basis.

When pupils start in August they will attend full days after the first fortnight; the children will attend mornings only for the first two weeks.

## **Staff**

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Mrs Fiona Goss        | Head Teacher (from December 2022)                    |
| Miss R Cameron        | Class Teacher P4-7                                   |
| Miss T Lancaster      | Class Teacher P1-3                                   |
| Miss Jennifer Hardman | Class Teacher P1-3                                   |
| Mr D MacLean          | Support for Learning Teacher                         |
| Mrs A MacVicar        | Class Contact Reduction (CCR) teacher- Art           |
| Ms I McAlister        | CCR Teacher  |
| Mrs Lynn Strachan     | Nursery Management Cover Teacher                     |
| Mrs J Morrison        | Early Years Practitioner                             |
| Miss M Lockhart       | Early Years Practitioner                             |
| Mrs S MacInnes        | Pupil Support Assistant and Care & Welfare Auxiliary |
| Mrs C MacLeod         | Clerical Assistant                                   |
| Miss A Gillies        | Pupil Support Assistant                              |
| Mrs K Masson          | Pupil Support Assistant                              |
| Mrs M Gillies         | School Meals   |
| Miss F Gillies        | School Cleaner                                       |
| Mr I Finlayson        | Piping Instructor                                    |
| Mr A MacKenzie        | Youth Music Initiative Instructor                    |
| Mrs S Ross            | Active Schools Coordinator                           |

## **School Roll**

School: 27 (P1-3: 9, P4-7: 18)

Nursery:4

## **Communication**

Our aim is to continue positive and supportive relationships between school and home. The Head Teacher welcomes parents' enquiries and will be happy to arrange interviews and meetings with the class teacher when necessary.

There is an Open Door policy in school which means that you may contact school at any time if you have anything you wish to discuss.

Parents' newsletters will be issued termly either through email or a paper copy. Apart from being a means of conveying necessary information to parents, the newsletters are intended to give a picture of the ongoing life of the school.

Regular parental questionnaires are distributed and the results are conveyed to parents.

Macdiarmid Primary has an active Parent Council which addresses many issues of importance to the school. Whilst any issues relating to the staff and children should be addressed by the Head Teacher directly, the Parent Council has an important role to play in promoting home/school links. Parent Council meetings are open to all parents.

Parent Council email address: [macdiarmid.primary@highlandpc.co.uk](mailto:macdiarmid.primary@highlandpc.co.uk)

Parents help run the School Fund, by sharing and approving decisions about priorities for spending money raised by Parents. An audit is carried out by an accountant each summer and accounts are available to all Parents. We are extremely grateful for parental support as it enriches the life of the School in many ways.

We would like to continue to extend a welcome to other family and local community members to our school and other events, as it is essential that our school plays an active role in the wider community.

We will communicate with you regularly in a range of ways including:

- Open afternoons (twice a year)
- Parents' evenings (at least twice a year)
- Parent workshops
- Learning logs
- Newsletters
- Emails
- Class Dojo
- Phone calls
- School bag mail

## **School Meals**

School meals are free for P1-5. P6-7 school meals cost £2.30 per day. Please send lunch money for the week ahead to the school office by Monday. Payment can be in cash or cheque made payable to Highland Council.

Some pupils in P6-7 are eligible for free school meals. Please apply at:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/899/schools - grants and benefits/10/free\\_school\\_meals\\_and\\_assistance\\_with\\_clothing](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/899/schools - grants and benefits/10/free_school_meals_and_assistance_with_clothing)

Our lunches are prepared and delivered by Portree High School.

## **Uniform and Ethos**

Macdiarmid is a welcoming, positive school with high standards of education and behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to be caring, polite and respectful. Pupil's achievements both in and out of school are celebrated regularly, both at class and whole school level.

School uniform is recommended and encouraged. The wearing of uniform adds to the sense of community in our school.

**Please ensure all clothing is clearly marked with your child's name.**

The uniform comprises:

School sweatshirt or cardigan, blue or white polo shirt and dark trousers/shorts/skirt.

Footwear: All children must have a pair of plimsolls for indoor use.

Football tops must not be worn at any time during school hours/events.

PE: Children must bring shorts, jogging trousers/leggings and trainers depending on the activity. PE days will be indicated by the class teacher.

Financial assistance with school uniform costs can be applied for at:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/899/schools - grants and benefits/10/free\\_school\\_meals\\_and\\_assistance\\_with\\_clothing](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/899/schools - grants and benefits/10/free_school_meals_and_assistance_with_clothing)

## **Yellow Jackets**

Your child will be provided with a reflective jacket after the October holidays. This promotes road safety and your child is encouraged to wear the jacket when travelling to and from school, as well as when walking or cycling at home. During the Easter term you will be asked to wash and return the jacket. A £5 charge may be incurred for lost jackets.

## **Playtime Snacks**

Children are welcome to bring a snack for playtime from home. School policy asks that children do not bring fizzy drinks or sweets to school.

## **Absences**

If your child is unable to attend school, it is essential that you let us know by 9.15am on the day of absence, in accordance with Child Protection procedures. When returning to school after an absence, the parent or guardian must give written reason for the time absent. This enables us to record the reason for your child's absence accurately, as required by law. An absence without a written note will be recorded as unauthorised.

If your child needs to attend a medical appointment during school hours, please inform the class teacher in writing. Where at all possible, medical and dental appointments should be made out with school hours.

It should be noted that parents must request the permission of the Head Teacher if there is a need to remove a child from school during term time.

If your child falls ill during the day, you will be contacted to collect your child, therefore it is essential that we have up to date day time 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 of 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,
- Will affect school attendance records and efforts to raise standards of attainment,
- 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](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.

## **School Closures/Adverse Weather Arrangements**

When known in advance, parents will be informed of planned early closures. Should an emergency closure become necessary you will be contacted to ensure that someone will be at home to await your child. An emergency contact number **must** be left with the school.

### **Adverse Weather Conditions**

Please refer to the circular issued from Highland Council on Advice to parents in Adverse Weather Conditions. We issue this annually to parents around November time each year and this advice is usually contained in Newsletters. Should the weather be severe, we will delay opening the school until roads have been gritted etc.

You may telephone 0800 564 2272 (local rate), (school pin number: 042550) for up to date guidance as regards the school. We also operate a local contact system.

You may also access this information through the Highland Council Website. Details are issued in November each year.

If the weather appears to be inclement in the morning (e.g. ice and snow, or high winds), the school may make the decision to open one hour later, at 10a.m. Please ensure you check the school facebook page/severe telephone number/school transport messenger group before setting out.

### **Major Incident in the School**

If a major incident occurred in the School (e.g. a fire) the children will be evacuated from the building and taken to Skeabost Hall to await collection by an adult. The Education Office would endeavour to contact parents by telephone.

In accordance with Highland Council policy, we are developing a major incident plan. The aim of this plan is to set out the initial arrangements for dealing efficiently and effectively with a major incident involving school pupils and/or staff. The plan is not designed to meet the routine, day-to-day incidents which can affect a school's normal functions and resources, such as school closure or loss of public utilities. A major incident for the Highland Council is one which threatens or causes one or more of the following:

- Serious disruption to normal life,
- Death or injury to numbers of people,



- Extensive damage to property,
- Contamination of the environment

### **Fire Precautions**

Fire Drill Notices are displayed throughout the building and Fire Drill Practices are held at least once a term. Fire alarms and fire exits are checked on a regular basis.

### **Administration of Medicines**

Parents must inform the school of any relevant information relating to the need to administer medication to their children. In some cases, parents may ask that a member of staff administers prescribed medication to your child (e.g. antibiotics, inhaler, painkiller). Parents must ensure that any medicines are sent to school in their original packaging including the dispensing label clearly stating the child's name and the dose. We require written permission to administer the medication to your child.

### **First Aid**

Most staff have a one-day Emergency First Aid certificate. If your child becomes injured or unwell, we will administer first aid in order to preserve life, promote recovery and prevent the condition worsening. If your child has a head injury, you will be informed either by telephone or by a head bump form. If your child has a penetrating injury (e.g. splinter, tick) we cannot remove this, but we will contact you immediately. All first aid incidents are recorded in a log book. You will be contacted if there are any concerns about the wellbeing of your child.

### **Transitions**

All pupils are invited to attend an induction prior to starting Nursery, a new class or secondary school. The Nursery works closely with the infant class all year to aid transition from Nursery to Primary 1. Close links are maintained between the P1-3 and the P4-7 class to aid transition from Primary 3 to Primary 4. Primary 7s have the opportunity to attend many events, including a residential trip, with other Primary 7 classes to help develop social links and the Primary 7 children attend several induction days at Portree High School in June. Further arrangements are made to support any learners who may have additional needs to make a successful transition.

Our Associated School Group is Portree High: this means that our children will transition to Portree High School after their final year in Primary 7.

Portree High School  
Viewfield Road  
PORTREE  
IV51 9ET

01478 614810

portree.high@highland.gov.uk

<http://www.portreehigh.highland.sch.uk/>

## Homework

At each stage, pupils will be encouraged to continue their learning at home through various means. You can help by talking with your child about their day, their learning and homework, reading with your child, discussing the text, providing materials to support homework, playing games and checking spellings and tables.

### Reading homework: P1-3

It has been found that the following routine of home reading has a very positive effect on a child who is developing their reading skills and it is therefore important not to miss out any of the steps.

Your child will be reading **daily** in class and doing many associated tasks and games.

At home your child will be asked to repeat what has already been taught in school but, as you know, "Practice makes perfect".

**Day 1:** Today your child read the book/chapter silently and then with a partner. Please ask them to retell the story to you in their own words. Ask them about the characters, their feelings and where and when the story takes place.

**Day 2- ?:** Let your child read the pages indicated to you. Remember to give lots of praise.

If they are finding it tricky, try reading it together (at the same time) first. Discuss the meanings of any difficult words.

**Final day:** Let your child read the whole book/chapter to you. Ask them about the story in general and discuss their favourite pages, illustrations and phrases.

At all times try to be as enthusiastic as possible.

### Reading homework P4-7

Reading at home develops essential skills. For our older children, we encourage independence and self-discipline. Your child will be supported to choose a suitable home reading book and will work together with the class teacher to plan when and how much will be read.

## **Book Club**

Macdiarmid uses Scholastic Book Club. You will periodically receive a catalogue, and if you wish to place an order you can do so online or by returning the paper order form to school.

## **Library Facilities**

We work in partnership with Portree Library and enjoy visits to and from the library. Pupils in Nursery and Primary 1 receive Book Bug packs every November, and children in Primary 2 and 3 receive a Read, Write, Count pack. The library van visits the school every third Wednesday. The children can borrow books using the school library card or with their own card.

## **Swimming**

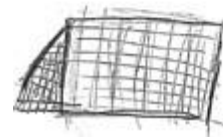
Children in Primary 1-7 take part in swimming lessons as a weekly or fortnightly block at Portree High School.

## **After School Activities**

Our pupils have the opportunity to take part in a variety of activities run by parent volunteers. For information on any of these, please see school newsletters or contact the school office.

## **Macdiarmid in the Community**

We strive to make a range of positive and educational links with the local community by creating learning partnerships to promote skill development and creativity. We involve parents, local businesses, Fair Trade, John Muir, Global and local citizenship education, Dance across the Generations and Eco-Schools.



## **Macdiarmid's Aims and Vision**

Macdiarmid Primary School seeks to provide a stimulating and caring environment in which each pupil can develop his/her own innate abilities.

Pupils are encouraged to develop a positive attitude to work and play, and to show respect and consideration for others, both within the school and in the wider community.

Within the school, we offer an environment in which learning will develop through a variety of teaching methods. For example: class, group and individual teaching, catering for a range of abilities.

### **School Aims:**

1. Our children should enjoy their educational opportunities in a secure environment which promotes life-long learning, encourages creativity and ambition and allows each child to achieve their individual potential.
2. Provide learning and teaching experiences using the Curriculum for Excellence that will allow children to become responsible citizens, effective contributors, successful learners and confident individuals through the development of the curriculum principles.
3. Foster self-discipline, develop independence and responsible attitudes in children to raise their awareness of their role in the wider community, including promoting individual health, well-being and a positive attitude to recreation and leisure.
4. Provide a learning environment which is adaptable and relevant to the changing needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
5. Foster a sense of identity and pride in the school and its environment.
6. Encourage and enhance parents' involvement in the partnership between home and school working together to develop links with the Parent Council as well as other agencies in the wider community.
7. Ensure that all children, parents and staff feel welcome, valued and respected as individuals by promoting an ethos of equal opportunities and inclusion for all.
8. Encourage and support all staff to engage in Continuing Professional Development by accessing staff training opportunities and operating as valued team

members in the delivery of the National Priorities as well as local and authority led developments.

**Vision Statement:**

We strive to ensure our learners reach their full potential in a caring, happy and fun environment.

**School Vision**

**Happy, Achieving, Team**

**School Values**

**Respect, Empathy, Self-belief, Positivity, Effort, Creativity, Teamwork**

**Aim**

**Our Vision and Values are at the heart of everything we do.**

D.1 Macdiaruid School 'Values

What do we value and promote at Macdiaruid?

Respect

Empathy

Self-Belief

Positivity

Excellence

Reactivity

Teamwork



## **School Improvement**

Here at Macdiarmid we believe that self-evaluation is key to improving our school. We are constantly evaluating our practice and planning next steps.

To see Macdiarmid's main achievements over the last 12 months and improvements in standards in literacy, numeracy and health and well-being:

Please refer to the Standards and Quality Report: you can ask for a copy from the office or from the Parent Council.

Details of where information regarding Macdiarmid School's performance can be found at...

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

Our plan for improvement of the school's performance is also contained in the School Improvement Plan. Please see the following summary of how we have improved standards in relation to core aspects of the curriculum:

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

### **Our improvements last session:**

- Continuing to review monitoring and tracking to inform areas of development, in line with Highland Council tracking.
- Health and Well-being continues as a key priority.
- Parents are involved in evaluating their child's work and giving their views through the Learning Profiles.

### **Our priorities for improvement this session:**

- 1) Health and wellbeing- outdoor learning
- 2) Recovery of learning, teaching and assessment
- 3) Attainment in session 21/22 (focusing on identifying new or widened gaps caused by the Covid-19 situation)
- 4) Profiling



| Improvement Priority Title   | What exactly are we going to do?   |
|--|--|
| <p>Recovery from Covid-19 School Closures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Health and wellbeing</li> <li>2) Recovery of learning, teaching and assessment</li> <li>3) Attainment (focusing on identifying new or widened gaps caused by the Covid-19 situation)</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1) Health and Wellbeing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·</li> <li>· Focus on Outdoor learning.</li> <li>· Weekly virtual assemblies across the cluster and flexi-schooling pupils to foster a sense of belonging and to discuss relevant Health and Wellbeing issues, including SHANARRI indicators.</li> <li>· Develop Vision, Values and Aims across the cluster.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>2) Recovery of learning, teaching and assessment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Implement Recovery Curriculum in Literacy and Health and Wellbeing.</li> <li>· Implement SHM maths scheme to provide a structured, progressive framework for Numeracy.</li> <li>· Assess current levels for pupils across core curricular areas and set targets for next steps.</li> <li>· Continue to embed and amend curricular progressions as pupils are ready and restrictions allow.</li> <li>· Flexible pathways in place for learners to ensure support and challenge based on individual needs.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>3) Attainment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Early completion of SNSA to provide diagnostic assessment and next steps for P4 and P7. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Formative assessment ongoing in class to give accurate and relevant information on progress and next steps.</li> <li>· Summative assessment of numeracy using SHM Check Ups and Highland Numeracy diagnostic assessments.</li> <li>· Summative assessment of literacy using Highland Literacy Common words, literacy</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ol> |

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <p>continuums and the informal encoding and decoding assessment where required:<br/> <a href="https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/0AB7e0xLrhxBDUk9PVA">https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/0AB7e0xLrhxBDUk9PVA</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Continue to develop learning conversations and share these with parents.</li> </ul>  |
| <p>Profiling and Parental Engagement</p> | <p>We are going to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Develop profiling, recognising the challenges surrounding parental engagement during the pandemic and making best use of technology to overcome barriers.</li> <li>· Using Quality Assessment Tasks to deliver quality learning and teaching and to provide the basis for valuable learning conversations.</li> <li>· Improve parental engagement by running virtual parents' evenings and continuing to use digital profiling to share learning.</li> <li>· Continue to track progress by using Benchmarks in our continuums.</li> </ul> |

## **History of Macdiarmid School**

Macdiarmid School was built in 1893, having originally been situated at Borve. Money was bequeathed by Donald Macdiarmid. His bequest of £1,025 sterling was “to establish an English school for the education of the poor people of my native parish”. The money was deposited with the Rev. Coll MacDonald.

Hugh Budge was the first headmaster of the school in Borve. Mr Budge retired in 1891 and was succeeded by a Lewis man who was the first headmaster of the present school built in 1893. According to the 1891 Census, however, Mr Budge’s immediate successor was William Morrison, also from Lewis.

Macdiarmid Primary is a non-denominational, equal opportunities school catering for nursery children and children from P1 to P7. Macdiarmid and Kensaleyre Schools amalgamated in August 1998 when Kensaleyre School was closed down.

The present building was refurbished and extended during session 1999-2000, with the extension having been formally opened by Councillor Andrew Anderson, chairman of Highland Council Education committee, on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2000.

The main building comprises two classrooms, one nursery classroom and a G.P. / dining room, which also serves as a P.E. facility; it also has a staffroom, a school office and separate cloakroom areas; these toilet facilities are for the use of all the primary children.

In January 2011 the P4-7 class moved into the new demountable. This is a great asset to our school.

In 2017 the nursery classroom was extended to include a new toilet block.

## **Parent Council**

Parent Councils are a vital part of the life of the school. It is well known that children achieve more if their parents/carers are actively involved in their learning. Funds raised by the parent council go towards items that are not covered by the School Fund but do help to enrich the children's overall experience at school. Fundraising is therefore part of what we do, but it is not all about fundraising. The role of the Parent Council is to support the school and provide a forum for parents and carers to express their views, get involved, share ideas and discuss anything pertaining to education. Parent Councils do not get involved in individual matters relating to pupils, families or school staff, however, it may be possible to draw a general issue for consideration by the Parent Council from a specific concern, without making reference to that concern.

At Macdiarmid Primary School & Nursery we have a small but dedicated group of volunteers, who endeavour to represent the whole parent population. We recognise that for many and varied reasons, not all parents are able to attend all the meetings and we always welcome new members. There is no need to hold a formal office, but your opinions, skills and ideas are needed. If you can attend the meetings, you will be made very welcome. Meetings take place once per term in the evening, usually in the second week of each term, and last about one hour. These are currently held virtually through "Google Meet". Mrs Nicolson, Head Teacher, is present at all the meetings and discussion and information sharing is very informal. Minutes, agendas and Google Meet links are emailed to all parents, via the school, with the agenda going out a few days before each meeting. If you would like anything added to the agenda, whether able to attend or not, please contact me as soon as possible at the start of each term.

Kirstie MacLeod, Parent Council Chairperson

[macdiarmid.primary@highlandpc.co.uk](mailto:macdiarmid.primary@highlandpc.co.uk)

## **Pupil Councils**

All children are involved in one of our councils: Pupil Council, Wellbeing Council and Eco Council. They meet regularly and being part of a council enables all children to have a strong voice and have their views valued.

### **Mission Statement from Macdiarmid Pupil Council**

"The Pupil Council is for pupils. We say ideas to see if we can try to make the school better. We share ideas and try to do these ideas to make the school a fun place, letting pupils decide what we want and need. There is a lot of chatting and debating for our lovely school. We have a Pupil Council shop where we sell different things to raise money."**Health Checks**

Pupils receive a health check in Primary 1. Macdiarmid is a Child Smile school and has regular visits from dental nurses who lead discussions around dental hygiene,

support the Nursery and P1-4 class with tooth brushing and apply fluoride varnish twice a year (parental consent must be given for fluoride varnishing).

Parents should keep the school informed of any relevant details concerning their child's health.

## **Parents/Guardians 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
- Open afternoons
- Class Dojo
- Learning logs
- Profiles and reports

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 seeks to involve parents in any key decisions about their child's education and keeps parents informed about progress.

Parental information is obtained from questionnaires issued regularly at Parents evenings and from the Parent Council.

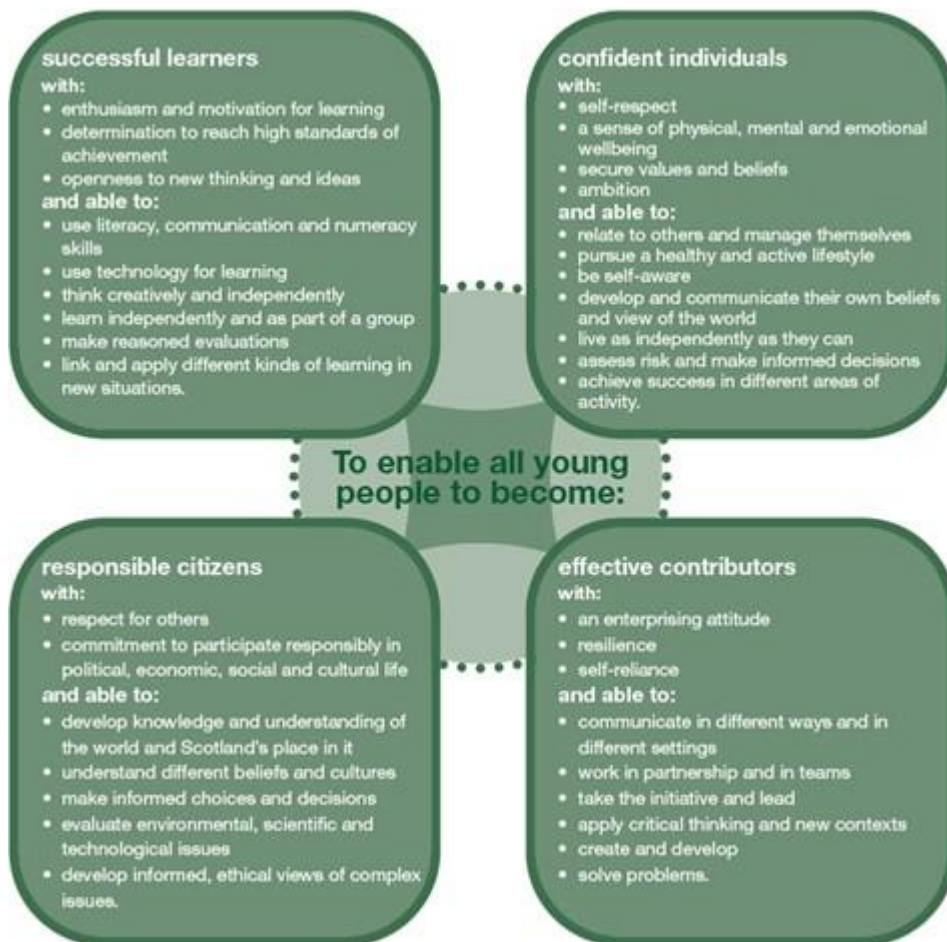
We operate an open door policy here at Macdiarmid and welcome your thoughts and comments at any time.

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/>

## Teaching and Learning

A Curriculum for Excellence aims to ensure that all children and young people in Scotland develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they will need if they are to flourish in life, learning and work, now and in the future.

The Curriculum for Excellence wants all young people to become:



## Literacy

Our learners need skills in literacy to be effective learners across the curriculum. Therefore literacy is at the forefront of learning. We use a variety of strategies including Jolly Phonics, Emerging Literacy, Words Up, Wraparound Spelling and the Highland Literacy Project. Please see the following links for useful parent information on literacy learning.

<https://bumps2bairns.com/>

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/learning-at-home/Supporting%20literacy%20at%20home>

Pupils in P1-3 are given a core reading book which is read in class every day. They are also asked to repeat this reading at home each night. Pupils in P4-7 read their class core readers three times a week and are given support to choose an appropriate home reading book; they are encouraged to develop independent organisational skills in deciding when and how much to read.

### **Numeracy and Mathematics**

We plan and track learning in Numeracy and Maths through the implementation of the Highland Numeracy Progression. We develop children's numeracy skills in knowledge and strategy. We use a range of strategies and resources and children are aware of their targets and are involved in setting next steps in their learning.

Learning in mathematics enables our learners to:

- develop a secure understanding of the concepts, principles and processes of mathematics and apply these in different contexts, including the world of work
- engage with more abstract mathematical concepts and develop important new kinds of thinking
- understand the application of mathematics, its impact on our society past and present, and its potential for the future
- develop essential numeracy skills which will allow me to participate fully in society
- establish firm foundations for further specialist learning
- understand that successful independent living requires financial awareness, effective money management, using schedules and other related skills
- interpret numerical information appropriately and use it to draw conclusions, assess risk, and make reasoned evaluations and informed decisions
- apply skills and understanding creatively and logically to solve problems, within a variety of contexts
- appreciate how the imaginative and effective use of technologies can enhance the development of skills and concepts.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

Learning in health and wellbeing ensures that children develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future.

The school aims to foster links between school, home and the community so that all are involved in a collective responsibility for promoting good health. Our Health Education covers a programme of Sexual Health and Relationship Education (SHARE) and drug awareness. Parents will be informed about sensitive aspects of learning (e.g. relationships, sexual health, parenthood and drugs awareness) by letter, and invited in to discuss these topics prior to teaching and learning where appropriate.

Throughout the school we are continually promoting positive behaviour and all children are given the opportunities to discuss and learn about the importance of citizenship and lifelong learning.

Macdiarmid School is a Health Promoting School and we continually aim to build on this.

We aim to foster a positive attitude to recreation and leisure.

The School Sport Field is located a short distance away from the school and is used for coaching organised games and sports. School sports are held annually.

## **Sciences**

The sciences framework provides a range of different contexts for learning which draw on important aspects of everyday life and work.

Learning in the sciences will enable our learners to:

- develop curiosity and understanding of the environment and my place in the living, material and physical world
- demonstrate a secure knowledge and understanding of the big ideas and concepts of the sciences
- develop skills for learning, life and work
- develop the skills of scientific inquiry and investigation using practical techniques
- develop skills in the accurate use of scientific language, formulae and equations
- apply safety measures and take necessary actions to control risk and hazards
- recognise the impact the sciences make on my life, the lives of others, the environment and on society
- recognise the role of creativity and inventiveness in the development of the sciences



- develop an understanding of the Earth's resources and the need for responsible use of them
- express opinions and make decisions on social, moral, ethical, economic and environmental issues based upon sound understanding
- develop as a scientifically-literate citizen with a lifelong interest in the sciences
- establish the foundation for more advanced learning and future careers in the sciences and the technologies.

### **Social Studies**

Learning in the social studies will enable our learners to:

- develop my understanding of the history, heritage and culture of Scotland, and an appreciation of my local and national heritage within the world
- broaden my understanding of the world by learning about human activities and achievements in the past and present
- develop my understanding of my own values, beliefs and cultures and those of others
- develop my understanding of the principles of democracy and citizenship through experience of critical and independent thinking
- explore and evaluate different types of sources and evidence
- learn how to locate, explore and link periods, people and events in time and place
- learn how to locate, explore and link features and places locally and further afield
- engage in activities which encourage enterprising attitudes
- develop an understanding of concepts that stimulate enterprise and influence business
- establish firm foundations for lifelong learning and for further specialised study and careers.

### **Technologies**

The technologies framework provides a range of different contexts for learning, including the themes across learning; learning for sustainability, global citizenship, enterprise that draw on important aspects of everyday life and work.

The framework develops knowledge, skills, attributes and capabilities around 13 key concepts/significant aspects of learning in the technologies.

- Awareness of technological developments (Past, Present and Future), including how they work.
- Impact, contribution, and relationship of technologies on business, the economy, politics, and the environment.
- Using digital products and services in a variety of contexts to achieve a purposeful outcome
- Searching, processing and managing information responsibly
- Cyber resilience and internet safety
- Understanding the world through computational thinking
- Understanding and analysing computing technology
- Designing, building and testing computing solutions
- Food and textile technologies
- Designing & constructing models/products
- Exploring uses of materials
- Representing ideas, concepts and products through a variety of graphic media
- Application of Engineering

Within each of the key concepts/significant aspects of learning learners will develop and demonstrates

- knowledge and understanding of the key concepts in the technologies
- curiosity, exploration and problem solving skills
- planning and organisational skills in a range of contexts
- creativity and innovation
- skills in using tools, equipment, software, graphic media and materials
- skills in collaborating, leading and interacting with others

- critical thinking through exploration and discovery within a range of learning contexts
- discussion and debate
- searching and retrieving information to inform thinking within diverse learning contexts
- making connections between specialist skills developed within learning and skills for work
- evaluating products, systems and services
- presentation and communication skills.
- awareness of sustainability

### **Religious and Moral Education**

Learning through religious and moral education enables our learners to:

- recognise religion as an important expression of human experience
- enables me to:
  - learn about and from the beliefs, values, practices and traditions of Christianity and the world religions selected for study, other traditions and viewpoints
- independent of religious belief
- explore and develop knowledge and understanding of religions, recognising the place of Christianity in the Scottish context
- investigate and understand the responses which religious and non-religious views can offer to questions about the nature and meaning of life
- recognise and understand religious diversity and the importance of religion in society
- develop respect for others and an understanding of beliefs and practices which are different from my own
- explore and establish values such as wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity and engage in the development of and reflection upon my own moral values
- develop my beliefs, attitudes, values and practices through reflection, discovery and critical evaluation

- develop the skills of reflection, discernment, critical thinking and deciding how to act when making moral decisions
- make a positive difference to the world by putting my beliefs and values into action
- establish a firm foundation for lifelong learning, further learning and adult life.

Our learners learn about all religions and in doing so develop respect and tolerance of others. A visiting minister conducts a Christian Assembly once a week. Special arrangements can be made for pupils whose parents do not wish them to participate.

### **RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE, Withdrawal**

Special arrangements will be made for pupils whose parents do not wish them to participate in religious observance.

### **Languages**

Learning a new language encourages children and young people to broaden their horizons as they explore the language and its associated culture. The study of language plays an important role in all language learning and the development of literacy skills. At Macdiarmid, we follow the 1+2 Language initiative: a Scottish Government initiative that wants all children to learn at least two languages during their time in primary school. This means that Language 1 is English, Language 2 (French) is taught through immersion strategies from Primary 1 onwards and Languages 3 (Gaelic and British Sign Language) are taught from Primary 5-7.

### **Skills for Learning, Life and Work**

1. The development of skills is essential to learning and education to help young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. The skills and attributes which children and young people develop should provide them with a sound basis for their development as lifelong learners in their adult, social and working lives, enabling them to reach their full potential.
2. All children and young people are entitled to opportunities for developing skills for learning, life and work. The skills are relevant at all stages of learning.
3. The skills should be developed across all curriculum areas, in interdisciplinary studies and in all the contexts and settings where young people are learning. They have been embedded into the Curriculum for Excellence Experiences and Outcomes. It is important to recognise and reflect the important role of parents and carers in influencing young people.

4. Progression in skills is signposted in the Experiences and Outcomes. This will help practitioners to ensure that as they progress through the levels, learners build on, extend and apply similar skills developed at previous levels.
5. Curriculum for Excellence is firmly focused on the learner. Opportunities to develop skills may be offered in different ways appropriate to learners' needs. The opportunity to engage in active learning, interdisciplinary tasks and to experience learning in practical contexts is important in enabling all children and young people to develop, demonstrate and apply a wide range of skills.
6. It is important that children and young people are aware of, and understand, the value of the skills that they are developing. Adults, practitioners and learners should reflect together on their progress in the range of skills that they consider to be important in their learning, lives and work.
7. The assessment process should help children and young people to understand why skills are important, reflect on how they are developing their skills, identify the next steps in their skills development and understand how the skills they have acquired can be used across the curriculum and in their lives in and outside the classroom or establishment.
8. Every child and young person is entitled to support to enable them to gain as much as possible from the opportunities to develop their skills which Curriculum for Excellence can provide. Timely provision of support to meet individuals' needs will enable children and young people to effectively engage with opportunities for skills development.
9. Curriculum for Excellence can best be delivered through partnership working. All establishments should work with partners and share a common understanding and language around skills development and application. Together, they should plan and deliver learning and other experiences which meet the needs of individual children and young people.

## **Planning**

Teachers plan for learning across the curriculum in a variety of ways. Children are involved in the planning process from Nursery to Primary 7. Quality Assessment Tasks are used regularly and allow teaching and learning to be planned, delivered and evaluated by teachers, children and parents.

Teaching and learning is planned and delivered using the Curriculum for Excellence Experiences and Outcomes. To see these, please visit

[https://education.gov.scot/scottish-education-system/policy-for-scottish-education/policy-drivers/cfe-\(building-from-the-statement-appendix-incl-btc1-5\)/Experiences%20and%20outcomes](https://education.gov.scot/scottish-education-system/policy-for-scottish-education/policy-drivers/cfe-(building-from-the-statement-appendix-incl-btc1-5)/Experiences%20and%20outcomes)

## **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 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 learning logs, class dojo, parent evenings. key assessment tasks, pupil reports and target setting information.

Parents wishing to enquire about a pupil's progress are invited to get in touch with Mrs Nicolson (01470 532229 philippa.nicolson@highland.gov.uk )

A pupil report is issued once a year, during the summer term.

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/learning-in-scotland/assessment-and-achievement>

## **Support for Pupils**

### **Support for Learners Website**

All children will have a Named Person and who to contact if a parent thinks that a pupil has additional support needs and where to get more information and advice.  
[Support for Learners Website](#);

<http://enquire.org.uk/>

There is a Pupil Support Assistant or an Early Year Practitioner supporting the pupils, in the playground, at break and lunch times.

(a) Enquire – the Scottish advice and information service for additional support for learning <http://enquire.org.uk/>

(b) My Rights, My Say – an advocacy and advice service for young people over 12 with additional support needs <http://enquire.org.uk/myrightsmysay/>

(c) [Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance](#), an advocacy service to support parents and children

**(d) Scottish Child Law Centre, an organisation providing free legal advice to young people**

**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 plans at:

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/230/highland\\_practice\\_model\\_-\\_delivering\\_additional\\_support\\_for\\_learners](http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/230/highland_practice_model_-_delivering_additional_support_for_learners)

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/11/co-ordinated\\_support\\_plan](http://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. A **Children's Service Worker** will generally focus on more social and emotional needs rather than issues about the curriculum or classroom learning. They:

- 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 that 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 out with 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 (Mrs Nicolson) 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:

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools\\_-\\_additional\\_support\\_needs/1/support\\_for\\_learners](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools_-_additional_support_needs/1/support_for_learners)

Please see the following links to organisations specified by Scottish Ministers which provide advice, further information and support to parents of children and young people with ASN

(a) Enquire – the Scottish advice and information service for additional support for learning <http://enquire.org.uk/>

(c) [Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance](#), an advocacy service to support parents and children

(d) [Scottish Child Law Centre](#), an organisation providing free legal advice to young people

### **School Policies**

School policies are available on request from the school office. Highland Council policies can be accessed here:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/893/schools - general information/29/school policies procedures and guidelines](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/893/schools_-_general_information/29/school_policies_procedures_and_guidelines)

### **Highland Council's anti-bullying policy**

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19358/anti\\_bullying - guidance for schools](https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19358/anti_bullying_-_guidance_for_schools)

### **Getting it Right for Every Child**

Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) is the Scotland-wide approach that looks to support and safeguard children's wellbeing.

GIRFEC provides professionals and agencies with a consistent approach to assessing and planning for children's wellbeing. It aims to put the child at the centre of the process and to work closely with families. There might be a time when several different agencies are required to properly support you and your child and GIRFEC provides a framework for coordination and appropriate information sharing.

Eight Wellbeing Indicators



GIRFEC uses 8 wellbeing indicators to assess the wellbeing of a child. These wellbeing indicators are Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included (SHANARRI). There are no specified levels in these areas that your child has to reach, but professionals will use the indicators to assess if there are any challenges for your child. People working with your children will then focus on these areas to deliver a positive difference with the child at the centre.



## Behaviour



All classes are encouraged to follow the Golden Rules at all times, both in the classroom and playground. The Golden Rules help to develop learning behaviours that support the development of the whole child. Children who follow the Golden Rules are rewarded with Golden Time. Failure to adhere to the Golden Rules will result in a loss of this privilege. A copy of our Bullying Policy is available from the office on request.



## **Complaints Procedure**

If you have any concerns, please contact Philippa Nicolson in the first instance.  
01470 532229 philippa.nicolson@highland.gov.uk

The school will always endeavour to resolve issues by listening to parents and seeking solutions in partnership. Should a situation not be resolved, parents can contact the Interim **Care and Learning Manager – Ross, Skye and Lochaber**

Ms Mhairi MacDonald  
The Fingal Centre  
Viewfield Road  
Portree  
Isle of Skye  
IV51 9ET  
Tel: 01478 614814

[mhairi.macdonald3@highland.gov.uk](mailto:mhairi.macdonald3@highland.gov.uk)

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](mailto:public.transport@highland.gov.uk).

**link to Parentline:**

<https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/parentline-scotland/>

## **Equality and Diversity Policy**

A copy of this is available from the school office on request.

## **Disclaimer**

Whilst the information in this handbook is considered to be true and correct at the date of publication, changes in circumstances after the time of publication may impact on the accuracy of the information.

