

Miller Academy Primary School  
Handbook 2025 - 26



Welcome to Miller Academy!

I feel very fortunate and proud to be the Acting Head Teacher of this school, which has a wonderful history and special place in local people's hearts.

We are a mainstream primary school, where our children are taught in classes from P1-P7. As of November 2024, our school role is 278 children. We have a fantastic Early Learning Centre (ELC) in which 80 little learners currently learn in our fabulous indoor and outdoor spaces. In addition, we also have our SCOPE (Social Communication Primary Education) where children diagnosed with autism also learn.

All of our staff work very hard to ensure that each child is active in and enjoys their learning, so that they progress and attain their full potential.

We are very fortunate to have an excellent Additional Support Needs Teacher with us 3 days a week, who supports our children in different areas of their learning. In addition, we have superb Pupil Support Assistants who help children to progress in a wide range of learning.

We have an active Parent Council, who support our school life in many different ways, and I hope that this is something that you will consider joining. Our meetings are generally termly and there will be cake!

I am very keen to develop positive relationships with our parents, so please do phone, or come in and meet me, if there is anything that you would like to discuss. I look forward to meeting you in due course, with thanks for now,

Mrs Vicki Ross,  
Acting Head Teacher.

'Happy Hive - Busy Bees'

Miller Academy Primary School

Princes Street

THURSO

Caithness

KW14 7DH

(01847) 892815 or [MillerAcademy.Primary@highland.gov.uk](mailto:MillerAcademy.Primary@highland.gov.uk)

### **Our school history**

We hope that this handbook will help you learn a little about our school, including some of our day-to-day procedures.

The original Miller Institution was opened in 1862, over 160 years ago. It was named after its founder, Alexander Miller, a native of Thurso, who had inherited a considerable fortune from his uncle, and he used the money for various charitable purposes, including the building of a school.

The original building was extended in 1892 and in 1900, a second building, which is still part of the school, was erected.

In 1937, the present building was opened as a secondary department and in 1958, due to the rapid increase in population because of Dounreay, the huts were built. In the same year Thurso High School was built and the present building became Miller Academy, solely a primary school. It underwent major renovation work in 1996/97.

### **Our school family**

Our historical school building is very impressive. It is bright and spacious and stands in its own grounds, with grass and tarred playing areas. Within our grounds, we also have our 'Early Learning Centre', 'SCOPE' building and 'Arts' building.

Our Early Learning Centre was opened in October 2021, and we are registered to take a maximum of 80 children at age 3 or 4 and for some 2 year olds. They are very ably supported by our Childcare Manager, Senior EYP, Early Years Practitioners (EYP's) and Childcare Support Workers (CSW's).

Our SCOPE (Social Communication Primary Education) classrooms are also housed in 2 huts within our grounds, and it has been designed to suit our learners with social communication difficulties

Our arts building was completely renovated, creating art, music, and hall areas. An amazing 'Victorian classroom' was also created to reflect Miller Academy's long historical past. Our own learners and learners from other schools often visit, to use it when learning about the Victorians and other related historical projects

We all work hard to make sure that our school is a happy and safe environment, in which our children will enjoy their learning and flourish. We want our children to feel a sense of pride about themselves and their school. We provide a broad and balanced learning curriculum and strive to meet the needs of all of our children.

### **Our Catchment Area**

Miller Academy serves Mount Vernon, the Ormlie Estate, John Kennedy Drive and every area from the river westwards to Dunbar Terrace, Howburn Road, St Magnus Road, Granville Street and Crescent, except for a small area near the harbour bounded by Riverside Place, Grove Lane, High Street and Shore Street. Also included in the catchment area is Forss.

Although this is our official catchment area, under the Education Act (Scotland) 1981, parents from out with these areas can request that their child attend our school and if there are places available, this is usually granted.

### **Transitions**

We have a detailed transition planner for our children moving from our ELC up to P1 which starts after Easter in earnest. Prior to this, we ensure that each of our new P1 children has a buddy for when they are in P1.

We support enhanced transitions for any of our children in P7 who we feel would benefit from this.

We liaise with the High School staff from December onwards to support them in preparing for our P7 joining them in the following August.

### **Feeder High School**

Our P7 classes are involved in transition activities to help ease their move up to our local High School, such as pre-visits there, visits from the guidance and other staff to speak to them here in Miller, information evenings, etc.

Its details are ~ Thurso High School, Ormlie Road, Thurso. KW14 7DS. (01847) 893822

## Miller Times

### Early Learning + Childcare - Flexible Approach

8am - 3pm - Monday-Thursday

8am - 3pm - Friday

30 hours per week funded entitlement

### Mainstream School hours at Miller Academy

(as of January 24)

P1-P3 children ~

Mon - Thurs =

8.55 - 10.15 (tuc)

11 - 12.35 (lunch)

1.15 - 2.45 (home)

Fri = 8.55 - 10.15 (tuc) 10.30 - 12.45 (home)

P4-P7 children ~

Mon - Thurs =

8.50 - 10.40 (tuc)

11 - 12.50 (lunch)

1.35 - 3.15 (home)

Fri = 8.50 - 10.40 (tuc) 11 - 12.50 (home)

### SCOPE School hours

Monday - Thursday

9am - 3.15pm

Friday 9am - 12:55pm

### Breakfast Club

8-9am

This is held in a room within our lovely ELC building.

**MILLER ACADEMY SCHOOL STAFF as at January 2025**

<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Class</b>
Mrs Kay	P1 stars
Mrs A Mackay	P1 rockets
Miss Cowie (Probationer)	P2 rainbows
Miss Bonner	P2 sunshine
Mrs Reid Miss Cameron	P3 moonbeams
Miss Davenport	P3 sparkles
Mrs Louise Mackay Mrs Davidson	P4
Miss Bremner (Probationer)	P5
Miss Taylor	P5/6
Mr Hale	P6/7
Mrs Hutcheon Mrs Lauren Mackay (maternity leave) Mrs H Mackay	P7
Mrs E Mackay (maternity leave) Mrs Thomson + Miss Hourston	SCOPE Teacher
Miss Brims	ASL Teacher
Mrs Souter	P2 probation cover
Miss Hourston	CCR
Mrs Ross	Acting head teacher
Ms Unger	Deputy Head teacher + Senior Early Years teacher
Lorriane Wilson Joanne Crittenden	Clerical
Ross Manson Emma Macintyre	Road crossing Patrol officer
Elaine, Justine, Gemma,	Catering Staff
Janitor	Awaiting appointment
Cleaner	Carly and Caroline

<b>PSA</b>	
Catherine Woods	Isobel
Jessica Tilt	Laura Budge
Julie Swanson	Barbara Rendall
Julie - Anne Mackenzie	Hannah Budge
Laurent Burell	Veronica Middledyad
Leelee Chan	Hazel Dunbar
Lesley Baker	Lisa Critchley
Sara Taylor	Wilma Webster

<b>Miller Early Learning and Childcar</b>	
Mrs Mackintosh ~ Senior Early Years Practitioner	
Ms Unger ~Senior Early Years Teacher	
EYP	
Mrs Taylor	
Miss Bremner	
Mrs Woods	
Mrs Walker Ham	
Miss Elder	
Miss L Mackay	
Mrs Williamson	
Mrs Sinclair	
Mrs Hannah	
Miss Smith	
Miss Fraser	
Mrs Robertson	
Mrs A Mackay	

### **Enrolment**

Children are entitled to start their formal education at the beginning of the session in August, if they are five on or before the last day of February of the same school session. Advertisements are placed in the local press at the beginning of each year giving enrolment dates. Parents are requested to complete the enrolment form online using the following link;

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

Induction - We recognise the importance of the transition of our children from our ELC to Primary 1 and strive to make this as smooth and as happy as possible.

From January onwards, we provide opportunities for our P1 teachers to visit our children in their ELC setting and to talk to staff. This gives the children an opportunity to meet their new teacher in a setting in which they are 'at home'. Transition activities continue thereafter, with our ELC children visiting our school in little groups to become more familiar with their new teacher, class and learning environment in school.

In June, as part of a whole school 'meet your new teacher' programme, the school hosts a curriculum afternoon for the parents whose child will be entering Primary 1. At this time the children enjoy an afternoon session with their new teacher. This ensures that our children will have the chance to meet and get to know their classmates and teacher for the coming session.

We have a detailed transition plan for our children joining P1, to ensure that you and your child have a very positive start at our school.

### **School Placing Requests - Parental Choice**

Each school serves its own particular catchment area. Pupils whose homes are located in that area will have priority in being allocated a place in the school. However, parents have the right to specify the school in which they wish to place their child. Application are made to the Area Education and Learning Manager Mhairi MacDonald . Placing request applications are made online at: [https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/887/enrol\\_your\\_child\\_for\\_school/2](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/887/enrol_your_child_for_school/2)



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

If pupils live outwith the school catchment area and their parents wish them to attend Miller Academy they can contact Mrs Ross to arrange a visit.

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

### **Early Learning + Childcare Centre**

Our Nursery and Childcare Centre (ELCC) was established in 1996, with our lovely new building being opened in October 2021. We are registered for 80 children, aged 3 and 4 and for some at age 2. We offer flexible sessions for the 30 hours a week of entitlement. Enrolment for the centre takes place in February and places are allocated according to Highland Council Policy. Our ELC encourages close, friendly partnerships between home and school. It has a separate information booklet, which you will be given on enrolment, or on request.

We are very proud of our ELC, which works hard to provide high quality education and friendly support to all our families. We are also very excited about our lovely, new building which is providing excellent purpose-built environments for our young learners.

### **Pupil Arrival Times**

It is essential that pupils arrive at school as near to the bell time as possible and we request that pupils are not allowed to arrive at school too early i.e. before 8:40am please, thank you.

### **Attendance / Absence**

Good attendance is vital if pupils are to achieve their full potential. If a pupil is absent from school, a parent or guardian should phone the school on the first day of absence on the school number 01847892815. When returning to school after an absence, the parent or guardian must give a written reason for the time absent.

Daily registration takes place at the start of both the morning and afternoon sessions. Teaching staff electronically notify the office regarding absences from class and if we have no explanation, we will contact you at home or at work for an explanation. This reassures us that nothing untoward has occurred. This procedure has been put in place to ensure the safety of all pupils.

When a pupil has attended school in the morning, but is absent in the afternoon, parents/carers should ensure that they inform the school.

If a child falls ill during the day, parents are contacted for them to collect their child, therefore it is essential that we have up to date daytime contact numbers and emergency contact numbers for all children. Thank you.

If children need to be out of school during class time the request should be made in advance, in writing, to the Head Teacher. Children in P1-3 and pupils who are transported by Highland Council must always be collected from school when such release is requested. Children in P4-7 will be allowed



to go home themselves when such release is requested only if parents make this request in writing. They should otherwise be collected from the school reception area.

Schools are required by law to maintain a record classifying absences as either authorised or unauthorised. This is part of the Government's policy to monitor truancy. Whilst attendance at medical appointments is classified as authorised absence, family holidays are deemed unauthorised and as such cannot be sanctioned by the Head Teacher. Should a holiday be organised during the school term, work is NOT issued by staff for this period. Repeated unauthorised absences have to be referred to the Area Care and Learning Manager, Social Work and in some instances the Police.

Family holidays will be counted as 'unauthorised' absence and it is the policy of the school and the Local Authority to actively discourage this practice. Here is a link to the school term dates on the Highland Council website to aid parents in planning any holidays they may be considering [https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/32/school\\_term\\_dates](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/32/school_term_dates)

### **School Uniform**

It has always been a tradition at Miller Academy that pupils wear school uniform. We ask for your co-operation in ensuring that this practice is continued. Not only is our school uniform as cheap as other clothing, but it promotes a sense of identity and belonging as well as pride in our school. Denim is not permitted.

Boys - Blue sweatshirt, grey/black trousers or shorts, gold or blue polo shirt/tshirt.

Girls - Blue sweatshirt, grey/black trousers or shorts or skirt, gold or blue polo shirt/tshirt.

Boys and girls - require a change of T-shirt or polo shirt, shorts and gym shoes for P.E.

Items of school uniform are available to order via -

Macgregors - online, telephone or shop. [www.macgregorschoolwear.co.uk](http://www.macgregorschoolwear.co.uk) - 01463 277755.

Families on a low income can apply for a clothing grant. Forms can be obtained from the school office or accessed online at [Free school meals and assistance with clothing | Free school meals and assistance with clothing | The Highland Council](#). We expect children to bring a change of footwear for indoor use. This ensures that their feet are dry throughout the day and helps protect our carpets and keeps our school clean.

Eco schools - If you have any school uniform that your child has outgrown and that is in good condition, we would appreciate it if you could send it to school so we can recycle it.

It is helpful if all items of clothing are **clearly labelled with the pupil's name** and that each child has an overall/shirt for art and craft activities.

Pupils are strongly discouraged from wearing make-up, nail varnish, jeans or articles of clothing carrying popular logos.




The wearing of hoop or dangling earrings, necklaces, bracelets, or rings is also strongly discouraged as in certain circumstances, such as during physical activity, these can constitute a hazard, both to themselves and others.

### **School Improvement**

Parents are given a summary of our School Improvement Plan along with the offer of a copy of our annual Standards and Quality Report.

Information on our children's levels of learning along with strategies and approaches which we used are detailed in our SQR.

Our priorities for improvement for 24/25 are -

-  We will teach our children about the world of work and the skills needed for the many different types of jobs, encouraging them all to have high expectations of themselves.
-  We will maximise health and wellbeing learning experiences for our children by ensuring that we have continuity in our planning, teaching and assessment of HWB across our levels, school and settings.
-  We will have a digital way of communicating with our parents and importantly educate our learners and families on how to ensure that they stay safe when online.

### **Family Learning**

We believe that much of the strength of the school lies in the positive relationships between staff, pupils and their parents. These relationships must be nurtured by a healthy exchange of information between teachers and pupils, between home and school. We always welcome parental interest in the welfare of our pupils. Whatever the nature of the issue, you can be assured of our help. Parents/carers are very welcome to phone school for information, or to arrange to talk to a member of staff. Parents/carers are also most welcome to come to school to discuss aspects of their child's education with the appropriate member of staff. Appointments can be made by contacting the school office (892815), to ensure that the particular member of staff is available to see you when you come to school.

An annual 'Meet and Greet' now takes place at the start of Term 1 to allow parents to meet their child's teacher(s). Parent's Evenings / Open Afternoons are also held to allow parents the opportunity to view their child's learning and talk individually with the class teacher. Detailed arrangements concerning these evenings are issued prior to each meeting. An open session is held in terms one and four to allow parents to see their children in class, view some of their learning and displays, as well as chat informally with the class teacher. Parents can request to meet with the class teacher at any agreed time to discuss their child's progress or any concerns they may have. In addition, our teachers use 'Class Dojo' to communicate learning to parents online. Parents appointments (evenings) are held in Term 3. Home / School diaries are also used for some of our learners when needed to support communication.

Parents are also invited in regularly to give their support to enterprise events / charity events, or to enjoy some aspect of learning.

The Head Teacher writes monthly newsletters and the class teachers write termly ones, to update parents on learning and the wider life of our school. In addition, our parents and children are given regular questionnaires, to share their views with us, so that we can consider their views in our continuous improvement. Our class teachers also provide termly learning newsletters to keep parents up to date with what their child will be learning and how they can help. These are sent by ParentMail which is an electronic communication system for registered parents. Hard copies are available on request from the school office.

### **Mental Health and Wellbeing**

Our 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. There is a website managed by Highland Council that supports a variety of information relating to mental health and emotional wellbeing that can be found [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. 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.

### **The school calendar for 2025 - 26**

School holidays can be found by following the link below:

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

### **School Catering**

Meals are provided by the Schools Catering Service.

Currently, all children in our ELC - P5 are entitled to a free school lunch. For P6 + P7 pupils, school meals cost £2.30.

When at all possible, parents should use our online booking system to book their child's lunch choices and payment may be made by cheque, payable to Highland Council or handed in to school in an envelope. Any other queries regarding school meals should be addressed to our school cook please.

Our children use colour wristbands (either green, orange or blue) depending on their choice of meal and they go up to our dinner counter to be served. Children with specific dietary needs have a red band.

At school meals the children are supervised by a lunch supervisor, school and canteen staff, and in normal circumstances a member of the management team is available. The children are expected to follow the lunchtime golden rules - showing good table manners etc. Menus can be found online.

Children eating packed lunches also eat these in our dining hall or outdoors if the weather allows. Again, they are supervised by the school staff and expected to keep the playground litter free and all uneaten food should be taken home so parents can see what their child has eaten for lunch. Children who remain in school for lunch are not allowed to leave the school grounds in the interests of security and safety.

### **Free School Meals**

Families receiving Income Support and Job Seekers Allowance are entitled to free school meals. Forms for free school meals are available at our school office or by accessing

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/9/school\\_meals](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/9/school_meals).

### **Tuck Shop**

Toast is sold in our dining hall during the morning break for 20p a slice.

### **Health and Safety**

At Miller Academy we aim to make our school, ELC and SCOPE safe and healthy environments for all of our children. We have security systems, which include a buzzer system at the main doors to our school, ELC and SCOPE.

Entry for parents/visitors will be via the main entrances only.

Visitors must report to the school office, sign the visitor's book and collect a badge, which must be worn within the building. Those people who are not wearing an identity badge will be challenged by staff. This system will create a secure environment within which staff and pupils may work safely.

To encourage an interest in personal well-being, children cover aspects of health and safety as part of our Social Studies and Health and Well Being programmes.

### **Illness at School**

If a child is taken ill at school, we will contact you to inform you of the situation. If you are not available, we will contact the emergency contact given on your enrolment form. It is most important that this is kept updated so that we can contact someone, so as not to cause unnecessary upset to a child in an emergency or with an illness.

### **Risk Assessment**

Health and safety is the responsibility of all members of staff. Risk assessments are carried out throughout the year as a matter of course and as needed. A Comprehensive Health and Safety Inspection are carried out annually. Before booking school trips staff carry out risk assessments to identify any risks associated with the outing and to take steps to minimise any potential dangers. These are then authorised by the Head Teacher.

### **First Aid**

The school is well equipped with first aid boxes in all areas. Minor injuries and ailments are attended to at school by the appropriate staff. Should a child have an accident during the school day, minor first aid will be provided. Education staff are only permitted to bathe injuries with water and/or apply a dry dressing. If further attention/treatment is deemed necessary, parents will be contacted. When a more serious injury occurs, medical help will be sought immediately, and the parents informed as soon as possible. It is our policy to err on the side of caution and contact you, if at all in doubt. This means you have information on which to base a decision on the appropriate course of action to take.

It is important that the school has an up-to-date emergency contact telephone number for each family to avoid unnecessary delays. This number should be of someone who can reach our school quickly.

### **Medication**

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 medicine 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.

For safety reasons no tablets or medicines should be brought to school. Most common ailment medications for children can be administered three times a day - after breakfast, when the child gets home from school and at bedtime.

### **Medication for chronic conditions**

Our school should be aware if your child is receiving any medication, which could affect mood or behaviour.

The school is happy to assist in the management of long-term medication prescribed by the child's doctor.

Parents should discuss this with the Head Teacher in the first instance and appropriate procedures will be put into place. For example, should you wish your child to receive an antibiotic or asthma medication you will receive a form, which you need to complete to authorise this. This form gives us clear instructions as to how and when your child needs medication.

Medication should be brought in to school clearly named and dated. Inhalers can be kept in the classroom in an accessible place. A spare can be stored in the office. Please remember the use of an inhaler will be your child's responsibility. If we are concerned about your child, we will contact you at once and we will phone 101 and get professional help if necessary.

### **Head lice**

It is no longer the case that pupils are checked by the nurse for the presence of head lice. It is now the responsibility of parents to check their child's head and, if head lice or eggs are found then please notify the school and treat your child to eliminate them. Should the school staff notice head lice in a child's hair then we will notify the parent/carer.

### **Medical and other professional services**

During the first year at primary school, children will be offered a screening test for hearing, vision, height, and weight.

This enables the school nurse to identify any conditions which have not been previously noted and which might influence the child's ability to benefit fully from his/her education.

Parents are invited to be present during this and will have the opportunity to discuss their child's health.

Where a school nurse feels that further investigation or treatment may be required, a note will be given for your family doctor.

If either a parent or the school feels that other services e.g. speech therapists may be helpful a meeting will be arranged to discuss possible action.

Please contact the school if you have any concerns about your child's health.

Head injuries ~ any head bump/injury is taken seriously, and parents are informed as soon as possible by telephone.

Children are given a 'head bump' letter and teachers are informed, so that they are alerted to the fact that they have bumped their head.

Drug Misuse ~ in line with Highland Council Policy, the school will record and report all instances of drug misuse or suspected drug misuse on school premises.

### **Child Protection**

Given ongoing public concern about child abuse as well as changes in the Law, schools are required to report if we think that any child has come to harm as a consequence of possible abuse.

Each school has a Designated Officer appointed to be responsible for Child Protection matters and specially trained for this task. At Miller Academy this person is the Head Teacher. Should you wish to talk further about Child Protection and the Safety of Children, please contact the Head Teacher. Where there is the possibility that a child could be at risk of abuse or neglect, the school is required to refer to Social Work, the Police or the Children's Reporter, and under these circumstances the parent would not normally be consulted first.

More information can be found using the following link.

<https://hcpc.scot/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Highland-Child-Protection-and-GIRFEC-Guidance-2024-FINAL.pdf>

### **Data protection**

In order to conform to the Data Protection Act it is necessary for you to give your permission to allow us to photograph or video your child. We do take lots of photos to celebrate the many exciting events which occur in the day-to-day life of our school. Photos also help us to show you our day-to-day work and give you an idea of the many ways that your child is learning.

The press often photograph our children at our various events throughout the year. Without your agreement we will not allow your child to be photographed during sports events, fun days, concerts etc.

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 can be found at ~

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory\\_record/1095920/enrol\\_your\\_child\\_at\\_a\\_school](https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/1095920/enrol_your_child_at_a_school)

### **Transport**

Free school transport is provided for any of our children aged under eight who live more than two miles from our school and for those aged over eight who live more than three miles from school, provided that Miller Academy is their designated school. Children may also be eligible for free transport on medical or safety grounds. Children qualifying for school transport either by reason of distance, safety or health will be picked up at the appropriate place. Application forms are available on request from our school office. Any parent enrolling a child in school other than the designated school for that area will be responsible for the transport of that child to the chosen school. In the interests of safety, we expect children to wear seat belts and to behave sensibly on our buses or taxis. Unsafe behaviour may result in transport being withdrawn.

### **Wet Weather Arrangements**

During inclement weather, children may remain inside school during break and lunchtimes. Supervision is carried out by school staff and Primary 7 pupils. It is helpful if children keep a wet-weather activity in class e.g. colouring book, board game etc.

### **Adverse Weather Procedure/Emergency School Closure**

The decision concerning the closure of schools due to bad weather is taken by the Head Teacher and arises as a result of safety considerations for pupils and staff. The Head Teacher will attempt to keep parents informed of possible school closures and the duration, if possible. If bad weather threatens to disrupt the school or prevent it opening the headteacher will communicate this using our Parent Council Facebook Page and via 'Parentmail'. Information about any school closures will also be on the Highland Council Website [School closures | The Highland Council](#).

If the school is closed during the school day pupils will not be dismissed from school unless we are sure that a parent is at home, they are collected by an appointed adult, or the emergency contact is available. If we are in any doubt, children will remain in school until we have made contact with a responsible adult. It is essential that the school has an up-to-date record of each child's address, mobile numbers, home telephone number and at least one other emergency contact number of a relation or family friend living close by and prepared to serve as an emergency contact in the event of an accident or ill health. **Please help us by ensuring that you inform us of any changes.**

### **Lost property**

Lost property is kept on a rack/box in the bottom corridor and every effort is made to trace owners. Parents are asked to ensure that all items of clothing and personal property are clearly named, particularly fleeces, jackets, sweatshirts, gym shoes and gym shorts.

### **Fire**

Miller Academy has a fire policy, which is regularly reviewed and updated. We also have external fire audits to ensure appropriate procedures are in place. There are regular fire drills throughout the session so that staff and pupils are fully aware of what to do in the event of a fire. All fire drills are logged and the log book is kept in our janitor's room.

### **Pupil accident insurance**

Pupils are not insured against accidental injury or damage to personal property. Highland Council, in common with most Scottish Education Authorities does not provide any general insurance cover for pupils. The Council does hold third party liability insurance for claims which are successfully proven in the courts for injury, illness, loss or damage arising from the negligence of the council or its employees. However, if there is no negligence, no claim will be accepted by the Council. The school takes out an annual policy from Zurich Municipal which covers both outings and residential trips. Parents are advised to consider the extent to which they wish to provide cover for their children.

### **Mobile phones, Smart watches, valuable items, money and jewellery**

Mobile phones should not be brought into school by children but we do recognise that there are exceptions as older children may need to access their phone after school. It is advised that, in this case, mobile phones should be handed in to their class teacher for safe keeping. If any family emergency does occur during school time parents/carers should telephone the school office. As with all other valuable items the school cannot accept responsibility for any mobile phone that is lost. Parents/carers are requested to ensure that their child does not bring valuable items or large sums of money to school. The school is unable to accept responsibility for the loss of any valuable item brought to school. The wearing of jewellery is strongly discouraged on the grounds of safety and in PE pupils will be asked to remove jewellery for this reason.

### **Road safety**

Parents are responsible for the safety of their children coming to and going away from school. On the way to and from school, children should take great care on the roads. Road Crossing Patrollers are on duty on Princes Street and Castlegreen Road. Parents are asked to instruct the children on the importance of crossing these roads only at the supervised places but please be aware that there is not always a Road Crossing Patroller on duty. Please encourage your child to be courteous to our Road Crossing Patrollers.

Similarly, we would urge all parents to emphasise that children should not use the main vehicle entrance to our school car park, nor should parents drop their children off in the school car park. Please stop at a safe distance from the school as this avoids dangerous congestion and makes the journey to school safe for all.

### **Pupil behaviour**

At Miller Academy, we combine high expectations of behaviour with a sympathetic yet firm approach. Discipline is a joint responsibility for both home and school and we ask for your co-operation in maintaining high standards of behaviour in our school.



Our emphasis is firmly on promoting and rewarding positive behaviour and an important element of the school's personal and social education programme is to help our pupils develop self-discipline and good manners in an atmosphere of mutual respect between staff and children. However, sometimes problems do occur, and it is our policy to involve parents at an early stage. We hope that you, in turn, will not hesitate to communicate any concerns to us.

Any sudden changes or upsets at home can cause children to behave differently at school; just as worry over schoolwork or falling out with friends can affect behaviour at home. Please inform the school if there are any major changes in home circumstances.

We have agreed rules, rewards and sanctions for the class, school, dining room and playground. These have been agreed upon by discussion with children and teachers. At all times, children should be well mannered and courteous to grown-ups and each other. We celebrate good behaviour at school, and we hope that parents will support these rules by sharing in our celebrations of good behaviour and by talking with their child if they have broken the rules. In cases of rule breaking parents will be contacted and if persistent, meetings will be arranged so that we can work together in partnership to support your child to improve their behaviour.

### **Promoting Positive Relationships**

Bullying whether psychological, verbal, or physical and whether persistent or an isolated occurrence is never acceptable and must never be tolerated. At Miller Academy we have an agreed written 'Promoting Positive Relationships' policy, which is put into practice effectively by all staff. We want our children to feel secure and happy at school. To this end, we strive to create an ethos in which everyone understands what bullying is and is encouraged to speak out about it. Children are helped to understand the definition of bullying and to increase their understanding of all of the related issues through Health and Wellbeing learning, drama, role-play, assemblies and class discussions. We will always take action to deal with any incidents which occur. Our promoting positive relationships policy is available to read, as are our anti-bullying leaflets.

Parents help and involvement is vital in making our school a happy secure environment. Please contact Mrs Ross, Acting Head Teacher, or your child's class teacher if you have any concerns.

### **Pupil Learning Council + Miller's Maintenance Team**

We have a Pupil Learning Council and Miller's Maintenance Team, with elected representatives from each class. The council meets regularly to help children and staff to run the school in a way which reflects the opinions and voices of children and adults. It also gives our children the opportunity to develop mature and responsible attitudes. They also take part in enterprise initiatives such as creating competitions, organising charity events, conducting surveys of children's and parents views, etc. We also have the MMT who help to keep our school thriving. They plant flowers, pick up litter and report any ground works that need to be done.

### **Inclusion**

We value all of our children at Miller Academy and embrace inclusive practice which includes embracing a proactive approach to ensuring that all of them are valued and able to access an appropriate and relevant curriculum. This includes an appreciation of equal opportunities, multi-cultural and anti-racist education.

### **Equalities and diversity**

Miller Academy supports and upholds the Council's policy to eliminate all racism whether direct, indirect, intentional or unintentional. Highland Council monitors racist incidents and all racist incidents must be reported to the Highland Council. At Miller Academy we embrace Multicultural education which permeates school life through curriculum, resources, language, ethos etc.

For up-to-date information please see:

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/751/equality\\_diversity\\_and\\_citizenship/313/equal\\_opportunities](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/>

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

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, promote good relations. Activities should not discriminate against any of the following 'protected characteristics' age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child has now been incorporated into Scots Law. To find out more about this and the rights for all children in Scotland, you can access information using the link below:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/statutory-guidance-part-2-uncrc-incorporation-scotland-act-2024/pages/3/>

### **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.

A Welcome to Your Children and Young People

Children and Young People from Armed Forces families in Highland have co-produced a 'Welcome' specifically for your Children and Young People moving into Highland. Click these links to view: [Primary School Welcome](#) | [Secondary School Welcome](#)

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](#).





### **Community links**

We are delighted to have the support of our local community, which enriches the experience of our children at Miller Academy and makes us proud to be at the heart of our community. We keep in touch with the Thurso West Church, the library, the swimming pool and local playgroups. We are always glad to see our neighbours at any school events.

### **Miller Academy Parent Council**

We are very fortunate to have an excellent Parent Council, who are very active and supportive of everything we do. All parent/carers of Miller Academy pupils are members of the Parent Forum and of course, are welcome to attend all Parent Council meetings. If you are interested in getting involved please let us know and you can also contact our office bearers at - [milleracademy.primary@highlandpc.co.uk](mailto:milleracademy.primary@highlandpc.co.uk)

Our current office bearers are:

-  Chairperson - Mrs J McEwen
-  Vice Chairperson - Mr D Wood
-  Secretary - Mrs Shone
-  Treasurer - Mrs A Anthoney

Our Parent Council is there for you as parents to help you have a voice and to contribute to and enhance our school and children's experiences.

Our Parent Council takes an active interest in our school and our community and enhances the partnership already existing between parents, staff, the Education Authority and the wider community. The Head Teacher is not a member of Parent Council but attends meetings in the capacity of an Advisor.

Parent Council meetings are held in school approximately every term. Items for inclusion on the agenda must be sent to the secretary at least two weeks before the meeting. Non-member parents may attend council meetings but have no voting rights.

Our Parent Council represents you and as such welcomes your comments and suggestions for school improvement.

Our Parent Council also works hard to strengthen links between home and school by involving parents in the life of the school and encouraging a two-way exchange of information and viewpoints. One of the aims of the Parent Council is to develop links between home and school, not only as a fundraising group but to give pupils, staff and parents the opportunity to meet socially. The Parent Council has hosted many successful events throughout the years. Funds from these events have been well spent on items such as cameras, upgrading playground equipment, resources to promote health and wellbeing and our fabulous outdoor ECO Learning Lodge.

Involvement is not time consuming and we are always in need of parent volunteers. Give a little of your time and please work with us for the good of our children and our school. The Parent Council also have a very informative and interesting Facebook page, which is continually updated with news and events.

### **Concerns / complaints**

If you have any queries or complaints, please contact the Head Teacher in the first instance in order to be able to discuss and hopefully resolve any issue.

Often the reason lies in a breakdown in communication for whatever reason. Please be assured that we are always acting in the best interests of your child. If you feel that the situation is unable to






be resolved and that you have a justifiable complaint, then it is your right to take the matter further and we can inform you on how to do this and explain how it will be dealt with.

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

### Vision, Values and Aims






**Our Vision: Happy Hive - Busy Bees'**

**Our Values:**

-  **Our school is a safe place to be**
-  **We have good manners**
-  **Children are at the heart of our school**
-  **We know what we are learning**
-  **We are proud of our learning**



**Our Aims:**

-  **It's okay to make mistakes**
-  **We play and learn inside and out**
-  **We are a happy school**
-  **Our teachers encourage us to do our best**
-  **We have lots of fun at school**

### Curriculum For Excellence

Curriculum for Excellence seeks to provide Scotland with a curriculum for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Our school curriculum encompasses all the experiences provided for pupils and is regularly reviewed in line with both local and national priorities. The core curriculum follows Curriculum for Excellence. As part of this, we also embrace opportunities for our children to learn skills for life and work. Our children have benefited from having a wide range of visitors in to speak to them about their jobs and they have also visited different workplaces to learn about these too.

The eight curriculum areas are:

- Expressive arts - Art, Drama and Music
- Health and wellbeing including P.E.
- Languages - English and Modern Languages
- Mathematics
- Religious and moral education
- Sciences
- Social studies
- Technologies



### Curriculum for Excellence Levels

#### Level

#### Stage

Early

The pre-school years and P1, or later for some.

First

To the end of P4, but earlier or later for some.

This work is done within the context of the National Priorities, which place emphasis on the following:

- 1 Achievement and Attainment
- 2 Framework for Learning
- 3 Inclusion and Equality
- 4 Values and Citizenship
- 5 Learning for Life

Many aspects of the curriculum overlap and are integrated with each other. Children are presented with a wide variety of planned experiences and activities to enable them to acquire knowledge and develop life and work skills at their own particular level.

To aid us in preparing pupils to become effective citizens in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, we deliver a comprehensive programme of activities to develop pupils' awareness of themselves and others as contributing members of society. A number of links with the local community have been established and these contribute to the overall success of this initiative. This is linked to a wide range of activities to promote personal and social development. They include outings linked with topics studied, opportunities to take part in sporting and arts related activities and a residential trip for P7 pupils.

An important focus for our work will be to deliver a programme of education for enterprise. This aims to help pupils find out about the world of work and business and provide opportunities for them to be directly involved in organising and running their own enterprise activities. Part of this will be aimed at work with the whole school community to achieve Eco School status.

Another very important aspect of our work is health education and promotion. A great deal of work has already been carried out successfully over previous years, particularly in the area of improving and increasing access to physical activity and to nutrition and healthy eating.

We provide a carefully, well planned curriculum, delivered through a new up to date resource called 'Jigsaw'. Success can only be achieved by carefully tailoring tasks and teaching approaches to individual pupils' needs. All Staff work hard to make learning stimulating and rewarding. The emphasis at early stages is firmly on teaching the essential skills of listening, talking, reading, writing and mathematics. This is integrated within the context of challenging and motivating activities in other areas of the curriculum. As pupils progress through the school they are encouraged to take more responsibility for their own learning in preparation for moving on to secondary school and the next stage in their education. They become more aware of discreet subject areas and more used to following a timetable.

A high priority is given to practical, activity-based learning experiences and the school aims to provide a rich and stimulating environment in which teaching and learning can take place. Pupils enjoy a variety of educational outings and we regularly welcome visitors to the school. Not all work is recorded in jotters. A wealth of work goes into class displays, class project books and oral presentations. These activities allow pupils to share their new knowledge and discoveries with their peers and build their confidence, independence and self-esteem.

We aim to communicate with parents about the curriculum through arranging meetings for parents at entry to our ELC and to primaries 1 to 7. You are welcome to contact the school at any time if you wish more information. Parents are given a formal written report on their child's progress once a year prior to the summer interview and a verbal report during interviews with class teachers on parents' evenings in autumn. Parents are welcome to make additional appointments to speak to the class teacher should they have any cause for concern. Should the teacher establish that a child is having problems; the parent will be informed at an early stage and will be invited into school to discuss the matter.

### **Teaching approaches**

People learn in different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them. Teachers employ a broad range of approaches to teaching and learning, adapt to differing learning styles and make use of skills in the community. We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. These include:

- Investigation and problem solving
- Research and finding out
- Group work
- Pair work
- Independent work
- Whole class work
- Asking and answering questions
- Fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest
- Creative activities
- Watching television and responding to musical and recorded material
- Debates, role-plays and oral presentations
- Designing and making things
- Participation in athletic or physical play

Pupils are encouraged to work across curricular areas. Staff also makes full use of modern technology (Smartboards, chrome books, I-Pads, digital projectors etc.) to enhance learning experiences the pupils are receiving. We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers share the learning intentions with pupils by stating clearly at the start of each lesson what pupils are expected to learn.

### **Language**

An understanding of English Language is essential if children are to make satisfactory progress at school. Language enables children to communicate with others effectively for a variety of purposes, and to explore their own and other peoples experiences, feeling and ideas.

English Language embraces all aspects of language development and comprises four focus areas:

- Listening
- Talking



- Reading
- Writing

Structured and stimulating opportunities for pupils are provided to allow them to:

- Develop their knowledge of language
- Listen effectively
- Talk with interest, understanding and for enjoyment
- Write fluently and legibly for a variety of purposes with accurate spelling and punctuation

### **Mathematics**

Curriculum for Excellence guidelines followed at Miller Academy provide many opportunities for the children to develop an understanding of number and wider mathematical concepts. We aim to help pupils to learn the skills and knowledge of mathematics and then to be able to use these skills in everyday situations, as well as for discovery and for pleasure.

Maths is planned with specific objectives in mind so that pupils gradually develop confidence and competence in a wide range of mathematical skills and concepts. The major outcomes are:

- Information handling
- Number, Money and Measurement
- Shape, Position and Movement
- Problem solving and Enquiry skills

Work begins with practical experience using 'concrete' materials and then moves on to formal recording. All areas of Maths are integrated as fully as possible with the wider curriculum. Pupils also develop the appropriate language for Maths and are encouraged to assess their own work by estimating and checking. Information technology is an integral part of this learning. We are also able to use the newly completed 'Newton Room' in Thurso College to help enhance our children's active learning of maths and our children have very much enjoyed sessions there.

### **Sciences**

The most important goal for science education is to stimulate, nurture and sustain the curiosity, wonder and questioning of young people. Young children come to the early years setting with a natural sense of wonder and curiosity and as active and eager learners endeavouring to make sense of the world. They continue to develop ideas through investigation, first hand experience, discussion and structured or free play. As they grow older, children ask searching questions based on their everyday observations and experiences of living things, the environment and the materials, objects and devices they interact with in their play.

The values that guide scientific endeavour: respect for living things and the environment; respect for evidence and the opinions of others; honesty in collecting and presenting data; openness to new ideas, are the basis of responsible citizenship.

Science taught at Miller Academy is grouped under three main lines of development.

- Our living world including the diversity of living things, the uniqueness of being human and the importance of cells, both for the individual and society.
- Our material world including the uses and properties of materials, sustainability, the chemistry of life processes and the applications of chemistry in society.

- Our physical world including harnessing and using energy sources, motion and travel on land, sea, air and space and the development of communication systems to meet the needs of society.

Taken together this learning through science will help each child to develop as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

Topics studied in class are carefully planned and balanced programmes of learning which have five areas of focus:

- Science
- Social Subjects
- Technology
- Health Education
- Information Technology

By the end of P7 children will have covered a variety of topics from each of the focus areas. The local environment is used as much as possible as the basis for investigations and explorations and other opportunities for direct experience e.g. visits to museums, farms, parks, exhibitions etc are an essential feature of our programmes.

At every level the aim is for children to be active learners, involved not only in a variety of practical activities suited to their abilities but also in the planning and evaluation of topics.

### **Expressive Arts**

Our central aim is to foster our children's imagination through expression of ideas and feelings. The Expressive arts include Art and Design, Music and Drama and they are fundamental to a child's development. All children are given many opportunities for expressing themselves in these areas as part of the on going work of the class.

Expressive arts link with language, maths, environmental studies and religious education. They help our children to be well balanced, confident, creative and imaginative.

### **Music**

Pupils from Early Learning and Childcare Centre - P7 have the opportunity to participate in music making with their class teacher and with visiting groups e.g. Feis Rois. Many of our pupils participate in Caithness Music Festival week. All pupils are encouraged to sing expressively, confidently and enthusiastically. Music notation and tuned and untuned percussion are introduced in the early stages and children develop musical skills through investigating, exploring, creating and inventing. Opportunities exist for musical productions, social gatherings and participation in the Caithness Music Festival. The children enjoy listening to a wide variety of music styles and are taught songs and dances.

### **Instrumental tuition**

Currently we are able to offer tuition in guitar and chanter. Following a standard test during Primary 4, pupils are offered a place according to interest, aptitude and availability of instructors.

### **Art and design**

From the outset children constantly learn about the world around them. Painting, drawing and modelling are ways for children to convey how they see and feel about the world around them. Lessons

follow a planned progression to give as wide a variety of experiences as possible, which include drawing and painting, printing, clay work and design based on problem solving activities. Children learn about mixing colours, making patterns, form and shape, line and texture. Reference is made to painters' and sculptors' own work.

### **Physical Education**

Through our Physical Education programme we aim to instil in our pupils positive health and fitness habits which will stand them in good stead for the future by promoting active lifestyles in the long term. PE is viewed as an integral part of the curriculum and all children are expected to participate in the varied programme of planned activities. Our aim is for each class to have two hours PE per week.

Over a school session the children will have the opportunity to take part in a range of physical activities such as team games, gymnastics, dance, health and fitness education, providing a balance and mix of enjoyable and stimulating experiences.

It is essential that children have the appropriate change of clothing and footwear for PE lessons.

### **Drama**

Most children will come to school with extensive experience of imaginative play through which they will have begun to explore aspects of the work and characteristics of the people around them. In drama this powerful way of learning is exploited as pupils engage in activities where they are given opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of themselves and their relationships to others and real-life events.

Following a planned progression of skill development children learn to use imagination to express themselves confidently in words and in mime. They perform for small groups and sometimes for large audiences.

### **Religious And Moral Education**

Education is about the development of the whole child. Religious and Moral Education deals with the development of the child's awareness and relationships with others. It explores the variety of beliefs, values and practices, which go to make up a religious and moral outlook on life. As such it makes an important contribution to the personal and social development of our children. The three components of Religious and Moral Education are:

- Christianity
- Other World Religions
- Personal Search

Children are taught a planned progression at their own level. This is often linked to Environmental Studies themes, as well as to the need to share, tell the truth and show consideration for others. There are 'Together Times' for P1 -P7 led by the Head Teacher, visiting speakers and on occasion by the children themselves. We include representatives from a variety of religious and other bodies in our Assembly programme. On special occasions we have whole school assemblies / services in the West Church. Parents and the local community are often invited to these. 'Together Times / Assemblies' have three purposes. They bring the school together encouraging a sense of community and shared values; they provide a forum for religious, moral and social issues and are also a vehicle for sharing of essential information. The school is inter-denominational, but parents have the right to withdraw their child from assemblies if they so wish.

### **Assessment**

Assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching. From our ELCC through to P7 our pupils are assessed continuously throughout the year in an informal way. Staff use formative assessment strategies sharing the learning intentions with pupils to ensure they understand clearly what they are trying to learn and the success criteria so that pupils know what they have to do to be successful in a particular task. Pupils are also given good quality feedback about their work and how to make improvements and what are their next steps in the learning process.

This ongoing process is supported by formal assessment using Assessment for Excellence which is administered in P2 - P7. The teachers keep evidence of children's progress at every stage. Tracking Meetings between class teacher and Head Teacher look at the progress of every child in a formal way twice a year. Assessment allows teachers, parents and pupils to make judgements about the appropriate next steps in pupils' learning and forms the basis of the verbal and written reports given to parents.

High Quality Assessments (HQA's), also inform our parents on some of their child's learning and progress.

Parental consultations are planned as part of our annual programme. These occasions are valued by staff as an opportunity to meet parents and share views in a personal manner. Parents should feel free to seek information on their child's progress at any time.

You can find out more information about the Curriculum for Excellence, Assessment and Reporting, Support for Pupils at ~

- <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/>
- <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/curriculum-in-scotland/assessment-and-achievement/>
- [https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/32/school\\_policies\\_and\\_guidance-curriculum teaching and learning](https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/32/school_policies_and_guidance-curriculum_teaching_and_learning)
- <https://www.gov.scot/policies/schools/additional-support-for-learning/>
- <http://enquire.org.uk>
- <https://education.gov.scot/inspection-and-review/find-an-inspection-report/find-an-inspection-report/>
- <https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/parentline-scotland/>
- [Curriculum for Excellence | Education Scotland](#)

In addition, a detailed 'Standards and Quality' report is written annually by the Head Teacher, which details improvements and progress made throughout the last year.

In 2025/26, we will continue to use our 'School Improvement Plan' to direct our progress. A parent summary of this is sent home to parents each year.

### **Additional Support Needs**

#### **Primary**

For young people with severe and complex needs, there are Enhanced Provisions for pre-school and primary aged pupils in Mount Pleasant Primary School in Thurso and Newton Park Primary School in Wick. Placements may be offered on a full or part-time basis.

For young people with neurodevelopmental/social communication difficulties, there are two SCOPE provisions (Social Communication Provision for Education); one here in the grounds of Miller Academy Primary School in Thurso and one in Noss Primary School in Wick. SCOPE offers support for primary-aged pupils through providing a 'split placement' with the young person's local mainstream school. Through providing targeted, individualised support, this enables young people to access education in their local school.

Applications for specialist provision can be made to the Admissions Group. Parents/Carers can speak with the Named Person or Lead Professional about making the application.

Throughout education all pupils may at some time require additional support for a number of reasons which might be that they are struggling with an aspect of the curriculum, they might have experienced bereavement, they might be an able child who needs challenged etc. Help and support are provided for children with additional support needs in learning, behaviour or acquiring motor control and clear speech. This support is provided by staff in school in partnership with other agencies, as appropriate.

The additional support needs teacher works closely with the class teacher to provide opportunities for learning at a suitable pace and with resources at an appropriate level. This can be for children struggling with an aspect of the curriculum or for more able pupils who need challenged.

Support can be provided by working in the classroom alongside the class teacher or with small groups and individuals. Sometimes pupils are withdrawn to a quieter area in the school to reach a greater level of concentration and focus.

Our additional support needs teacher is available to discuss any concerns you might have about your child's progress.

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

If you have a concern about your child in primary school please contact your child's class teacher in the first instance or the 'named person', who is the Head Teacher. In a secondary school, the named person will usually be the Principal Teacher Guidance/Pupil Support.

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

If you wish to find out more about The Highland Practice Model or the Child's Plan you can access more information at:

[Highland's Children](#)

There is also information available at:

- Thriving Families: <https://www.thrivingfamilies.org.uk/>
- Enquire : <http://enquire.org.uk/>
- My rights, My Say: <http://enquire.org.uk/myrightmysay/>
- Scottish Child Law Centre: <https://sclc.org.uk/>
- Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance: <https://www.siaa.org.uk/>

### **Parental/ Carer Partnerships**

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

Homework given to pupils may take many forms and may be for a variety of reasons. It is our policy to give homework, which will consolidate learning done in class. Spelling, language work, mathematics, research work and collecting materials for topic work are all tasks which may be set. Whatever the task, the homework will be purposeful, geared to the level of the child and for the benefit of the child.

Parents can make an invaluable contribution by showing interest and supporting their child in the completion of set tasks. Homework should be enjoyable and not take too long to complete.

If a parent has any query about the homework, which has been set, or the length of time it takes to complete, they should arrange to discuss the matter with the class teacher.

If your child's homework is causing distress at home, please contact the school immediately so we can determine the cause.

School work is not usually set during absence from school due to ill health or family holiday, unless particular circumstances warrant it, in which case parents should contact the Head Teacher.

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/>

### **USEFUL ADDRESSES**

Derek Brown  
Head of Education  
Highland Council HQ  
Glenurquhart Road  
INVERNESS

Whilst the information in this handbook is considered to be true and correct at the date of publication, changes in circumstances after the time of publication may impact on the accuracy of the information. December 2024