

Macdiarmid Nursery



Handbook



2023 - 2024

Welcome

A very warm welcome to Macdiarmid Nursery!

We look forward to working in partnership with you to make your child's time in Nursery happy and fulfilling. We aim to encourage your child's natural curiosity and develop enthusiasm for learning that will build a solid foundation for life. Joining our nursery is your child's first important step in becoming part of our learning community.

This handbook is designed to equip you with the basic information that you will need during your child's time in Nursery. You will be kept up to date on a regular basis through daily contact with the Nursery Team, the Facebook Nursery page and via email.

We have copies of policies and Care Inspectorate information available on request. The Care Inspectorate plays an important role in the meeting of pupils' needs. Should you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact the Head Teacher, Nursery Management Teacher or Nursery staff at the school.

The Nursery opened in August 2000. The nursery classroom is purpose built and was completed in June 2000 as part of the major building and refurbishment undertaken at the school. In August 2016 a purpose built extension containing two toilets and basins was added to the nursery.

There is a notice board in the Nursery on which is displayed details of policies, themes, Care Inspectorate information and photographs of staff. Planning is also shared with children and parents and is displayed on the wall. Please take a look!

Staff

Head teacher:	Mrs Fiona Goss (from December 2022)
Early Years Practitioner:	Miss M Lockhart
Early Years Practitioner:	Mrs J Morrison
Nursery Management:	Miss T Lancaster

Who can have Funded Early Learning and Childcare

Nursery Admission 2023-24

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.

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/11/enrol_your_child_for_early_learning_and_childcare/2

Nursery Hours

Monday-Friday 9am-3pm

In the interests of your child's safety you must inform the Nursery staff who will be collecting your child at the end of the session.

The Nursery door opens at 9am. Please arrive between 9-9.30, as this enables all children to join in with welcome activities, independent tasks and planning for the session ahead.

Lunches are ordered at 9.30 – you will be required to either place an order from the menu, tell us if your child has a packed lunch, or is not staying for lunch each day.

We encourage independence in all our children. To help with this, we ask that you bring your child into the setting, say goodbye and leave them to change their shoes, hang up their

coats and begin another day of fun at Macdiarmid Nursery! **(COVID restrictions mean that we are currently asking you to say goodbye in the Nursery garden. You may not enter the building at this time.)**

Term Dates

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

Partnership with parents

Parents are always welcome at Macdiarmid Nursery. Staff are available for informal updates at the beginning and end of each session, and parents are offered an opportunity to come and discuss progress with staff each term through a variety of stay-and-play sessions, open mornings and parent meetings. We believe that working together creates the best outcomes for our children.

Structure of the session

The Nursery is open from 9am-3pm Monday to Friday. You may wish your child to attend for all of these hours, or less. You must inform Nursery staff well in advance of any changes to attendance patterns. We offer two drop off times – 9am and 12pm, and two collection times – 12pm and 3pm.

Parents/carers should bring their children into Nursery via the Nursery garden.

Children are encouraged to change their own shoes and hang up their coats while parents place lunch orders.

Next, children are encouraged to explore their own interests during free play. Resources regularly available are sand, water, paint, craft, drawing/mark-making, books, role-play, ICT toys, construction toys, jigsaws/puzzles, musical toys, sorting activities, small world play, toy vehicles, fine motor skill activities, cutting, sticking, painting, outdoor play, soft play, baking, finger painting, printing, junk modelling and playdough.

Adult-led activities are offered regularly, to encourage skill development and communication.

The nursery children join the rest of the school for outdoor play, which helps to develop social skills and is an important part of our transition into Primary one.

Snack is offered twice a day; in the morning and the afternoon. Our children take turns to be helper, developing responsibility, and help to set the table and prepare snack where appropriate. Children are offered a variety of healthy options, including fruit, vegetables, toast, breadsticks and yoghurt. We encourage children to pour their own milk/water. Trying new foods is always celebrated!

Lunch is eaten around 12.15 – please see the Highland Council website for the two-choice Nursery menu.

https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/9/school_menus

Lunch is free for all children who are in Nursery for four hours or more. It is possible to pay for lunch if your child is attending for less than four hours – please contact us directly for details.

Children brush their teeth once a day in line with the Childsmile programme.

In the afternoon, adult-led activities will be offered and quiet time encouraged. Naps can be taken if required.

To finish the session, everyone joins together for stories and songs, before being collected at the main school gate by parents/carers.

What to wear for Nursery?

Please provide a pair of indoor plimsolls for your child to keep at Nursery. It is helpful if they are the pull-on type without laces. These are available to purchase from the school, if so desired.

We find children are most likely to have accidents at the toilet if they are wearing all-in-one suits or dungarees with bows and buckle ties. The other thing children find particularly difficult are buttons at the waist of jeans and belts of any sort holding up trousers. As we are encouraging the children to be independent in their personal hygiene, it is therefore advisable that your child comes to nursery dressed in easy fitting play clothes.

Also, it is a good idea to ensure your child has a change of clothes in their bag in case of any type of accident.

The children are taken outside regardless of the weather so please ensure your child is suitably dressed for outdoor activities. A jacket is essential as well as suitable shoes or boots.

We provide aprons for messy play.

Administration of Medicines

If your child needs to take medication during the Nursery session, please be aware that staff can only administer prescribed medicine that bears your child's name and the dosage on the label. Emergency or life-saving medication (e.g. EpiPen/anti-histamine) should be stored at school and again clearly labelled with the child's name. A medical protocol from your GP or consultant must be provided for any long-term medical needs.

Child Protection

The school follows the national strategy known as 'Getting It Right For Every Child' (GIRFEC). Getting It Right places children's and young people's needs first and provides coordinated help where this is required. Services involved could be Social Work, Health and Police. The named person with overall responsibility is the Head Teacher, but all staff have had training in GIRFEC and are aware of their role in supporting children. More information about Child Protection Procedures with Highland can be obtained from the Child Protection Development Officer, Mrs Eliz MacIntosh eliz.macintosh@highland.gov.uk

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)

Communication

Our aim is to continue positive and supportive relationships between school/nursery 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.

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.

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)
- Newsletters
- Emails
- Phone calls
- School bag mail

Parent Council

Parent Council is a group of parents selected to represent all parents of children at the school and nursery. Any parent who wishes to raise an issue for the Parent

Council to consider can do so by contacting the Chair of the Parent Council, Kirstie MacLeod.

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

Adverse Weather/School Closure

In the event of severe weather conditions, you can access the Highland Council website to check for school closures on www.highland.gov.uk . You may telephone 0800 564 2272 (local rate), (school pin number: 042550) for up to date information. Updates may also be given on the Macdiarmid Parents' Facebook page. Please note that in the event of severe weather, the decision as to whether a child should attend school is entirely down to each parent/carer and this decision should be made taking into consideration whether a child can safely make it to and from school.

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

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 **Education and Learning Manager – West Area**

Ms Mhairi MacDonald

The Fingal Centre

Viewfield Road

Portree

Isle of Skye

IV51 9ET

Tel: 01478 613697

mhairi.macdonald3@highland.gov.uk

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.

Contact details

Macdiarmid School Nursery

Carbost

Skeabost Bridge,

Portree

Isle of Skye

IV51 9PD

Tel: 01470 532229

Email: macdiarmid.primary@highland.gov.uk

Area Education Manager

Ms Mhairi
MacDonald
Fingal Centre
Viewfield Road
Portree
Isle of Skye
IV51 9ET

Tel: 01478 613697

ASN Manager Miss Fiona Wallace

Education & Learning
Office
Camiaghael Hostel
Fort William
Tel: 01349 781436

Educational Psychologist Ms Stephanie Bennett (based in Area Education Office)

Parent Council

Chairperson Mrs Kirstie MacLeod

macdiarmid.primary@highlandpc.co.uk

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Tel: 01470 532 229