

Thurso High School

School Handbook 2024-2025



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Please note that whilst information provided in this handbook is considered to be correct at the time of printing, it is possible that there may be changes affecting a matter dealt with in the document.

Thurso High School

Thurso High School is a six year comprehensive, non-denominational, co-educational secondary school which offers the best in traditional Scottish values. The broad and balanced curriculum provides a challenge for all its pupils. It is the most northerly secondary school on the Scottish mainland serving the town of Thurso and the surrounding rural area which includes the villages of Castletown, Halkirk and Reay. We have 754 pupils at present (November 2023 figure), approximately half of whom travel daily to school by bus. Gaelic learning was introduced to the school in August 2020.

The main building, which has excellent views over the surrounding countryside and across the Pentland Firth to Orkney, was designed by Sir Basil Spence and was opened in 1958. A large two-storey extension was added in 1970 followed by a Games Hall. Playing fields with rugby and football pitches and an all-weather running track are adjacent to the school.

The school has an Enhanced Provision for children with severe and profound physical and learning difficulties where classrooms have been adapted to provide a superb facility for our students with a dedicated outdoor area. We can, where appropriate, offer an individualised blend of mainstream and Enhanced Provision learning and aim to personalise what we offer wherever possible to best support all pupils.

The school also has a Pupil Support Base staffed by Children's Service Workers who support pupils with social, emotional and behavioural needs. Other pupils may choose to frequent the CSW Base at break and lunchtime if they wish.

The success of any school is measured by the achievements of its students and both teachers and parents have a vital role to play in our young people's progress. Learning is at the centre of all we do and we have high expectations for all. We aim to encourage all of our young people to become independent and confident learners as well as well-rounded individuals who will leave school to positive and worthwhile destinations and make a valued contribution to society. We also hope they will leave here with a respect and care for all.

We hope to build strong relationships with you as parents and to work with you in partnership over the years your child attends school allowing us to prepare them for the lives and the world that lies ahead, whether this is through following a conventional route through school or with the support of a more individualised timetable.

We try to offer as wide a variety of learning opportunities as we can with the aim of engaging every young person so that they are excited by learning and enjoy their time at school. We have clear expectations of all by setting clear routines and structures within the school and applying these with consistency. We believe that school should be an enjoyable experience for pupils, staff and parents. We look forward to welcoming you and your child to Thurso High School with the confidence that together we can provide the best education and range of opportunities for your child.

Head Teacher: Mrs Hannah Flavell

Address: Thurso High School
Ormlie Road
Thurso
Caithness
KW14 7DS

Telephone: 01847 893822
Email: thurso.high@highland.gov.uk
Website: thursohighschool.org.uk
Facebook: Thurso High School

Current Roll

| S1 | S2 | S3 | S4 | S5 | S6 |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| 129 | 136 | 143 | 147 | 111 | 83 |

(Nov 2023 figures)

Projected roll for next year (2023/24) is 755.

Associated Primaries

Thurso High School accepts pupils from a catchment area served by:

CASTLETOWN PRIMARY
 Castletown, Thurso..... (Tel: 01847 821256)

CROSSROADS PRIMARY
 Dunnet, Thurso..... (Tel: 01847 851629)

HALKIRK PRIMARY
 Halkirk, Thurso..... (Tel: 01847 831246)

MILLER ACADEMY
 Princes Street, Thurso..... (Tel: 01847 892815)

MOUNT PLEASANT PRIMARY
 Castletown Road, Thurso..... (Tel: 01847 893419)

PENNYLAND PRIMARY
 Trostan Road, Thurso..... (Tel: 01847 892661)

REAY PRIMARY
 Reay, Thurso..... (Tel: 01847 811206)

There are also pupils on the roll who have attended primaries out with the catchment area.

Vision, Values and Aims of the School

Vision

'For every pupil to achieve their full potential in a safe, happy and caring environment in which all pupils feel valued'

Values

Teamwork, Respect, Achievement, Commitment, Kindness

Aims

- To set high expectations for attainment, achievement, behaviour, attendance and punctuality.
- To provide quality learning and teaching experiences for all.
- To provide an engaging, challenging and creative curriculum for all learners.
- To create an ethos of kindness and respect so all pupils feel included, supported and valued.



Enrolling at Thurso High School

Pupils enrolling from Associated Primary Schools:

Pupils who attend any of the Associated Primary Schools are enrolled automatically into S1 at Thurso High School. Pupils are visited in Primary Schools in the year prior to transfer by Pupil Support and Learning Support Staff. Primary 7 pupils then spend two days in Thurso High School in June, with some pupils having transition visits earlier than this.

A Parents' Information Evening is held for the parents of Primary 7 pupils in June. The date for the next academic session is Tuesday 11th June 2024. This gives parents the opportunity to meet some staff and discuss any concerns or questions they may have relating to their child's secondary educational provision.

Pupils enrolling during the session:

If you wish to enrol your child please complete an online enrolment form. Enrolment forms can be found at https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/887/enrol_your_child_for_school. Once received by the school, parents will be contacted to arrange an interview with the relevant Year Head, one of the Depute Head Teachers, following which the enrolment procedures are carried out. Pupils cannot be admitted to classes until this interview has taken place. Where pupils are following a set of choices in their present school, Thurso High will try to match this. However, the right is reserved to suggest alternatives if this is not possible.

The school prides itself in helping pupils settle into their new environment, including those from out with the Scottish system. Pupil Support teachers oversee new enrolments and a formal review is carried out after approximately six weeks.

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 Education Manager. Placing request forms can be obtained from 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 out with the school catchment area and their parents wish them to attend Thurso High School they can contact the appropriate Year Head to arrange a visit. Contact can be made by telephone or by email thurso.high@highland.gov.uk.

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.

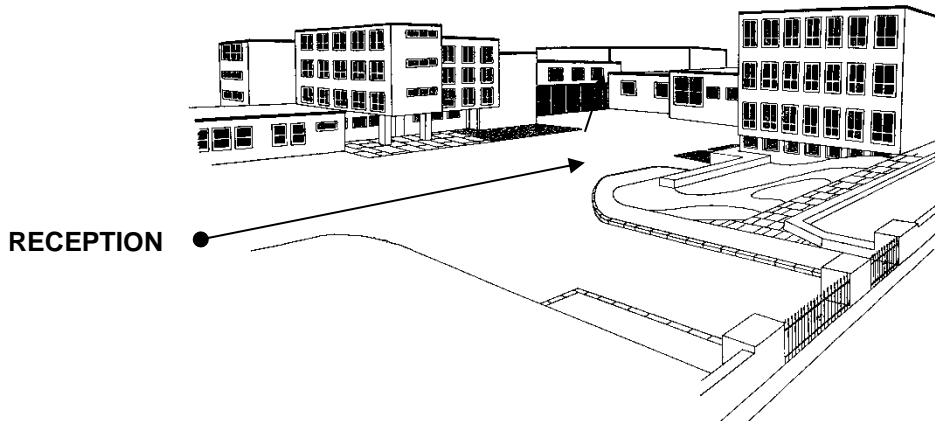
School Year Calendar

The school year is divided into four terms, the dates for which can be found at the following Highland Council calendar link:

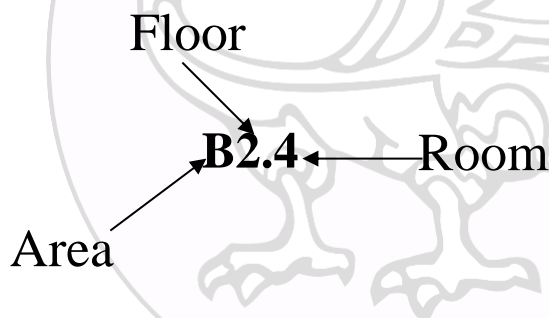
[School term dates | Highland School Calendar 2024 to 2025](#)

Finding your way around

All visitors must report to reception, inside the main entrance, where they will be issued with a visitor's badge. For pupil safety car parking in front of the school is not allowed during the school day. The bus park is available until 3.15 pm along with the signposted area to the rear of the school.



Use the map opposite to help find the area required.
All classrooms can be found by **Area, Floor and Room** (see below).



| <u>AREA</u> | <u>DEPARTMENT</u> |
|-------------|---|
| B | Modern Studies, Geography, History, Mathematics |
| C | English, French, Library |
| D | Technical (workshops) |
| E | Science, Music, Business Studies |
| E19 – E23 | Learning Support, Enhanced Provision |
| F | Home Economics, Art |
| G | PE |
| H 1, 2 | PE |
| M | Technical and Nurture |

Staff List (as at November 2023)

| TEACHING STAFF | | NON TEACHING STAFF | |
|---|--|---|--|
| Head Teacher Mrs H Flavell | Learning Support Mr S Disbury (PT) Mrs A Lloyd Ms A Koukouzela Ms K Lewis Mrs K Gunn | Office Staff Mrs H Geddes (Manager) Mrs P Sinclair (Reception) Mrs J Mackay Mrs B Jardine Mrs V Dunnett | Pupil Support Assistants Mrs R Campbell Mrs K Dunnet Mr D Mainland Miss C MacPherson Mrs A Ross Ms T Fraser Mrs E Russell Mrs L Trueman Mrs H Gunn Ms V Tait Miss G Wares Mr C Geddes Mrs J Rosie Mr R McInnes Ms A Mackay Ms D Larnach Ms A Nicoll Mrs P Mill Ms S Cook Mrs R Morris |
| Depute Head Teacher Mr C Omand Mrs A Nicoll Mrs J Miller | Mathematics Mrs V Gunn (FH) Mr R Hadden Mrs R Gunn Mrs E Byrne Mr A Brotherston Mrs R. Omand | Children's Support Workers Mr R Burridge Ms C Fox | |
| Pupil Support/Guidance Mr G Blyth Mr P McKeesick Mr E McElroy Mrs B Sinclair | Modern Languages Ms L Straumann | Janitors Mr D Swanson Mr D Sutherland Mr C McLean | |
| Art Mr W Wallace Mr S Webb Ms S Blackadder | Modern Studies Mr J McQuaker Mr J Lynch | Technicians Mr G Pemberton Mr A Crawford | |
| Biology Mr P Redshaw (FH) Miss E Pearce Mrs S Struthers | Music Mr C Frame (FH) Ms H Lewry | Music Instructors Mrs K Anderson Mr A McLeod Mr N Laybourne Mr K Gunn | |
| Business Mr B Nicolson Miss S Russell Mr W Spratt | | High Life Highland Librarian Mrs E Cormack | |
| Chemistry Mr D Groat Miss K Mackenzie | Physical Education Mr S Ross (FH) Miss K Findlay Miss S MacDonald Mr R McLean Mr R Sutherland (Probationer) | High Life Highland Active Schools Coordinator | |
| English and Drama Mrs K McAlonan (FH) Mrs H Perrie McCabe (FH) Miss C MacDonald (Acting FH) Mrs C Groat Mrs A Wallace Miss M Cormack Miss A Sinclair Mr A Lanyon Miss B Craig | Physics Mr S Mackenzie Mr J Byrne | DYW Coordinator Mrs A Nicolson | |
| Gaelic Ms L Munro | | ICT Services Mr K McLeod | |
| Geography Mrs F Bremner Mr D Lloyd | Technical Mr A Ford (FH) Mr A Davidson Mr S Bartlett Mr L Forsyth Miss B Plater Mr G Sutherland | | |
| History Mr A Rathie (FH) Mr A Jamieson-Caley | | | |
| Home Economics Mr S Calder Miss R Dunnett (Probationer) | | | |

School Routine

The School Day

Each day begins for pupils with a 10 minute registration period. School closes at 3.35 pm Mon-Thurs and 12.25 pm on a Friday.



THURSO HIGH SCHOOL: School Week Structure

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------|-----------|------------|--|
| Tutor Time/Registration | 8:40 – 8:50 | Mon-Fri | 10 Minutes | Registration every day. A “Hurry Bell” will ring at 8:35. |
| Period 1 | 8:50 – 9:40 | Mon-Fri | 50 Minutes | |
| Period 2 | 9:40 – 10:30 | Mon-Fri | 50 Minutes | |
| Interval | 10:30 – 10:45 | Mon-Fri | 15 Minutes | Canteen and Milk Bar open five days per week. |
| Period 3 | 10:45 – 11:35 | Mon-Fri | 50 Minutes | |
| Period 4 | 11:35 – 12:25 | Mon-Fri | 50 Minutes | School finishes at 12:25 on Friday. |
| Period 5 | 12:25 – 1:15 | Mon-Thurs | 50 Minutes | |
| Lunch Break | 1:15 – 1:55 | Mon-Thurs | 40 Minutes | Canteen and Milk Bar open four days per week. On a Friday no hot meals, “Grab and Go” only |
| Period 6 | 1:55 – 2:45 | Mon-Thurs | 50 Minutes | A “Hurry Bell” will ring at 1:50. |
| Period 7 | 2:45 – 3:35 | Mon-Thurs | 50 Minutes | School finishes at 3:35 Monday to Thursday. |

Registration

Pupils attend a Registration period each day as above. Pupils who arrive late for school should report to Reception where they will be issued with a late card that they should present to each teacher.

Canteen/Snack Bars

The canteen is open in the morning for breakfast, at interval when snacks are available and at lunchtime. On Fridays, pupils requiring lunch should order a ‘Grab and Go’ in the morning and collect when the school finishes at 12.25 pm. A ‘Cashless Catering’ system operates for purchases from the canteen. Pupils can buy food by depositing money into the auto tellers in the school or online at www.highland.gov.uk/yourcouncil/finance/onlinepayments/ and then using their pin code or Young Scot Card to purchase food. Details of this are available from the canteen and are sent to all First Year pupils. Some pupils choose to bring a packed lunch to school.

Equipment required for lessons

All pupils are welcome to come to school with their own equipment for lessons. This is also supplied in each classroom to ensure that all pupils are ready to learn. All pupils should have or will be supplied with a pen or a pencil for all lessons. Some subjects require additional equipment – see below.

Technology Lessons

Pupils with long hair will be expected to tie it back for Technology or Home Economics lessons. For Health and Safety reasons pupils should not wear open toed shoes in Technology lessons.

Home Economics Lessons

For cookery lessons in Home Economics, pupils can bring an apron and a plastic container to carry home whatever is baked or cooked. Where this is not possible, these items will be supplied.

Physical Education

In the interests of health and hygiene, a change of clothing is desirable. This should include shorts, sports top, socks and sports footwear. For outdoors, a tracksuit, jogging or leisure suit and specialised footwear are acceptable. This should comply with the school dress code (please see section on school dress code). A change into clean-soled footwear is essential for indoor activity i.e. footwear which has been worn outside is not permitted. Where there are any concerns or difficulties with providing clothing for PE, support can be given through the school. Pupils, parents or carers can contact Guidance staff to discuss any support needs. Pupils, parents or carers are very To prevent injury, watches, badges, earrings or any similar articles will not be worn. Pupils who have a valid reason for being excused from PE must bring a note from their parents to the teacher in charge.

Maths Lessons

Pupils in the Senior Phase are required to have a scientific calculator. They are welcome to bring their own or can be supplied with one from the department.

School Transport

Your child may be eligible for free school transport if they are:

- 8 or over and live more than 3 miles from school
- Have a medical condition or additional support needs
- Would have to walk a route which is considered by us to be unsafe for children to walk, even when accompanied by an adult

Please see the following link for the full Highland Council transport policy: [School transport policy](#)

To apply for free school transport, please see the following link to the Highland Council online application form: [Apply for school transport | School transport | The Highland Council](#) .Alternatively, a printable version of the application form is available here: [School transport | School transport application form \(highland.gov.uk\)](#) . Any paper application forms can be returned to the school office.

Bus Passes

Bus passes are issued to pupils living out with Thurso who have applied for school transport at the start of each year. These passes may only be used by the pupils who are entitled to them. If a bus pass is lost, the pupil can order another from the school reception at a cost of £5.

Dress Code

Our dress code is based on a black and white theme, with the exception of the school rugby shirt which is black, white and red, and the school tie which is black and red. Clothing that is acceptable is:

- Plain black or white T shirts, long sleeved tops or shirts;
- Black sweatshirts or hoodies or zipped tops or fleeces;
- School rugby shirt;
- Black trousers, jeans, skirts or tracksuit bottoms (leggings are not actively encouraged but are the norm in current fashion).

Pupils **must** wear one item of clothing - either the sweatshirt or T-shirt - with the school logo, or wear a school tie. Any colours other than black and white (except the official school rugby top and school tie) are not permitted. Neither are any form of overly revealing clothing, items with brand names or inappropriate lettering, striped or branded (other than a very small logo) tracksuit trousers or leggings, patterned and striped tops, football tops and scarves, black jeans that are so faded as to appear grey, ripped knee jeans or leggings with 'transparent' blocks.

Outdoor jackets may be of any colour; however coloured hoodies are not deemed outdoor jackets and should not be worn at all in or to school, even if they are removed in classes. Shoes may be of any colour or type as long as they are appropriate for moving easily about school.

Pupils must bring a change of clothes and trainers for PE. Any tracksuits or T shirts are allowed as long as they are school appropriate.

As with all other school and classroom procedures, dress code must be followed and register teachers will check the dress code first thing in the morning. If a pupil is not wearing the correct dress code they will be sent to the top office where a member of Senior Management will see them.

If a pupil doesn't have a school logo on any item of clothing or an inappropriate top they will be given a school hoodie to wear for the day which they can then swap back for their own top at reception at 3.35pm. Trousers/jeans that are not dress code will be discussed and appropriate trousers given. Pupils will be supported if there are issues preventing them having suitable dress code.

Jackets must be removed in class. Please ensure that as necessary, warm clothing is worn so that a child will not be cold in class without a jacket. If a pupil is cold they can go to the top office to borrow a school hoodie which can be returned at 3.35pm.

Repeated dress code infringements will be dealt with by Guidance and Year Heads. Parents or carers will be contacted so that children can be supported to be in appropriate clothing.

A range of shops in Highland stock appropriate items of dress code. All items with a school logo, as well as the official Thurso High School rugby shirt, can be purchased from Highland workwear in Wick and Buttresses in Thurso. Highland Workwear and Schoolwearmadeeasy can be accessed online.

Families in receipt of means-tested welfare payments may be entitled to claim a clothing allowance. Please contact the school if you require any help with this.

Attendance

Schools are required to keep an attendance register by law and to record an attendance in respect of each morning and afternoon of every school day. A high level of attendance is necessary in ensuring that pupils make the most of the opportunities provided at Thurso High School and achieve their full potential. We also have a responsibility for the care and welfare of all pupils during the school day therefore, need to know the whereabouts of absent pupils.

Absence due to illness or unforeseen circumstances

If your child is unable to attend school due to illness or unforeseen circumstances parents are expected to telephone the school (01847 893822) first thing in the morning of the first day of absence, or email thurso.high@highland.gov.uk with a reason for your child's absence. It is helpful at this time if the duration of the absence is also given.

Pupils must give their Register Teacher a note written by their parent or guardian on the day they return from school following an absence. The note should explain the reason for the absence. Alternatively, parents can email the school to explain the absence. Parents/Carers can contact the school by telephone to explain absences, however, a written note or email is still required.

Pupils falling ill during the school day

If pupils fall ill during the day, parents will be contacted for them to collect their child. It is therefore essential that we have up to date daytime contact numbers and emergency contact numbers are provided for all pupils. Data collection forms capturing this information are distributed in August but should you change your details after this time, please contact the school reception or office.

Permission to leave during the school day

If a pupil needs to leave during the school day for an appointment etc., they must please bring a note to reception from their parent or guardian, or an email should be sent to thurso.high@highland.gov.uk. Pupils must report to the school reception and 'sign out' at the time indicated on the note. If returning the same day, they must report again to the reception and 'sign in'. Where at all possible, medical and dental appointments should be made out with school hours.

Unexplained absences

The school operates a text messaging service for parent/carers of absent pupils. If a child is absent from school and the school has not been notified, parents will receive a text message informing them their child has not registered at school that day. The text message asks the parent to contact the school. The message will be sent before 10.30 am on the day of absence.

Holidays

When parents are considering whether or not to remove their children from school for a family holiday, they should be aware that such a decision:

- will result in a significant loss in classroom experience;
- will result in a pressure to 'catch up' on missed work by pupils;
- could result in pupils missing assessments with consequential impact on pupils and teachers;
- could result in the loss of curricular activities;
- will affect school attendance records and efforts to raise standards of attendance;
- under the guidance issued at a national level, most family holidays will be coded as unauthorised absence, only in exceptional cases will the absence be recorded as authorised.

In conclusion, we would ask parents to be aware of these considerations when making decisions on planning holidays during term time. We have enclosed a link to the school term dates on the Highland Council website to aid parents in planning any holidays they may be considering https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/32/school_term_dates. If parents decide to make holiday arrangements during school term, this should please be confirmed in writing to the Head Teacher.

Attendance Monitoring and Support

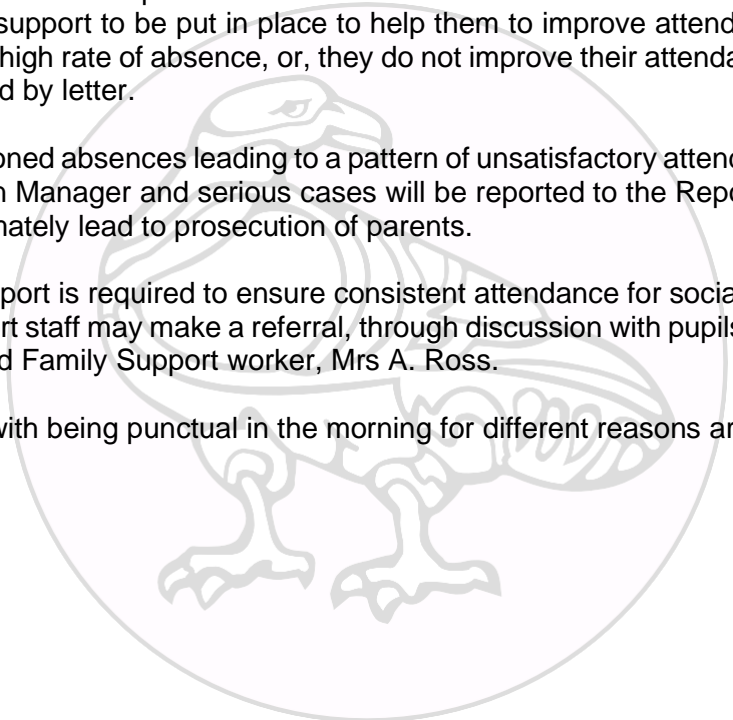
Poor attendance from S1 onwards is directly linked to pupils performing less well in SQA examinations; because of this we carefully monitor pupil attendance in all years and follow our recently updated Thurso High School Attendance Monitoring and Intervention Procedures. As part of these intervention procedures we offer support through our Attendance and Family Support Lead who follows the Reluctant Attendance and School Refusal Policy procedures. For information, please see these both of these policies on the school website at [Welcome to Thurso High School](#).

In S3 and beyond we also monitor attendance across individual subjects which is reported on in the pupil's tracking information. Pupils who have an attendance rate of less than 90% are closely monitored to enable support to be put in place to help them to improve attendance. Where a pupil has an unacceptably high rate of absence, or, they do not improve their attendance with support, the parents will be notified by letter.

Unexplained or condoned absences leading to a pattern of unsatisfactory attendance will be reported to the Area Education Manager and serious cases will be reported to the Reporter to the Children's Panel which can ultimately lead to prosecution of parents.

Where additional support is required to ensure consistent attendance for social, emotional or health reasons, Pupil Support staff may make a referral, through discussion with pupils and parents/ carers, to our Attendance and Family Support worker, Mrs A. Ross.

Pupils who struggle with being punctual in the morning for different reasons are also supported.



Courses available in the School

The Curriculum

The educational framework Curriculum for Excellence aims to raise standards, prepare our children for a future they may not yet know and equip them for jobs of tomorrow in a fast changing world. Curriculum for Excellence balances the importance of knowledge and skills. Teachers in the associated primary schools will share information helping progression from nursery to primary, primary to secondary and beyond.

There is a sustained focus on Literacy and Numeracy, with every teacher being responsible for the language and number skills that unlock other subjects and are vital to everyday life. CfE aims to bring real life into the classroom, making learning relevant and helping young people apply lessons to their life beyond the classroom. CfE develops skills so that children can think for themselves, make sound judgements, challenge, enquire and find solutions. It aims to ensure that every child knows that they are valued and to nurture successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors, and responsible citizens

There is an emphasis by all staff on looking after our children's health and wellbeing – to ensure that the school is a place where children feel safe and secure.

The Education Scotland and SQA websites listed below both contain more information:

[National Parent Forum of Scotland \(npfs.org.uk\)](http://npfs.org.uk)
[Parentzone Scotland | Education Scotland](#)
[Parents and carers - SQA](#)

S1 to S3: A Broad General Education

Throughout S1 - S3 pupils work at a level consistent with their needs and prior achievements, many progressing to third level experiences and outcomes in S1 and S2, with some learners progressing to study at fourth level and beyond in chosen areas at appropriate points during S1 to S3. It is important that young people experience a suitable, challenging gradient of progression during this period. All young people will progress at different rates and need different levels of support and some will continue to experience learning at curriculum levels below the third level.

All pupils study Personal and Social Education (PSE), Physical Education (PE) and Religious and Moral Education (RME) as part of their core entitlement.

In the course of S1 and S2 pupils will study the following subjects.

| | | |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| English | Maths | Physical Education |
| Technologies | Literacy Skills | Health and Wellbeing |
| Music | French | Religious and Moral Education |
| History | Science | Personal and Social Education |
| Computing | Business | Geography |
| Modern Studies | Art & Design | |

A Reading Programme is incorporated into the school week with designated reading periods in S1 and S2. Pupils can achieve awards at different levels - Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum.

Towards the end of S2 pupils are offered personalisation and choice in their subjects for S3 in preparation for the Senior Phase.

All pupils in S3 study English and Maths but can then choose further six subjects dependent on their individual interests and aptitudes. This allows them to study subjects of their interest while still keeping their range of subjects across all curricular areas in line with the principles of the Broad General Education.

The curricular areas and the subjects available within those for S3 pupils are:

- **Languages:** English, French, Gaelic, Literacy
- **Mathematics**
- **Sciences:** Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Science
- **Social Studies:** Geography, History, Modern Studies
- **Expressive Arts:** Music, Art and Design, Textiles, Drama
- **Technologies:** Graphic Design, Engineering Science, Practical Woodwork, Business Studies, Computing, Administration,
- **Health and Wellbeing:** Physical Education, Recreational Sports and Fitness, Home Economics, Personal and Social Education.
- **Religious and Moral Education**

This leads pupils to their choices in the Senior Phase for certificated courses. The level of at which a pupil will study in S4 and beyond is determined by their progress in S1-S3 so these are very important years.

S4-S6: The Senior Phase

In the Senior Phase pupils sit qualifications in their chosen subjects. Young people are encouraged to choose a well-balanced programme of study throughout the Senior Phase which is relevant to their future pathways. Apart from Maths and English, all subjects in the Senior Phase are taught by level rather than year group, with different pathways for progression to meet the varying needs of the range of learners, e.g. one or two year courses to achieve a level are available. Information on all the subjects to be offered in the Senior Phase can be found on the School website.

There are also opportunities for learning in college in S4-6, details of which can be found on the School website and also the College website: [Schools - UHI North, West and Hebrides](#)

Pupils will study a maximum of six subjects in S4 at a National Level (mostly National 3, 4 or 5, though some may take qualifications at National 2) which will be determined by their progress in S3. These will include Maths and English. Preparatory work for these will begin in S3 therefore it is strongly advised that pupils select subjects in S4 they have already studied in S3. Pupils receive information throughout S3 on their progress through the CfE levels and their recommended level for progression in S4.

In S5, pupils can choose to study up to five subjects from a range of subjects at levels from National (Levels 2-5) to Higher (Level 6) along with choices from the College Link programme.

In S6 they may also study Advanced Higher (Level 7) and also have planned opportunities for personal achievement (eg Prefect Duties, Saltire Awards, Duke of Edinburgh, ASDAN and Community Placements) and for increasing contributions to the school and community.

Throughout S5 and S6, further course choices at National, Higher and Advanced Higher levels are also available through virtual learning classes delivered through the Highland Virtual Academy.

S3 subject information and senior phase subject information booklets will be posted on the school website at the appropriate time of year detailing courses and levels offered at Thurso High School for the upcoming session.

Religious and Moral Education

School Policy

Thurso High School recognises the need for a broad and balanced curriculum and the fundamental position of Religious and Moral Education within it. It also recognises that Christianity has a special place within the history, culture, values and institutions of the area and that this should be reflected in the place given to it in the curriculum. The aim of Religious and Moral Education is to help pupils throughout their whole school career to reflect on and respond to different religious and spiritual beliefs, practices, insights and experiences and to work towards:

- developing a knowledge and understanding of the broad cultural, religious and spiritual heritage of our entire community and its changing character.
- enabling pupils to confirm, deepen or come to their own beliefs about the meaning of life.
- fostering in pupils a respect for the commitment, beliefs and practices of others.
- developing an appreciation of religious faith and the varieties of faith including those well-established ethical traditions that are present in our society;
- appreciating the part played by religion in determining individual and community values, standards, behaviour and conduct.

As well as being the remit of the Social Studies and Religious Education Faculty, moral education also permeates the curriculum, especially appearing in the areas of English, Pupil Support and PSE. Moral issues inevitably arise in the day to day life of the school and these are responded to in a positive, caring way, in line with the stated aims of the school.

Gaelic Provision

Mount Pleasant Primary School feeds into Thurso High School's Gaelic Medium education provision which began in August 2020. A member of staff provides for both Gaelic Medium education and the aspiration of Gaelic Learners in S3 and Senior Phase. Currently, Modern Studies and Computing are delivered as Gaelic Medium as well as Gaelic itself which leads to National Gaelic learners provision in the Senior Phase. S6 pupils are also offered a Gaelic Learners for beginners option

Homework

It is the policy of the school that pupils should have homework on a regular basis. There are two forms of homework; tasks set by the teacher and private study. The homework set by the teacher can take a variety of forms including assignments, revision for tests, research and preparation. Private study is homework tasks set by the pupil. It is important because it develops the pupil's ability to study and revise on their own without immediate help.

For both types of homework, it is important to plan ahead so that the amount of work undertaken in each sitting remains manageable and time is allowed for the pupil to return to their teacher(s) with any additional queries or concerns head of the given deadlines. All homework given by the teacher should be noted carefully by the pupil with the date of when it should be handed in and deadlines adhered to. Private study should also be planned. A note should be made of what subjects are to be revised and when. Regular revision is important. Pupils will all receive information on effective methods of study and are issued with 'Study Skills' booklets to help them practise these.

In practice, the amount of homework will vary throughout the session. For older pupils following certificated courses, the amount of work done at home will increase as deadlines for folios, projects and coursework approach.

Google Classroom

All pupils have access to Google Classroom through their individual Chromebook device, as allocated by the Highland Council. This can also be utilised through devices at home such as PCs, laptops or tablets and, additionally, there is an app available for mobile phones. Resources for each subject, including homework, are accessed by pupils in each subject's 'Google Classroom' wherever they have online access. Pupils should receive Google Classroom codes for subjects from their class teacher. It is most effective if homework is monitored and supported by parents/ carers and pupils are encouraged at home to organise their own work. Parents/ carers are invited by Thurso High to become a 'Google Guardian' for their child which provides them with email summaries about a student's class work. This can include notifications about missing work, upcoming work and class activity.

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. For all pupils, assessment is based on a mixture of teacher observation and questioning, continuous assessment (coursework), tests carried out during class time and more formal examinations. 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.

Pupil Progress Reports are issued to parents three times per year throughout the course of the school year to keep parents informed of pupil progress. There is a robust system in place for tracking and monitoring every pupil's progress and where this is causing concern parents will be contacted and become involved in helping to find a way forward.

Guides to the tracking and reporting process are issued to all parents along with the first report of the session and these can also be found on the School website. Prelim examinations for S4, S5 and S6 are held in January.

Dates of Progress Reports, Parents' Evenings and Parents' Information Evenings

During the school session Parents' Evenings are held to provide the opportunity for parents to meet and discuss with staff their son or daughter's progress.

These dates are posted on the school website and Facebook page and also emailed to parents/carers.

In addition to these formal Parents' Evenings, Parent Information Evenings for P7 parents, for S1/2 parents and for S3/4/5 parents will be held. Parents/carers are also able to contact the school at any time to make an appointment to discuss any matters concerning their child's progress with the relevant Guidance teacher.

Further support for parents on assessment and achievement can be found at <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/curriculum-in-scotland/assessment-and-achievement/> and at [Highland Curriculum for Excellence information](#)

Additional Support Needs

Many pupils experience varied learning needs at some time in the secondary school. In Thurso High School we actively promote inclusion and a range of provision is available to address all pupils' needs. Further information can be found on the Highland Council website: **[Support for Learners Website](#)**

Class/ subject teachers, in conjunction with Additional Support Needs Teachers, monitor the progress of pupils with additional support. The needs of pupils with ASN are generally catered for within the mainstream 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:

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools_-_additional_support_needs/1/additional_support_for_learning/4

[CHIP+ information sheets | Co-ordinated support plan \(highland.gov.uk\)](#)

Support in Classes

Support for Learning staff work in some classes alongside subject teachers giving additional help to individual or groups of pupils. In other circumstances, a Personal Support Assistant (PSA) might read and scribe for a dyslexic pupil or give assistance with practical tasks for others.

The school recognises the importance of delivering a curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils and the Support for Learning teachers and PSAs work with subject departments in helping to provide advice on curriculum planning

Additional Support Needs Provision

Some pupils may be unable to cope with the demands of the wider school. These pupils may be taught in smaller classes by Support for Learning teachers within the ASN Department. Such support may be considered appropriate if the pupil has specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and requires to follow a particular programme of work designed to improve skills in reading and writing, information handling, etc. Such pupils may also require individual instruction in the use of technology. The purpose of these groups is to give pupils the tools and skills to assist them to become more independent in their learning.

In some subjects, these classes are taught by Support for Learning staff in consultation with the relevant subject department. Pupils will follow either an individualised programme or one which meets the needs of a group of pupils. Some of these classes work towards National qualifications at National 2/3. A number of subject departments also teach small groups of pupils with additional support needs. This ensures that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum with opportunities to attain nationally recognised qualifications.

The decision to place a pupil in one of these small groups, if the timetable permits, is taken only after discussion between pupil, parents and school staff. Pupils' progress will be monitored carefully and parents invited to contribute to the review process.

Pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders

Pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders are supported by the ASN Department. Staff give support to pupils within classes and also give more specialised individual support. Partner agencies may also provide further specialised advice to help meet these needs.

A dedicated classroom area is provided for some of these groups of pupils, depending on how they access the curriculum. As well as functioning as a teaching area it is also used for social and recreational purposes at break and lunchtimes.

Enhanced Provision Resource Base

The role of the Enhanced Provision Resource Base in Thurso High School is to give secondary school provision for pupils with severe and complex learning needs from the West of Caithness. The staff to pupil allocation in the Base allows pupils to follow an individually planned curriculum, often with an emphasis on the development of life skills.

A policy of social inclusion for all pupils is actively encouraged and pupils make use of whole-school resources as well as having social contact with their mainstream peers

CSW Support

Sometimes a Children's Service Worker will be involved in supporting a child. A **Children's Service Worker** is often based at the school and 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.

Involvement of Parents

Parents who are concerned about their child's progress are welcome to contact their child's Principal Teacher of Pupil Support (Guidance) to discuss these matters. PTPSs can be contacted using the generic school email address given at the beginning of the handbook or by calling the school and asking for the relevant member of Guidance staff. Regular reviews are held for pupils, especially those with Individual Education Programmes (IEPs) and with significant needs. Parents are encouraged to become involved in the process of development and review of IEPs. Parents will also be contacted and their views sought when alterations to support arrangements are being considered, for example changes related to school staffing provision.

Additional Support for Learning (Sources of Information) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2011

Listed are 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 Amendment Order 2011 as:

- **Enquire – the Scottish advice and information service for additional support for learning** [http://enquire.org.uk/](http://enquire.org.uk)
- **My Rights, My Say – an advocacy and advice service for young people over 12 with additional support needs** <http://enquire.org.uk/myrightsmysay/>
- **[Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance](#)**, an advocacy service to support parents and children

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

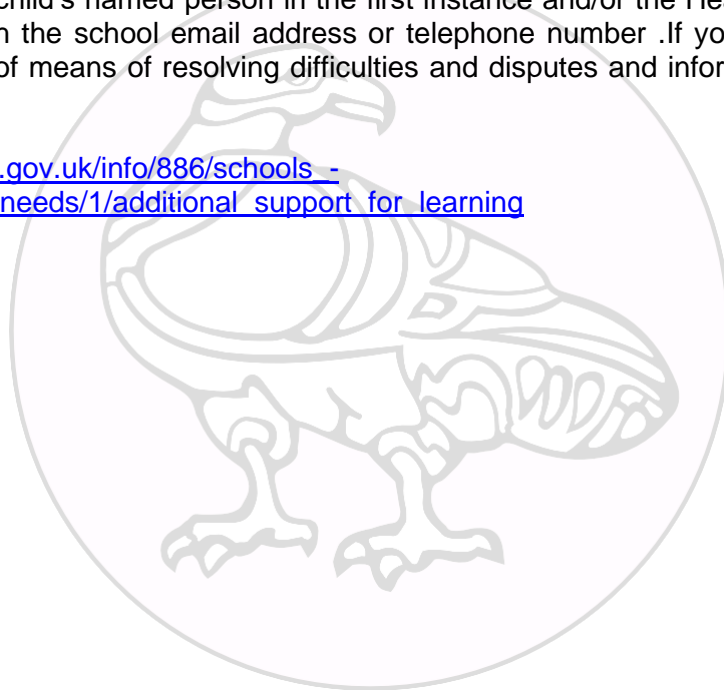
Transition Support

Pupils with additional support needs and their families will be supported in planning for the transition from secondary education to the a chosen post school destination through relevant review meetings involving Pupil and Learning Support staff and other agencies as required, for example, Skills Development Scotland, Further or Higher Education admission staff, Social Work and Health where relevant. Reviews can be held online or based within school and will focus on planning a staged approach to ensure the young person is supported with the process.

Parental Concerns regarding ASN support

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 in the first instance and/or the Head Teacher. They can be contacted through the school email address or telephone number .If your concerns continue, there are a number of means of resolving difficulties and disputes and information on this can be found at:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools -
additional support needs/1/additional support for learning](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools-_additional_support_needs/1/additional_support_for_learning)



Pupil Support/Guidance Structure

Before starting in Thurso High School, all pupils are allocated to one of the four Principal Teachers of Pupil Support (Guidance). All the pupils in a register class ("S" class) have the same Principal Teacher of Pupil Support. As far as possible, these pupils will remain together in the same group and with the same Principal Teacher of Pupil Support throughout their time in Thurso High School.

Pupil Support teachers will track progress and support their pupils through school, helping and encouraging them to achieve their full academic, personal, and social potential. To help in this, regular class and individual contacts will be set up and developed over the years. Pupil Support teachers offer support and guidance to individual pupils when needed.

Close links with the associated Primary Schools assist in making the transition to secondary as easy as possible for the new intake. From the two day P7 Visit onwards, the Pupil Support Teacher is there to give guidance and advice to any child or young person in their group. The Pupil Support teacher will be involved throughout a pupil's schooling but special focus is given to key times in the pupil's school career, e.g. when making subject choices in S2, S3, S4 and S5, going on work experience and prior to SQA exams in senior classes. However, advice will always be available on any matter which has a bearing on pupils' development. Contact and liaison with parents is an important part of the work of the Pupil Support team. Parents should always feel welcome to contact the Pupil Support staff on any matter they need to discuss including any concerns about a pupil's progress. This can be done by contacting the school on the number provided or by email.

Principal Teachers of Pupil Support

Mr G Blyth
Mr P McKeesick
Mr E McElroy
Mrs B Sinclair

Personal and Social Education

All pupils in S1–S5 follow a personal and social education programme (PSE). The aim of the programme is to help pupils develop self-awareness, self-esteem, self-confidence and interpersonal skills. Pupils are encouraged to develop an awareness of themselves as members of a wider society through study and discussion of the issues of today. They learn how to make informed decisions on matters which will affect their lives.

From S1 to S5 Personal and Social Education is mainly taught by Pupil Support Staff working with the pupils in their own Pupil Support Group. In addition, members of the wider community are brought into school to talk to PSE classes. These vary from the school nurse, police, visitors from many universities, colleges and local work providers - all offering specialist information and advice to the pupils.

The PSE programme includes a focus on Developing the Young Workforce. DYW staff and specialist Careers Advisers visit classes and pupils can make individual appointments to see careers staff from Skills Development Scotland (SDS). They receive support within their DYW curriculum to develop an understanding of key skills and their personal strengths, to progress their understanding of how to complete applications and around interview processes and consider how they can access support for their individual pathways. Pupils will be given a broad outline of the topics they will study in any year and parents are welcome to contact the school to seek further information if required.

Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)

It is recognised that many children and young people may experience difficulties which affect their learning. Whatever factors underpin the difficulty, use of the staged approach attempts to minimise any negative impact on the pupil's learning.

Every child has a Named Person whose job it is to maintain the child's development record and to look into any concerns about a child's wellbeing. In Thurso High School this is the pupil's Pupil Support (Guidance) teacher. Any parent with concerns about their child's welfare or progress should contact their child's Pupil Support teacher in the first instance.

Stage One: At the first level, the pupil's needs can be met by the class teacher, perhaps with advice from Learning Support or other school staff. If it is felt that further help is needed, the Pupil Support teacher will be informed. In some cases, there will be a need for further investigation and more directed support.

Stage Two: At stage two, the Pupil Support teacher will work with parents/carers and their child to work out what the concerns are and to assess strengths and pressures. Parents/carers and their child are generally invited to attend a review meeting in school with the Pupil Support Teacher. Sometimes other staff will also be there, perhaps including the Year Head, Children's Service Worker or Educational Psychologist. At this meeting a plan of action will be agreed. This is called a Single-Agency Plan as it only involves school staff and their partners in education.

A time for review of the plan will also be agreed. Responsibilities for actions will be described in the Plan and the Named Person will monitor progress. Feedback from all involved in the Plan will be given at the review meeting and will form the basis for a decision on whether further assessment and intervention involving other agencies is needed.

Stage Three: A small number of children and young people have more complex needs requiring the support of another agency or agencies. At stage three, the school will call on partner agencies, for example Social Work, NHS partners, voluntary agencies, etc. to support its work with the child or young person. Parents/carers and the child will be fully involved in the process and will then be invited to a full **Child's Plan** meeting. Everyone involved will be encouraged to share their views. When the plan is drawn up it will become the responsibility of the **Lead Professional** to make sure the plan happens and things get better. The Lead Professional will be the professional best able to ensure better outcomes for the child and will not necessarily be a member of school staff.

Whole School and Classroom procedures

All pupils should be aware of what is expected of them in school. In addition, certain routines are appropriate for particular parts of the day so that the school runs smoothly and pupils can learn efficiently. Parents can support their children by helping ensure that they have the correct equipment, have done homework, have the correct dress code and teaching them to be organised and take responsibility for themselves.

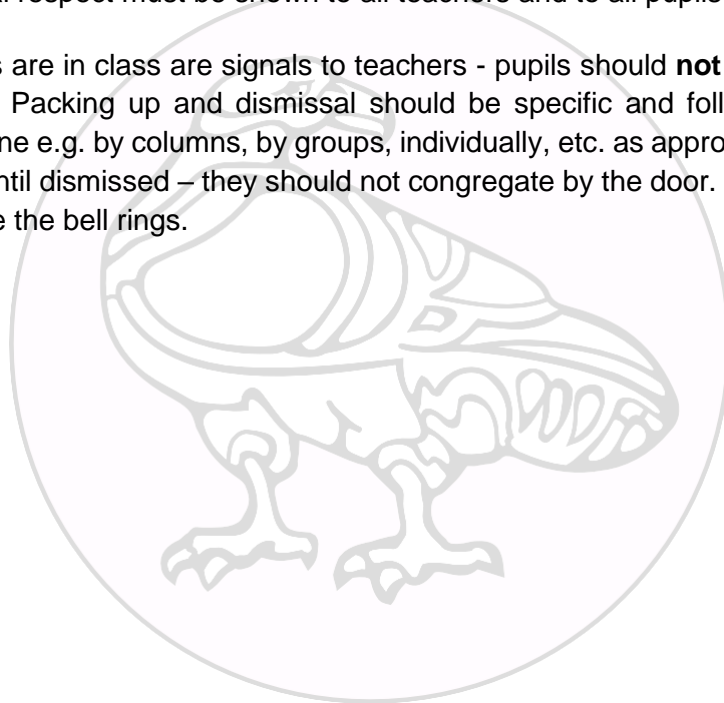
WHOLE SCHOOL

1. Pupils should walk in the corridors.
2. Pupils should remove hoods/hats indoors.
3. Everyone should keep to the left on stairs and in corridors.
4. Everyone should observe the up/down stairs in the B Block and the one way system past the Gyms at period changeovers. At start of break, lunch and at the end of the day both stairs can be used. The fire exit at B Block should not be used by pupils.
5. Pupils should stay on the ground floor at break and lunchtimes unless going to a pre-arranged group. Pupils waiting for the Library to open at lunchtimes should wait on the ground floor.
6. At Registration pupils wait on ground floor until the first bell, then go to classroom and wait outside class for their Registration teacher.
7. Chromebooks should not be used in social areas before registration, at breaks or lunchtimes. Chromebooks must be carried in the cases supplied (or equivalent). Chromebooks or cases must not be defaced in any way.
8. No food or drinks (apart from water) above ground floor apart from when attending pre-organised meetings or clubs with prior agreement from the teacher. No drinks allowed at all in classes where Technical or IT equipment is used. Energy drinks are not allowed in school.
9. The flagged area in front of Reception and the Hall should be kept clear.
10. Pupils should conduct themselves in an appropriate manner in the school at all times, including in the corridors and outside areas; there should be no shouting, swearing or jostling.

CLASSROOM

1. Pupils are expected to enter the classroom quietly when asked to do so by the teacher and to get out books and equipment needed for the lesson, following a pre-explained and practised routine.
2. Each pupil to have own allocated place in class from a seating plan made up by the teacher and pupils should not leave their seat during non-practical classes without specific instruction or permission.
3. No jackets, hoods, scarves, hats, gloves to be worn in class.

4. Mobile phones should be switched off and out of sight in class-time. This applies whether the pupil is actually in a classroom or in another area of the school for any reason. Phones may be confiscated for the remainder of the day if this is not adhered to.
5. Pupils are expected to bring appropriate equipment to each lesson. Chromebooks must be charged and ready to use every day. They must be kept in their cases and must be carried in a school bag. They should only be brought out to use in a lesson when the teacher tells you to do so and only used for the purpose of the lesson. Chromebooks may be removed for the remainder of the day if this is not adhered to.
6. No eating or chewing in class. Water may be drunk – no juice. Pupils are not allowed to leave a class to buy water (or anything else) from the vending machine.
7. “Please”, “thank you” and normal courteous forms of address to be used in classrooms to everyone. Mutual respect must be shown to all teachers and to all pupils.
8. Bells when pupils are in class are signals to teachers - pupils should **not** automatically pack up when bell rings. Packing up and dismissal should be specific and following an agreed and established routine e.g. by columns, by groups, individually, etc. as appropriate. Classes should remain seated until dismissed – they should not congregate by the door. No pupil or class to be dismissed before the bell rings.



Promoting Positive Behaviour

The school's aim at all stages is to provide an interesting and stimulating educational experience. At Thurso High, the belief is that all pupils are entitled to education of the highest quality which helps them to develop their full potential as individuals and to gain skills, knowledge, understanding and qualifications. If the pupils are educated in a well-ordered and structured environment, these entitlements are enhanced.

The major aims of our Positive Behaviour Management System are:

- To promote positive behaviour in pupils by actively encouraging and rewarding good behaviour.
- To have consistency in the issuing of merits and warnings.
- To promote partnership with parents by early and regular communication with them.
- To promote a code of conduct for pupils.
- To give encouragement to pupils who have accumulated warnings by making it their responsibility to remove these through good behaviour during the session.
- To effectively track all pupils' progress.

Class Transfers: Pupils whose behaviour is preventing effective teaching, their own learning and that of others, will face a range of warnings and sanctions. As a last resort pupils may be temporarily transferred to another class during the lesson to allow teaching to continue uninterrupted. Pupils consistently defying teacher instructions or across a number of classes can be expected to be class transferred for longer periods of time, so learning and teaching is unaffected. The pupil profile system allows pupils' progress and any difficulties to be closely monitored. All class transfers are recorded and parents informed. This allows the Senior Management Team and the Principal Teacher of Pupil Support to keep parents well informed and ensure early intervention where needed.

Nurture Groups

To support our young people work to their full potential and to feel valued and included, nurture groups play a significant role and are available to both senior and junior pupils in a range of forms.

Soft Start sessions, led by designated members of staff, run each morning of the school week for a small group of junior pupils and provide a calm and happy start to the day, helping to develop each students' resilience and an ability to engage in their individual curriculum.

In addition to Soft Start, weekly sessions are run for junior and senior students at points throughout the school year including:

- Friendship Groups
- Girls and Boys Groups
- Seasons for Growth if required (Bereavement and loss support)
- Growing Together (Links with a local primary school to build resilience and confidence)
- Fire Skills (Building resilience and confidence)
- Bloom (Resilience for Seniors)
- Youth Development and Childrens Service Worker support

To discuss the allocation of a place on any of the above, pupils or parents/ carers can contact their child's Pupil Support link to discuss.

School House and Merit Systems

As part of a focus on developing a positive school ethos, staff and pupils work together to embed key values which have been jointly agreed by members of the school community including parents, pupils and staff. Thurso High School's values are as follows:

Teamwork

I am willing to work alongside others to achieve the aims of THS.

This means:

- Contributing positively to the school community
- Representing Thurso High School in the wider community
- Cooperating with others in class and school activities.

Respect

I will show respect for staff, other pupils and the community

This means:

- Being polite and considerate towards others
- Listening and following instructions when they are given
- Taking pride in school property and the surrounding environment.

Achievement

I will always aim to realise my potential by working to the best of my ability

This means:

- Recognising the importance of learning for all
- Successfully engaging in lessons and school activities
- Working towards short term and long term goals.

Commitment

I will be supportive of the values of Thurso High School and its ethos.

This means:

- Showing loyalty to the school community
- Remaining resilient even when in challenging situations
- Being willing to work to the highest level

Kindness

I will treat others the way I would like to be treated.

This means:

- Being willing to support and show care for those who need help
- Considering other people's thoughts and feelings
- Showing manners and courtesy to others in the school and the community.

To support and encourage these values, Thurso High School has a House system. Houses include Dirlot, Forss, Brims, Pentland and Orlig. All pupils will be allocated to a house based on their register group and will remain in this house throughout their time in Thurso High School. S6 pupils will have the opportunity to assume positions of responsibility as Prefects including positions of Head Boy and Girl, Depute Head Boy and Girl or as House Captains, whilst all pupils will receive individual recognition for positive achievements, team efforts and behaviour through house points generated from a merit system and ongoing school events. Merits can be awarded by any member of staff and will fall under the categories of each of the five school values. Individual pupil merits will be recorded as well as contributing to house groups.

School Prefect Positions

To further promote our school vision, core values and aims and to provide opportunities for responsibility and engagement with the wider school community, a prefect system has been created for sixth year senior students. The role of school prefect includes a number of duties, falling in to four main categories including:

- Helping staff
- Supporting younger pupils
- Organising events

To apply for the role of school prefect, senior pupils will firstly complete an application form, detailing their suitability for the role and why they would like to assume the position of prefect. Following this, selected candidates will be asked to attend an interview with members of the school middle and senior management. Where successful, pupils will receive an agreement detailing their duties and various roles.

Senior Prefect roles seek to promote a diverse range of skills which will further equip students for life and work beyond school including confidence communicating in a range of scenarios, working as part of a team, organisation, initiative, resourcefulness and leadership. Prefects will also work to help maintain a positive ethos and to stand as an example to other students in regards to their daily conduct, dress code and commitment to achieving their individual goals.

S6 Opportunities

In S6, pupils can either choose a full academic timetable of five subjects, or they can choose four subjects and have a column for S6 Opportunities. These opportunities are varied but all are forms of volunteering and will count towards a **Saltire Award**. Some also involve undertaking other qualifications and awards which will contribute to the pupils' personal development.

As well making a very valuable contribution to the school or wider community and being a chance to 'give something back', all activities undertaken will add value to applications for a variety of post school destinations. S6 opportunities include:

- **Saltire Award-** all pupils should sign up for this as all the opportunities below will add to the award achieved.
- **Pupil wellbeing opportunities:** Mental Health Ambassadors; S1 'buddy'/mentors; Mikeysline and Listening Ear
- **Academic support opportunities:** S1 Paired reading; Homework Support; Subject support
- **Wider community opportunities:** Befriending; Work experience
- **Extra-curricular activities for younger pupils:** Setting up and running extra-curricular activities for younger pupils after school or at lunch time or helping with any other already established extra-curricular activity

Pupil Council

Each academic session, two pupil representatives volunteer from each register set to take part in termly House Council meetings. Prior to the meeting, the chosen representatives from each registration class discuss any ongoing matters from previous meetings with their peers and ask for any new points that require to be raised at upcoming meetings.

House Council meetings are led by staff House Leads and S6 House Captains from the Prefect Team. Actions from the meeting are taken to the School Senior Management for discussion and progress fed back to pupils through school announcements and Personal and Social Education classes. The House Council allows pupils the opportunity to reflect and voice ideas and opinions on their learning, the school environment and to contribute to the wider ethos of the school.



Extra-Curricular Activities

Clubs and Activities

To broaden their experience, pupils are offered the opportunity to choose from a wide range of activities out with the timetabled school day. Some of the clubs meet during the lunch hour, while others meet after 3.35pm. Country pupils wishing to attend a club/activity after school can obtain a late bus pass from reception.

Pupils are advised about dates and times clubs meet on the daily announcement sheet. The following clubs have met on a regular basis during the last session:

| Activity | Day | Time | Contact | Location |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Senior Netball S3-S6 | Wednesday | 3:35 - 5:00pm | Ms S Macdonald | Games Hall |
| S3 Boys' Football | Monday | 3:45 - 4:45pm | Mr R Sutherland | Naver |
| S1-S6 Girls' Football | Tuesday | 3.45- 4.45pm | Miss K Findlay | Naver (Meet at Games Hall) |
| Pupil Support Football | Tuesday | 3.35 - 5.00pm | Mr R Burrige | Games Hall |
| Senior Boys' Football | Wednesday | 3:35 - 4:30pm | Mr E McElroy | Naver |
| S3-S6 Basketball | Monday | 3:35 - 4:40pm | Ms C Macdonald | Games Hall |
| S1/2 Netball | Wednesday | Lunchtime | Ms S MacDonald | Games Hall |
| Wind Band | Monday | 6:30pm | Mrs K Anderson | E10 |
| Band | Wednesday | 3:40 - 5pm | Mr A Macleod | Music Dept |
| Scottish Group | Tuesday | 1.15pm | Mr C Frame | E10 |
| Choir | Monday | 1:15pm | Ms H Lewry | E9 |
| Tabletop Games | Wednesday | 3:40 - 5pm | Mr S Disbury | E20 |
| Debating Club | Tuesday | 1:15pm | Mrs A Wallace | C2.7 |
| Duke of Edinburgh Award | at lunchtimes by arrangement | | Mrs F Bremner | B3.2 |
| S1/2 Indoor Champ League Football | Thursday | Lunchtime | Mr Ross | Games Hall |
| S1-6 Girls' & Boys' Badminton | Thursday | 3.35-5.00 pm | Mr McLean | Games Hall |
| S1-6 Girls' and Boys' Touch Rugby | Thursday | 3.35-5.00 pm | Mr Calder | Naver |
| Chess Club | Thursday | 3.35 – 5.00 pm | Mr J McQuaker | B3.1 |
| S1/2 Cooking Club | Wednesday | 3.35-4.45pm | Ms B Plater | F4 |
| Foreign Film Club | Thursday | Lunchtime | Madame Straumann | C1.6 |
| Homework Club | Tuesdays Wednesdays Thursdays | 3.35-4.30 pm Lunchtime Lunchtime | Mrs E Cormack | Library |
| Lego Robot Competition Group (First Lego League) | Monday | 3.35- 4.45pm Lunchtimes by arrangement | Mr Ford, Mr Forsyth | C Block Staffroom |
| Wooley Wednesdays | Wednesday | 3.35- 4.30pm | Miss Plater, Mrs Dunnett | E1 |

The enthusiasm and commitment of teachers, staff and parents who give up their own free time ensures that all these opportunities can be offered to our pupils.

Foreign Trips

In recent years, many pupils in Thurso High have benefited from foreign trips organised by school staff. These trips have included visits to France for snow sports holidays (skiing and snowboarding). Other trips have included a visit to Iceland arranged by the Social Subjects Department and a joint visit between Wick High School and Thurso High School to Madrid for football.

Forthcoming trips and activities are advertised on daily announcement sheets and on the school website/Facebook page to ensure that all pupils have access to information about how and when to register their interest.



Skills Development Scotland

Skills Development Scotland provides a link between the school and the world of work. To assist young people as they consider their futures, Careers Advisers provide specialist information, pupil support and advice which complement the school's Careers Education Programme. They are also involved in the transition to post-school education or employment.

School Provision from Skills Development Scotland

A team of Careers Scotland Advisers allocated to Thurso High, visits the school regularly and is also routinely available during Parents' Evenings. This is led by **Jane Young**. The strategic aim of Skills Development Scotland is *to equip individuals with the skills to make well-informed, realistic career decisions throughout their working lives*. Various career based events are held throughout the school year and advertised in the school announcements. At the convention, a wide range of employers, colleges and agencies make themselves available in school to provide information, advice and experience on employment and training.

Appointments to see the Skills Development Scotland Advisers can be arranged by the Pupil Support Staff- the key Careers Advisor for Thurso High School is Jane Young. The Careers Team can also be contacted by parents or pupils at:

Skills Development Scotland Centre

Tollemache House

Thurso

Caithness

KW14 8AZ

Tel.: 01847 896115

thurso@careers-scotland.org.uk

During their time at Thurso High School all pupils will participate in a planned programme of careers education delivered by a range of people including PSE teachers and representatives from Skills Development Scotland. At key stages such as option choice decision-making, most staff will be involved in making recommendations or giving general advice. We rely on the good links between home and school to ensure that through open dialogue, the most appropriate decisions for individual pupils are arrived at.

There have recently been significant changes in the operation of Skills Development Scotland in terms of working in schools and the overall emphasis is now on career planning. The strategic aim of Skills Development Scotland is *to equip individuals with the skills to make well-informed, realistic career decisions throughout their working lives*. Specialist careers staff can offer services in various ways that will allow the pupil flexibility while helping Careers to differentiate levels of service according to need:

- **high priority** pupils are those identified as not likely to make a smooth transition from school to further/higher education, training or employment.
- **medium priority** are those not at risk but nevertheless requiring career planning support;
- **low priority** are pupils able to self-help.

Transition

The school will ensure that all pupils leaving school have a positive destination. Aspiration data is collected at various points from pupils throughout the school year through a 16+ data form. This information is required by Skills Development Scotland and the Scottish Government but also ensures we can best support each student with their post school plans Support is offered to pupils

applying to Further or Higher Education through designated classes within the timetable to support the UCAS application process. Relevant job opportunities are advertised where possible through school announcements and on our social media page. Pupils are supported with the application process for Modern Apprenticeships and employment with various careers events throughout the academic year and with mock interview opportunities through the careers service. In addition, in conjunction with our school DYW Coordinator, we organise a range of visiting speakers, site visits, career talks within subject areas and regular 'Meet the Employer' lunchtime session to ensure that our students have the opportunity to learn about a diverse range of career paths and post school options and how they may access these.

Parents should spend time with their child looking at the world of work website: [My World of Work](#)

Information about local opportunities are listed on the hi-hope.org website to support 16+ planning. [Home | Hi-hope](#) or advertised through the school Facebook page where possible.

Opportunities for all

Opportunities for All is a commitment by Scottish Government to offer a place in learning or training to every 16-19 year old who is currently not in education, employment or training. Highland Council has a lead role in respect of Opportunities for All whilst young people are still in school. The long-term aim is to enable all young people to access and progress in learning and to equip them with the skills to participate and progress, where possible into eventual employment.

Further support for employment

Further support and information on employment opportunities can be found at the Job Centre plus website, by searching for your local office:

<https://find-your-nearest-jobcentre.dwp.gov.uk/search.php>



Home/School Links

Communication with Parents

Communication between parents and the school has a vital role to play in the education of the young people in Thurso High school and we pride ourselves on being an open school and responding as promptly as possible to any parental communication. Where parents wish to visit the school an appointment should be made to ensure the appropriate member of staff is available. Parents should contact the school if they have any concerns about their child's progress or welfare. This may be via the school office or directly to Guidance or Senior Management staff. Similarly, the school will inform parents quickly of any problems that arise at school, this may be by phone, text message, letter or email.

It is important that parents are kept up to date with happenings at the school as well as forthcoming events such as examinations, Parents' Evenings or the issue of Progress Reports. An email is sent to contacts periodically. The email informs parents/carers of upcoming events and general school news. The school will celebrate events that have taken place in the school on the website and Facebook as well as by submitting articles to the *Caithness Courier* and *John O'Groat Journal*.

Support for Parents

For support and advice for general parenting concerns Parentline can offer this through their website or support line which can be found at <https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/>

Parental Involvement

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.

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
- Tracking and Reporting
- Target Setting
- Course choice/ Options evenings
- Information on the school website

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

The school seeks to involve parents in any key decisions about their child's education and to inform about progress.

Parental information is obtained from questionnaires issued regularly.

What is a Parent Council?

Parent Council is a group of parents selected to represent all parents of children at the school.

The role of the Parent Council is to:

- support the school in its work with pupils
- represent the views of all parents
- encourage links between the school, parents, pupils, and the wider community

Any parent who wishes to raise an issue for the Parent Council to consider can do so by contacting thursohighpc@gmail.com

| THURSO HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP 2023/24 | | |
|---|--|------------------------|
| Ms Beth Cunningham | Chairperson | thursohighpc@gmail.com |
| Mr D Hymers-Mackintosh | Vice Chair | |
| Mr D Hymers-Mackintosh | Treasurer | |
| Mrs B McKenna | Parent Member | |
| Ms D Wood | Parent Member | |
| Mrs D Pottinger | Parent Member | |
| Ms JA Leslie | Parent Member | |
| Ms Z McIntosh | Parent Member | |
| Ms L Manson | Parent Member | |
| Mr G Mackay | Parent Member PTA Chair | |
| Mr S Struthers | Teacher Member | |
| Mr J Lynch | Teacher Member | |
| Mrs A Nicolson | DYW Coordinator | |
| Ms T Morris | Co-opted Member | |
| Mrs M Horne | Clerk (mhorne55@outlook.com) | 01847 893822 |
| Mrs H Flavell | Advisor to Parent Council and Head Teacher | 01847 893822 |

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/>

Fundraising Committee

There is an active Fundraising Committee at Thurso High School. This is a sub-committee of the Parent Council. Meetings are held regularly in the school.

The Fundraising Committee exists to assist the Head Teacher in providing desirable facilities, amenities and resources via fund-raising activities. Membership is open to all parents/carers of pupils at Thurso High School and to all current members of staff.

For information please contact Mrs Anne Nicoll (Depute), at Thurso High School. Present office bearers are:

Chairperson: Mr G Mackay

Secretary: Ms S Bell

Free School Meals

To receive free school meals and assistance with school clothing, your household must be in receipt of any one of the following:

- Income Support
- Universal Credit (where the monthly earned income does not exceed £625).
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance
- Any income related element of Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit, but not in receipt of Working Tax Credit, and your income is less than £16,105 (as assessed by the HMRC)
- Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit and an income below £7,500 (as assessed by the HMRC)
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

You can also apply:

- If you are 16 to 18 yrs old and receive any of these benefits in your own right
- If you have no recourse to public funds, normally due to immigration status
- If you are a family awaiting your first monthly Universal Credit award notice

For further information on Free School Meals or to make an application to receive these, please see the following link: https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/899/schools_-_grants_and_benefits/10/free_school_meals_and_assistance_with_clothing

Primary/Secondary Liaison

Regular meetings are held between the staff from the High School and the associated primaries to promote a close liaison which has two aims:

- to develop continuity in our curricular provision
- to ensure a smooth transition for pupils from P7 to S1.

Contact with the associated primary schools, with regard to building up both academic and social profiles of the young people, starts around Easter when class lists are drawn up in consultation with the primary teachers. However, the process begins much earlier, sometimes in P6, for pupils with significant additional support needs. Learning Support and Pupil Support staff visit the primary school to talk with the teachers and with the primary seven pupils. A Parents' Night is held in June for primary seven parents. A two-day visit to the High School takes place in June for all incoming pupils when they follow a timetable similar to that which they will have in S1.

School Improvement

School Improvement Plan

The key priorities in this year's school improvement plan are as follows:

1. Health and wellbeing
2. Developing the young workforce
3. Raising attainment
4. Supporting the needs of every child
5. Growing as a Gaidhlig Medium school
6. Pupil Equity Fund planning

The plan can be found in full on our school website at: <https://thursohighschool.org.uk/>

Standards and Quality Report

Our school's Standard and Quality report details our key strengths and areas for improvement. For further information on the following, please see the Standards and Quality Report on our school website under the 'Parents' menu.

- The trends and information on overall school performance at CfE levels, SCQF Levels and other awards, leaver destinations and any other significant achievements over the last three years.
- How the school has improved standards in relation to literacy, numeracy and health and well-being.
- How the school has worked to close the poverty-related attainment gap.

Schools Performance at Local and National Level

Details of the school's performance at a local and national level can be obtained from the following websites:

<https://education.gov.scot/inspection-and-review/find-an-inspection-report/find-an-inspection-report/>

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

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

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.

You can also access the highland school closure website for school closure information.

Adverse Weather Procedure

The decision as to whether a pupil should attempt to travel to school in adverse weather conditions, either by transport or on foot, lies with the parent. While recognising that education should be interrupted as little as possible, the Education Authority accepts that in severe weather conditions the safety of the pupils is paramount.

For pupils using school transport, weather conditions and availability, or otherwise, of shelter at the 'pick-up point' will dictate just how long a child should wait. Parents are asked to advise children appropriately in relation to prevailing conditions. During difficult weather conditions no pupil is expected to wait longer than twenty minutes past the normal 'pick-up' time.

Parents are advised of the different circumstances affecting drivers of contract vehicles and public service vehicles. Drivers of contract vehicles are advised that they should not drop off children where there is any doubt that they may not safely reach home or other acceptable place of shelter. Drivers of public service vehicles, however, must travel by specified routes in accordance with scheduled timetables and cannot make special provision for the individual needs of passengers.

If road conditions have deteriorated overnight, the transport operators may use their professional judgement not to run buses to school in the morning. In such cases, local radio stations will issue news and weather bulletins conveying appropriate information regarding traffic conditions, school closures, etc. While it is recognised that such transmissions may not cover all households, they will be helpful to many families.

Moray Firth Radio - Normal hourly news bulletins and half-hourly summaries will carry local information on weather, roads and conditions affecting schools. In severe conditions normal programmes will be interrupted to carry emergency bulletins.

Radio stations request that, since telephone lines are busy at such times, parents should not phone in for advice but should listen to appropriate broadcasts.

Telephone Messaging Service Thurso High School also has a telephone messaging service which will allow parents to hear a message from the Head Teacher confirming if it is open or closed and noting any transport changes. Staff will endeavour to have a message on prior to 0800 hours. This 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.

To connect with the adverse weather message phone:

0800 564 2272, when asked, enter the school's PIN number 04 1230

The Internet - Highland Council provide a Highland School Closures information service on the World Wide Web. It can be accessed at: <http://www.highland.gov.uk/schoolclosures>

In snowy weather information can also be obtained from the school website and Facebook page.

Closing the School during the School Day

It does happen on occasion that after the pupils have arrived in school, the Head Teacher, in consultation with the transport operators and sometimes with police, takes a decision to send bus pupils home before the usual closure time. There are times when, in the interests of the safety of the children, such a decision has to be taken very quickly.

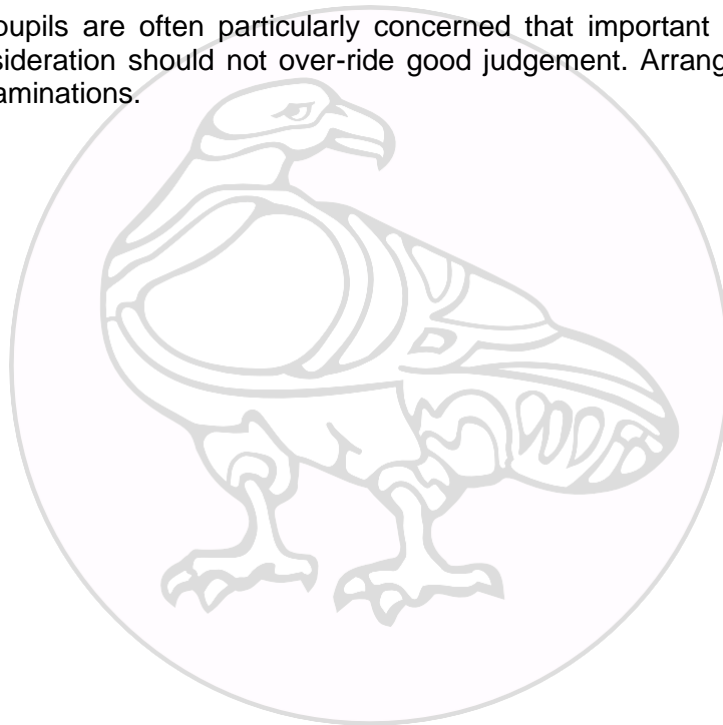
Country pupils being sent home early report to allocated departure rooms according to a well planned procedure as all pupils need to be accounted for prior to evacuating the school.

It is vitally important that parents ensure there are arrangements for their child should they arrive home in the middle of the day and country pupils must also have a storm address in town. This may be with a relative, a friend of the family, or with the parents of a classmate. Early in the first term pupils will be asked by their Pupil Support Teacher to provide such a storm address.

Where parents are sufficiently concerned about conditions at 'drop-off' points, they should arrange to have children met or consider an alternative destination. In such cases parents should contact the school as early as possible.

Although weather conditions may improve after children have been sent home, they must not then return to school, as the usual means of transport will no longer be available at the end of that school day.

Some parents and pupils are often particularly concerned that important examinations may be missed but this consideration should not over-ride good judgement. Arrangements can be made regarding missed examinations.



Health

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.

Accidents in School

In the case of an injury occurring in school or, when there is serious concern about a pupil, the school will, at its discretion, either seek help from the local doctors, take the pupil to the accident and emergency unit at Dunbar Hospital or summon an ambulance. The school will contact parents as soon as is practicable.

The school has a number of staff trained as First Aiders. These staff are, on occasion, called to assist pupils who require First Aid.

The school is unable to administer drugs or medicines (including analgesics) without parental agreement.

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.

It is expected that parents or carers will inform a pupil's Guidance teacher of any relevant information relating to the need to administer medication to their child. The Guidance teacher will liaise with parents or carers regarding exactly what support the school can provide for a child with health care needs. Please see the following link for the Highland council Administration of Medicine Policy:

https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/175/administration_of_medicines_in_schools

School Health Service

Ms Janelle Spratt provides the School Health Service through the Community Child Health Department, Highland Primary Care NHS Trust. The School Health Service aims to work in partnership with children, parents and teachers to enable children to benefit fully from their education. Dr Stephanie Govenden is the Consultant Community Paediatrician based in Inverness

- Parents are given the option of having their child given routine immunisation at school rather than with their family GP.
- Pupils with particular health needs are monitored on a regular basis. The service acts as a link between other health professionals and the school.
- Any pupil wishing health advice may self-refer confidentially to the school nurse. Pupils should ask the receptionist or Pupil Support teacher for details of how to make an appointment.
- The nurse liaises with the Pupil Support staff on health issues.
- Advice can be given on the career implications of various medical conditions.

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. Mental Health and Wellbeing is integrated into our PSE curriculum and supported through a number of nurture strategies. There is a website managed by Highland Council that supports a variety of information relating to mental health and emotional wellbeing that can be accessed [here](#). Schools 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. Counselling is also available for all pupils from age 10. Information on your school's service can be accessed from your child's guidance teacher. Alternately, there is a completely confidential, online counselling service called Kooth for children and young people from age 10 that can be accessed [here](#). Parents would generally be involved in discussions beforehand, however a young person over the age of 12 can ask for support themselves.

Safety Advice for Pupils

Throughout their time at Thurso High School, we try to impress on the pupils the importance of health and safety. The following messages are particularly emphasised over the school session.

Alcohol or Drug Abuse

The use of any form of alcohol or drugs will not be tolerated.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Any form of anti-social behaviour – eg, smoking, spitting, swearing, physical/verbal aggression will not be accepted.

Buses

Pupils must carry and display bus passes as a matter of course. Pupils must wear the seat belts provided and do nothing that will distract the driver. Pupils should also show respect to, and consideration for, all other passengers on the bus. Pupils should move with care and according to instruction when moving about the bus park.

Canteen

Breakfast is available from the canteen each morning. The canteen is always very busy and it is important that everyone exercises care and patience. Parents are responsible for pupils who decide to go out with the school grounds at lunchtime.

Corridors

Pupils must keep to the one-way system at all times. In other parts of the school, keep to the left. Pupils should not run in any part of the school building.

Cycling

All bicycles should be padlocked and left (at the owner's risk) in the designated areas at the front of the school. It is strongly recommended that cyclists wear helmets and that, during the winter, bicycles are well lit and cyclists wear fluorescent clothing. Bikes should not be ridden in the school grounds.

Emergency Plan

In the event of a significant emergency, pupils will be escorted from Thurso High School's evacuation area to Miller Academy primary school. From there, pupils will be sent home to parents or emergency contacts.

Fire Drills

A series of fire drills are carried out each year and are practised to ensure that safe evacuation procedures are understood.

Railway Lines

Pupils must not go near the railway lines.

School Grounds

Care should be exercised when entering or leaving the school grounds. Pupils should use the pedestrian crossing in Ormlie Road and should **not** use the bus parking area as a short cut. Pupils should walk down Ormlie Road on the pavement side – using the opposite side can be dangerous. Cyclists should push their bikes out the top entrance or round to the side of the Technical block. Cyclists **must not** leave through the bus park as it is too busy with traffic. Pupils are not allowed into the car park unless accompanied by a member of staff or other adult. The only exceptions are S6 drivers who need to seek permission from the S6 Year Head.

Snowballing

Grit and ice can cause serious injuries and for that reason, snowballing is not allowed near school.

Stairs

Pupils must keep to the left and avoid pushing as a slip could lead to a serious injury. The one-way system in the B Block, C Block and extension stairwells should be observed. Pupils should not enter a classroom at the 8.35 warning bell for registration but should only do so when the teacher arrives for the 8.40 registration beginning.

Property

Highland Council is not insured to cover the loss of personal property and would recommend that parents take the necessary steps to insure against loss, damage or theft of personal property. Parents/pupils should put names on everything that can be lost and pupils should never leave money or valuables unattended in schoolbags or jackets. When necessary, valuables may be handed to a teacher.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones brought to school are entirely the pupil's responsibility and are brought at the pupil's own risk. Phones should not be charged in school.

Pupils must follow this code of practice:

- Mobile phones and other devices may only be used for personal reasons:
 - Before the first bell in the morning
 - At interval
 - At lunchtimes (unless the pupil is with a teacher).
- At all other times these items should be in a school bag out of sight and switched off unless permission for use is given by the teacher.
- All devices and earphones must be handed over on entry to exam rooms.
- Phones may not be used for photography or videoing at any time within the school or its grounds.

Pupils who breach this code will be asked to hand over their phone to the member of staff involved. Refusal to comply with such a request is a serious breach of school discipline.

In most cases phones will be returned at 3.35 pm, but there will be instances where parents will have to be contacted first.

Aerosol Sprays

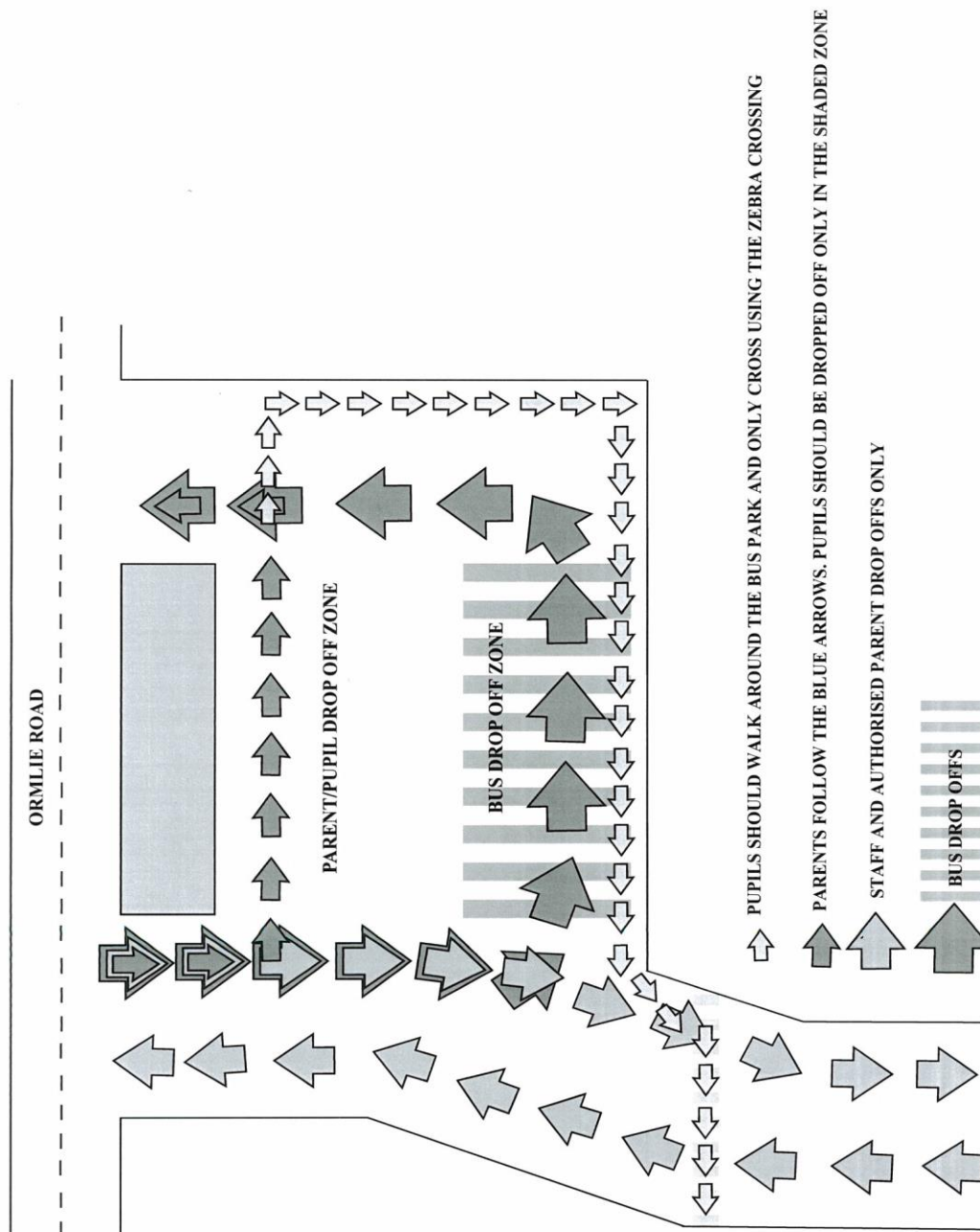
For health and safety reasons aerosol sprays are prohibited in school. If found these items will be confiscated and returned to parents on request. The parent will need to collect the item from reception.

Lost property

Lost property should be handed in to the reception. If a pupil has lost something then they should check with the receptionist in the first instance to see if it has been handed in.

Bus Park Health and Safety

To ensure that traffic can flow freely, especially during the very busy times, buses will drop pupils off at the bottom of the bus park. Parents dropping pupils off should do so at the top of the car park. (Please refer to map). Instead of walking across the bus park, pupils must walk around the outside of the bus park to the crossing point. Pupils must not wear headphones or earphones while disembarking from buses or cars as this is a health and safety risk. Only parents who are authorised to drop pupils off at the rear of the school for specific reasons can do this but they must ensure that the 5 mph speed limit is adhered to and that all pupils coming from the bus park have right of way at the crossing point.



Anti Bullying

Thurso High school is aware that bullying, in its various forms, can cause anxiety and unhappiness for those subjected to it and have developed a policy and procedures to help prevent and, where necessary, deal positively with the problem. Essentially this involves:

- alerting staff to the need for vigilance;
- advising pupils on appropriate action if threatened;
- using opportunities within the curriculum to lead pupils to understand the unacceptability of bullying behaviour establishing procedures for dealing with incidences of bullying;
- inviting the co-operation of parents as appropriate.

The basic message is, "if you are being bullied, tell someone". **The school encourages pupils to adopt the attitude that speaking out will make things better whereas keeping quiet will make things worse.**

The school's Anti Bullying Policy has been updated and contains further information and advice. This can be found on the school website at thursohighschool.org.uk under the 'Parents' menu.

Alternatively, the Highland Council Anti Bullying policy can be accessed at https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19358/anti_bullying_-_guidance_for_schools

Child Protection Policy

From time to time incidents can occur within the school setting which cause concern and could indicate that a pupil is suffering some form of abuse.

In terms of Highland Child Protection Committee Inter-agency Protection Guidelines, Education Service staff must report such incidents to Social Work Services which can lead to a joint Social Work/Police investigation.

All agencies involved in Child Protection are obliged to make the welfare of children their paramount consideration and this will be the priority for Education Service staff.

COPIES OF CHILD PROTECTION POLICY GUIDELINES are available online at http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/1361/childcare_and_family_care/438/child_protection or available from:

Child Protection Development Officer
Fiona Mackintosh
Family Resource Centre
Limetree Avenue
Inverness
IV3 5RH

Data Protection

Access to Pupil Records

The Pupils' Educational Records (Scotland) Regulations 2003 extend to parents the right of access (with 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 <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/ScotXed>.

Data about pupil preferred routes, preferred occupations and anticipated school leaving date is also collected from S3/S4 to support planning for leaving school. This information is shared with Skills Development Scotland. Further information about 16+ Data can be found here:

<https://hi-hope.org/directory/listing/16plus-planning>

Data policy

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

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

The individual data collected by Scottish Government through 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 here:

https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/1095920/enrol_your_child_at_a_school

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

<http://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 these data will not be used to take any actions in respect of an individual. Decisions on the sharing of data will be taken in consultation with relevant colleagues and individuals within and outwith 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.

Education Maintenance Allowances (EMA)

An EMA is a weekly payment worth up to £30 for pupils who are planning to stay on at school after their leaving age. They must complete a learning agreement at school for a minimum of 21 learning hours per week.

In session 2024/2025 pupils born between 1 March 2005 and 30 September 2008 can receive payments from August 2024. Pupils born between 1 October 2008 and 28 February 2009 can receive payments from January 2025. Further information on full eligibility criteria and the online application process can be obtained from the school.

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/899/schools_-_grants_and_benefits/14/education_maintenance_allowance

Employment of Children

The employment of children byelaws regulate the types of occupation in which children under school leaving age may be employed and other conditions of employment. For further information please see:

http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/19/employment_of_children

Equality and Inclusion

The school policy is to oppose all forms of prejudice or discrimination, whether on grounds of age, gender, social class, culture, religion or belief, sexual orientation, race or for other reasons. Equality of opportunity is recognised as a basic human right.

Equal opportunity issues are discussed in the curriculum, particularly in English, PSE and Religious Studies.

Discriminatory behaviour of any kind is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. There is a school policy which deals with both the perpetrator and the victim. If a pupil is on the receiving end of racist behaviour, or has witnessed racist behaviour, this should be reported to a member of staff. If parents have concerns they should phone the appropriate Principal Teacher of Pupil Support or a member of the Senior Management Team.

For up-to-date information please see:

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

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/guidance-presumption-provide-education-mainstream-setting/pages/1/>

Military Families

Our school welcomes and supports families, their Children and Young People from Armed Forces families: Serving, Reservists and Veterans.

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 or Early Years setting. 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 Armed Forces community. There is a dedicated Highland Council partnership, **The Military Liaison Group (Education)**, often referred to as “The MLG” which has been formed to promote and ensure the equity and equality for your Children and Young People within an educational context.

Visit the Highland Council [Armed Forces Families Website](#) for lots of helpful information and support for both families and Educators. The [Enrolment page](#) may be particularly helpful.

Please get in touch with your child’s named person or the Headteacher if you have any concerns or if you would prefer, contact the MLG (Education) lead [here](#).

Complaints and Requests for Service

If a parent has any concerns they should contact their child’s Named Person in the first instance, usually the pupil’s Guidance Teacher or the Year Head for more serious issues.

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 Area Education Manager Annika Jansson (Area Education North) at annika.jansson@highland.gov.uk.

For support and advice for general parenting concerns Parentline can offer this through their website or support line which can be found at <https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/parentline-scotland/>.

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.