



Avoch Primary School

Handbook 2026/2027

Address: Station Road, Avoch, IV9 8PS

Head Teacher: Mrs Lynsey Third

Tel. 01381 620369

Email: avoch.primary@highland.gov.uk

School Website: [Avoch Primary and ELC](#)

Stages taught: ELC and P1-P7

School roll (Nov 2025): 267 P1-P7 & 41 Early Learning and Childcare

Avoch Primary Parent Council: avochprimarypc@gmail.com

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Introduction

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to Avoch Primary School. At Avoch Primary School, everyone plays a significant role in ensuring that our learners become confident individuals, effective contributors, responsible citizens and successful learners.

The purpose of the handbook is to:

- communicate the ethos of the school and provide a welcome for parents to the school
- help parents to choose a school
- prepare their child for school
- act as a reference tool while their child is at the school.

On request, schools must make available to parents a hard copy

Should you wish to visit the school, or to obtain a place for your child you are most welcome. Please call to make an appointment on 01381 620369

A paper copy of this handbook is also available if you contact the school.

Yours faithfully

Mrs L Third

Head Teacher

About Avoch Primary School

Avoch Primary School is situated in the village of Avoch on the southern edge of the Black Isle. The school serves the communities of Avoch, Fortrose and Rosemarkie and the surrounding districts. Formerly a Junior Secondary and Primary School, it became solely a Primary School in August 1973.

The building stands in a large playground including playing fields and woods. There are thirteen classrooms, two of which are in a demountable unit, a Staffroom, general purpose areas and a large hall and Stage. This allows school lunches to be consumed in the school hall. There is a strong emphasis on promoting healthy foods and balanced diets at School Meals. There is a school library, medical room, general purpose room and an open learning area in the lower end of the school.

In 2022 our purpose built Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Centre opened. We have two nursery rooms and an ELC outdoor area. There are currently eleven mainstream classes and two nursery classes.

School Ethos

Our positive school ethos is underpinned by the promotion of health and well-being for all. Pupils are encouraged to give their best in all aspects of their learning. School Ethos

Better Relationships, Better Learning, Better Behaviour

At Avoch Primary School we have a high standard of good behaviour and courtesy. We base all of our behaviour discussion around our values, which were reviewed with all pupils in November 2022.

Kind Honest Included Respected Hardworking

Pupils contributed to our Vision, Values and Aims (see page 6) and these are regularly referred to across the school. The school aims to promote positive behaviour and to recognise and reward examples of such behaviour. There are strategies in place throughout the school to encourage this behaviour. Children are regularly praised for good work, manners and thoughtfulness.

All behaviour is a form of communication and as a school we develop positive relationships with pupils, as this will allow us to support children when dealing with behaviour. We will actively involve parents in discussions around behaviour. Unacceptable behaviour will be discussed with parents and we will seek support on how we can address this.

We are a Rights Respecting School, where children will be aware of their rights, however, children will be encouraged to respect others rights and how their actions can have a negative impact on other people. Behaviour issues will be resolved through restorative conversations.

Our 'Better Relationships, Better Learning, Better Behaviour' Policy is available [here](#). This includes the Highland Council anti-bullying guidance.

AVOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Our Values



Successful Learners

We want to inspire everyone to have a wide range of learning opportunities.

Confident Individuals

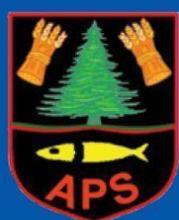
We want everyone to work as a team with the people around us.

Responsible Citizens

We want to include everyone with respect in our happy school.

Effective Contributors

We want everyone to have a say in how we learn.



AVOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Our Vision

To work in partnership to nurture every pupil of Avoch Primary and nursery to be happy, healthy and achieving - now and in their future life.



Avoch Primary School Staff

Head Teacher Mrs L Third
Depute Head Teacher Ms C MacPhee

Additional Support for Learning Teacher Miss K Patience

Teachers Mrs L Ross Mrs V Moffat
 Mrs S Graham Mrs E Thomson
 Mrs E Harvey Ms S Hickey
 Mrs S Hughes Mrs C Milne
 Ms A Young Ms H Webster
 Ms S Byham Mrs S Callander
 Miss E Keyes Mrs D MacLeod
 Mrs K Connell

Clerical Assistants Mrs C Hallam Miss J MacPherson

Pupil Support Assistants Mrs D Anderson Mrs L Paterson
 Mrs S Chatburn Mrs L Urquhart
 Miss S Laird Mrs L Downing
 Ms L Douglas Mrs J Mullery
 Mrs H Goodall Ms K Gibson
 Mrs J Watt

ELC Staff

Senior EYP Mrs G Grant
EYP Mrs S Campbell Mrs J Tarr
 Miss J Golden (mat leave) Miss I Macdonald (mat leave)
 Mrs S Stuart Mrs C Ure
 Miss J Mackenzie Miss K Chisholm

Support Worker Mrs G Sala Lay Ms K Leslie
 Miss E McLoughlin Miss C Mcphee

Visiting Teachers
PE Mr C McIntosh

Strings Mr Ellis Ash
Brass Ms H Hook
Woodwind Mr C Delmonte
Drumming Mr D Caldwell
Pipes Mr R Anderson

Active Schools Coordinator Mr Murdoch Jamieson

Janitor Mrs M Thomson

Kitchen Mrs T Black Mrs H Gunn
 Ms C Macfarlane Ms M Duncan
 Mrs K Tuach (ELC catering)

Out of School Club Miss K Chisholm and Mrs G Sala Lay

School Improvement Plan

All schools produce an annual improvement plan showing areas under review and areas for development. These are identified from robust self- evaluation. Information and updates of progress relating to this will be issued throughout the duration of the school year.

A 'Standards and Quality' Report is written as part of the improvement plan, annually to give account of the difference the planned improvements have made to the Teaching and Learning in Avoch School.

Copies of these are available for parents and members of the community on request and on the website <https://sites.google.com/fortroseacademy.org.uk/avoch-primary-and-elc/home>

Enrolment

Parents are invited to enrol their child in January. Advertisements are placed by the local authority in the press each January giving details of how to enrol. Your child must reach the age of 5 by the end of February 2024 in order to be enrolled.

Details of enrolment week, usually at the end of January, in Avoch Primary School will be posted on the Nursery notice board and the parents' notice board in the school grounds.

**** Birth certificates and proof of address must be provided.***

Our School Day

School commences for all children at 9.10am. Pupils should not arrive at school in excess of 10 minutes prior to starting time as supervision is ultimately the responsibility of parents before 9.10am and after 3.10pm.

P1-P3

9.10am-12 noon with a 15 minute interval at 10.40am. Afternoon session from 1.15 to 3.10pm

P4-P7

9.10am-12.35pm with a 15 minute interval at 10.40am. Afternoon session from 1.20pm to 3.10pm

Pupils should enter or leave the school grounds using the gate and path to the car park, or by walking on the pavement beside the car park. Pupils using their bicycles should walk their bicycles through the school grounds and leave them in the cycle shed.

Parents/carers are responsible for their child(ren) in the car park and should therefore come to meet them in the school grounds to ensure their safety.

Absence from School

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, 01381 620369 or email avoch.primary@highland.gov.uk . When returning to school after an absence, the parent or guardian must give written reason for the time absent.

Permission to leave during the school day: If a pupil needs to leave during the school day for an appointment etc, pupils need to bring with them a note from parent or guardian. Pupils must report to the school reception and 'sign out', 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 outside of school hours.

If pupils fall ill during the day, parents are contacted for them to collect their child, therefore it is essential that we have up to date day time contact numbers and emergency contact numbers for all pupils.

Schools are required to keep an attendance register by law. We have a responsibility for the care and welfare of all pupils during the school day therefore need to know the whereabouts of absent pupils.

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

- will result in a significant loss in classroom experience;
- will result in a pressure to 'catch up' on missed work by pupils;
- could result in pupils missing 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 be confirmed in writing to the Head Teacher.

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 unopened, clearly marked with the directions from the pharmacist and administered as part of an agreed medical protocol.

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.

Illness During School Time

If a pupil becomes unwell during the school day, parents are contacted in order that his/her treatment may be agreed. **It is therefore essential that details of emergency contacts be provided and that these people are available to answer a call.** Where such contact proves to be impossible and the child's condition worsens, medical attention will be sought. It is therefore important that the school be notified if parents have objections to any aspect of medical / surgical attention. Please ensure that emergency contact details are kept up-to-date. These forms are issued to all children every session.

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. 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.

School Meals

Meals for P1-P7 children are prepared in our school kitchen by our team of catering staff. They cost £2.40 per day, currently the P1-P5 children do not pay for school meals. The most up to date menus can be found on the Highland Council website [School menus](#)

Children also eat their packed lunches in the canteen. Cans, bottles or containers made of glass are not permitted. Suitable (NON glass) vacuum flasks are allowed provided that the contents are not overly hot and there is no danger of scalding. Packed lunch boxes should be clearly named both inside and out for reasons of personal safety.

Parents are requested to consider re-usable containers in a bid to cut plastic waste. Children will be asked to take all plastic waste home to be recycled.

Free school meals and clothing grants are available in certain circumstances

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/899/schools -
grants and benefits/10/free school meals and assistance with clothing](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/899/schools-_grants_and_benefits/10/free_school_meals_and_assistance_with_clothing)

The kitchen also offer a snack trolley at playtime. The prices range from 15p and they offer a variety of snacks that change on a daily basis, examples may be, a slice of toast, half a bagel, crackers, cartons of milk, etc. If your child is going to the snack trolley please do not provide them with another snack.

School Uniform

Children are expected to wear school uniform. Uniform consists of a navy school top, this can be a fleece, jumper or cardigan (no hoodies). Red polo shirts are worn underneath. Trousers, skirts or shorts should be navy (although grey is acceptable). Our ELC children have the option of wearing a red school sweatshirt. Please try to avoid branded tracksuit bottoms and patterned leggings and/or jeans should not be worn. Football shirts should not be worn in school on any occasion.

Items of uniform that are embroidered with our school logo are available to purchase, however, plain items are acceptable. Our parent council sell iron on school logo badges, this can help to keep the cost of uniform as low as possible.

All children should have a suitable pair of indoor shoes to change into. These cannot be slippers or any form of slide on shoes. They must be proper fastening shoes for health and safety reasons, e.g. fire drills.

Our playground is very muddy, so during wet weather a pair of boots or wellies are recommended.

Please ensure that all items of clothing are labelled with children's names.

Recycled Uniform

The school, alongside the Parent Council, encourages uniform to be recycled. Washed items can be handed into the office. Clothing is usually free and can be obtained by emailing the school or parent

School Transport

Highland Council Policy states that pupils less than eight years of age who live more than two miles from their catchment school can obtain free transport for the journey to and from school. For children of either year and above the minimum distance is three miles. Please note that transport is not a school responsibility and any queries should be addressed to the Local Transport Officer, Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, IV3 5NX or public.transport@highland.gov.uk

There is no adult supervision on buses. However, older pupils are given the role of bus buddies and bus monitors to help little ones with their seatbelt, etc. Responsibility for appropriate behaviour on the buses lies with the parents, and Highland Council policy regarding pupil behaviour.

All buses arrive and depart from the bus area at the main road. This is connected to the school by a footpath. Staff escort the children to the buses at the end of the day and a PSA meets the buses when they arrive in the morning.

Out of School Care

When staffing permits we do offer Out of School Care.

Breakfast Club - 8.10am - 9.10am. The cost is £5.05 per day, children receive breakfast and are supervised.

Out of School Club - This takes place from 3.10pm - 5.50pm. The children receive a snack and are offered a variety of activities.

Children do need to be booked into sessions. For further information on using the service please contact Avoch.Bookings@FortroseAcademy.org.uk

These services are both non-statutory services. They are reviewed annually to ensure that there is a necessary demand for the service to ensure that the cost of running is covered.

Communication with Parents

We believe that much of the strength of the school lies in the positive relationships between staff, pupils and their parents. These relationships must be nurtured by a healthy exchange of information between teachers and pupils, between home and school. We always welcome parental interest in the welfare of our pupils. Whatever the nature of the issue, you can be assured of our help.

The school works very hard to keep parents informed regarding their child's progress and any key decisions being made about their education. This includes:

- Parents' evenings
- Pupil reports and formal reports in June
- Target Setting
- Curriculum letters
- Open afternoons
- Pupil Profiles

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, and encouraging responsibility are important ways of supporting children's learning.

The school always seek to involve parents in any key decisions about their child's education and keep parents informed about progress.

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

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/>

Avoch Parent Council

All parents at Avoch School automatically become members of the Parent Forum. The Parent Council has been selected by members of the Parent Forum to represent the views of all parents at the school. The Parent Council meet on a regular basis and are open to any interested parent to attend. A copy of the Avoch Primary School Parent Council Constitution can be obtained from the Parent Council or from the school website.

Details of how to contact Parent Council- avochprimarypc@gmail.com

School Fund

The school fund is maintained through fund raising activities eg Sales of Work, Sponsored events etc. Money from this is used to enhance the curriculum and to provide additional activities for the pupils such as in school theatre groups and science workshops.

Adverse Weather Conditions

Parents can obtain information on the Highland Council school closures webpage

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/schoolclosures>

The school will endeavour to inform parents as early as possible if the school is going to close. This will be done via email to all parent/carers. We also try to update the school Facebook page with information. Due to high levels of children travelling on school transport, we do advise that you also follow D&E coaches Facebook page.

In the event of adverse weather conditions, e.g. a heavy snowfall, it may be necessary to close school early. Parents need to have arrangements in place if such conditions occur during the school day. Please ensure that you keep emergency contact details up to date.

Wet Weather

The school operates an 'all weather policy'. This is in place in several schools across Highland and all schools in Scandinavia, and has been proven to improve behaviour and learning. Children need to play outdoors every day. As long as they have been provided with, and wear suitable clothing, this is not an issue, and the children tell us they enjoy being outdoors. There are also shelter sheds

that can be used. However, during extremely inclement weather, the pupils will be accommodated in their classrooms. Wet Weather Monitors and support staff help to supervise in the classrooms. Please note, the children will remain outside prior to 9.10am so please do not drop children off to school before 8.55am.

The Curriculum

At Avoch Primary School we follow A Curriculum for Excellence. The values and principles are based on enabling all our children to become Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Effective Contributors and Responsible Citizens - the skills needed for life, for learning and for work. The national website can be found at [Curriculum for Excellence | Education Scotland](#).

The Curriculum for Excellence recognises the need for children to access a broad range of achievements, as well as striving for high attainment. We are always reflecting on our Curriculum Rationale, this is a document that is always evolving, please find the document here [Avoch Primary School Curriculum Rationale Dec 2024.pptx - Google Slides](#)

The range of experiences and outcomes for the learning outcomes for the Curriculum for Excellence are grouped into following areas:

- Health and Well-being (to include personal and social development, health, physical education and activity)
- Languages (to include modern languages/Gaelic/classics)
- Mathematics and numeracy
- Sciences (to include biological, physical, chemical and environmental contexts)
- Social Studies (people, past events and societies; people, place and environment and people in society, economy and business)
- Expressive Arts (drama, dance, music and art)
- Technologies (craft, design technology, graphics, computing and home economics)
- Religious and moral education

There are six levels: Early, First, Second, Third, Fourth and Senior.

Level	Stage
Early	The pre-school years and P1
First	To the end of P4
Second	To the end of P7
Third and Fourth	S1 to S3. The fourth level broadly equates to Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level 4. The fourth level experiences and outcomes are intended to provide possibilities for choice and young people's programmes will not include all of the fourth level outcomes.
Senior phase	S4 to S6, and college or other means of study.

Some children and young people will start learning at these levels earlier and others later, depending upon individual needs and aptitudes. The framework is, however, designed to be flexible in order to permit careful planning for those with additional support needs, including

those who, for example, have a learning difficulty and those who are particularly able or talented.

The seven principles of CfE: Challenge and Enjoyment; Breadth; Progression; Depth; Personalisation and Choice; Coherence; Relevance, are also embedded in the planning and delivery of education at Avoch Primary. Pupils are given opportunities to make choices in what and how they learn.

Pupil Voice

As a Rights Respecting School we provide various opportunities for children to participate in the life of the school and ensure that their ideas are heard. We have Rights Respecting Ambassadors, Reading Champions and Pupil Council Representatives. Children lead in playground developments and develop our links with the community. We have Playground and Singing leaders. All of the projects that the children participate in are ideas that they develop and lead. Our House Captains represent the school at various events and organise activities for the whole school to participate in.

Health and Wellbeing

Health and Wellbeing Learning in health and well-being ensures that children and young people develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capacities and attributes which they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future. It enables children to apply their mental, emotional, social and physical skills to pursue a healthy lifestyle which will be continued into adult life.

We are supported by our Active School's Coordinator in arranging a wide range of physical activities throughout the school year. We invite other agencies to share their expertise with pupils e.g. police, ambulance service, emergency services, school nurses, disability groups, charities. Parents are informed of about sensitive aspects of learning e.g. relationships, sexual health, drugs awareness etc. In all aspects of school life we are concerned with developing personal and social skills such as the ability to work independently, coping with emotions, making informed decisions, showing respect and tolerance for others.

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. 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. Information on your school's service can be accessed via the school. Alternatively, 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.

Language

Language is at the heart of children's learning across the curriculum and is regarded as one of the core subjects within the Curriculum for Excellence. Through language they receive much of their knowledge and acquire many of their skills. Language enables children to communicate effectively with others for a variety of purposes, and to examine their own and other's experiences, feelings and ideas, giving them order and meaning. The development of literacy and English skills i.e. listening, talking, reading and writing is integrated into all areas of the

curriculum and pupils are taught to make links between the reading and writing. Foreign languages are included within the language area. From P1-P7 we introduce French and from P5-P7 the children begin to learn BSL. This involves listening, talking, reading and writing activities.

Numeracy and Mathematics

Pupils enter school as active thinkers, having already experienced mathematics informally through play and in everyday activities such as dressing, eating, shopping and travelling. Being numerate and having an understanding of numeracy and mathematics helps us to function responsibly in everyday life and contribute effectively to society. Wherever possible the pupils will actively engage with learning experiences that will enable them to be equipped with the skills, the concepts, the facts and techniques required to deal with numbers and maths in the real world.

Sciences

Through learning in the sciences, pupils develop their interest in, and understanding of, the living, material and physical world. The main areas covered in sciences are planet Earth, forces, electricity and waves, biological systems, materials and understanding some of the current issues of science. Most science will be integrated into other topics being studied e.g. if studying 'Weather' the pupils will look at aspects of water science, but some aspects will be taught separately.

STEM- Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths

The school actively promotes learning within these subjects and builds pupil knowledge and understanding about STEM careers. The senior pupils work towards a Young Engineer award and the whole school takes part in monthly STEM challenges to help build skills for life, learning and work.

Social Studies

Through Social studies, pupils develop their understanding of the world by learning about other people and their values, in different times, places and circumstances. They also develop their understanding of their environment and how it has been shaped. This includes for example, understanding principles of democracy, history, heritage and culture of Scotland, engaging in activities which encourage enterprising attitudes. A topic or theme approach is normally used to integrate the various aspects of the curriculum and make it meaningful for the pupils.

Expressive Arts

Components of Expressive Arts are:

Music

Drama

Art and Design

Dance

These subjects place special emphasis on developing creativity, imagination and personal response in individual pupils. Evidence of development and progression of these skills can be seen from work in display areas, classroom displays, public and school performances. Other musical activities are offered such as Feis Rois and Kodaly music, usually to P5 and P3 and incur no charge currently. We also have visiting High Life Highland music specialists that visit the school. Parents sign their children up for this via High Life Highland.

Religious and Moral Education

Religious Education takes account of knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other World Religions and aims to allow children to recognise religion as an important expression of human experience. Children are encouraged to appreciate moral values such as honesty, liberty, justice, fairness and concern for others, and to investigate and understand the questions and answers that religions can offer about the nature and meaning of life. Moral Education reinforces the school ethos concentrating on consideration for others and the value of kindness and courtesy.

School Assemblies

We hold weekly assemblies, most of which are non-denominational and focus on moral subject and/or wellbeing. We sometimes have visitors at assembly to talk about charities or local organisations. We focus on celebrating achievement at assemblies and our House Captains will often share information and updates with the whole school. We have links with the churches within our community and the ministers from each church will be invited in to lead one of religious observance assemblies.

Withdrawing from Religious observance

Whilst Religious Education is required by Statute to form part of the curriculum, parents have the right to withdraw their children from religious observance on written notification of the same to the Head Teacher and alternative arrangements can be made.

Technology

Opportunities for our pupils to develop their understanding and use of technologies will be sought in all areas of learning and teaching and will involve the following areas:

- technological developments in society
- ICT to enhance learning
- business
- computing science
- food and textiles
- craft, design, engineering and graphics.

Being skilled in using ICT is essential if children and young people are to be effective contributors able to communicate and interact on a global scale. Across the curriculum, skills in ICT will be developed in the context of the learning and teaching as appropriate to your child's age and stage of development. Currently P6 and P7 are allocated chrome books which are used both at home and at school, whilst P3-5 have access to chrome books at school. Nursery to P2 use tablets.

Contexts for Learning

At Avoch we embrace learning in all its forms and in all places. We have strong connections with the local community where the children learn how to take care of the wildlife, the coastline and river. During their time at Avoch, they will learn about Fair Trade, sustainability and global education.

All pupils in the school take part in enterprise projects, outdoor learning, STEM challenges (science, technology, Engineering and maths), Eco work and Citizenship activities; which work together to improve Avoch Primary School, the local community and those further afield.

More local info can be found at [Highland Curriculum for Excellence information](#)

Parent Helpers

Parent volunteers are highly valued and give of their time, skills and talents to widen children's experiences. Highland Council has clearly understood procedures for vetting volunteers who will work with children. If this is on a regular basis or will be unsupervised by a member of school staff, a Disclosure Scotland check is required, which the school can organise.

Assessment & Achievement

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. The school follows the Highland Council's Learning, teaching and Assessment policy and uses assessment and tracking to check that progress has been made, and that the needs of the individual are being met. Assessment is carried out in a variety of ways: -

1. Day to day informal and formal observations of pupils by teachers to assess the ability and working level of each pupil. Special note is also taken of any pupils with a special aptitude or any who may have a learning difficulty.
2. Class, group and individual assessments are used to check more precisely how well pupils are meeting their learning outcomes.
3. High Quality Assessment Tasks- these are used after a period of learning to inform next steps in teaching and learning and are taken home with the pupil to help parents to understand where their child is in their learning and to promote parent/pupil discussion.
4. Standardised assessment- Since 2018, the Scottish Government asks all schools to use a standardised online assessment with pupils in P1, P4 and P7. This will be used only as an additional support to aid professional judgement.
5. Self and peer assessment. This can be a very effective tool allowing pupils to take more responsibility for their learning. All pupils set learning targets each term and evaluate their success in achieving them. They are building profiles of their best work, which are available to view and comment upon at parents' nights and open days.

Further information can be found at

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

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

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

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

Homework

In February 2024, we surveyed parents with regards to homework. The outcome of the survey can

be found here.

[Feb 2024 Avoch Homework Survey - Google Slides](#)

From the results of the survey we have produced some homework guidance.

[Feb 2024 Homework Guidance - Google Docs](#)

We will review our approaches to homework with pupils, parents and staff in 2026.

Additional Support Needs

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

https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/230/highland_practice_model_-_delivering%20additional_support_for_learners

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

Sometimes a Children's Service Worker will be involved in supporting a child. A Children's Service Worker 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. Highland Council would seek to work in partnership with parents at all times, but sometimes you will have a concern that you don't feel is being addressed, or will want to talk to someone outwith the school. Should you have any concerns that your child's additional needs are not being met, you should contact Mrs Third (Head Teacher) in the first instance.

If your concerns continue, there are a number of means of resolving difficulties and disputes and information on this can be found at:

http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools_additional_support_needs/1/support_for_learners

Websites/Organisations which can provide further advice, information and support to parents/carers of children and young people with additional support needs are listed below:

(a) Enquire – the Scottish advice and information service for additional support for learning

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

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

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

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

(e) Support can also be found here <https://www.thrivingfamilies.org.uk/> for families.

School Transition

Transition into Primary

Staff in the ELCC and Primary 1 promote opportunities for the children to work together throughout the school year. We run 'freeflow' opportunities between the ELCC and the Primary 1 classrooms on a regular basis. We have a 'moving up' transition programme that ensure every child coming into Primary 1 is included. Parents have an opportunity to meet with staff during a 'Starting P1' information meeting. We follow this up with a curriculum information meeting when the children have started in P1. Children who attend other pre-school settings are invited to participate in the transition events and if possible our teaching staff will visit pre school settings to meet the children.

Transition to Secondary School

On completion of Primary Education, Avoch pupils normally transfer to Fortrose Academy for their secondary education. There is a transition programme in place and we work closely with Fortrose Academy to ensure there are plenty of opportunities for children to visit the Academy. In June the children attend Fortrose Academy for an extended period, where the children get to follow their timetable for S1. We have close links with the Fortrose Academy Guidance Team and the Additional Support Needs staff. They usually come for a visit in Term 3 to meet the pupils. If your child is not going to attend Fortrose Academy we will ensure that we have regular contact with the secondary school and support your child's transition.

Contact information for Fortrose Academy: Head Teacher - Nigel Engstrand, Academy Street, Fortrose, IV10 8TW, email - fortrose.academy@highland.gov.uk 01381 620310

Transition for Pupils with additional support needs

If required we may arrange additional transition visits and arrangements for pupils with additional support needs.

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 Annika Jansson, the Area Quality Improvement Manager, annika.jansson@highland.gov.uk. Placing request forms can be obtained from the school or from: [Enrolment in a school outside your catchment area | Enrol your child for school | The Highland Council](#)

Transportation to and from school, for placing request pupils, is a parental responsibility. If you are outside our designated catchment area, attendance at Avoch Nursery does not guarantee a place in primary 1 at Avoch and attendance at Avoch Primary does not guarantee a place at Fortrose Academy. Please note that you should still enrol your child at the local secondary/primary school for the area in which you live. You should do this well before your child's entry to the school in August. Parents/Carers of children with additional support needs can make placing requests to any school in Scotland, including schools outside the local authority that they live in. All appeals about placing requests to special schools will be referred to the Joint Admissions Group (JAG).

Parents/Guardians as Partners

We believe that much of the strength of the school lies in the positive relationships between staff, pupils and their parents. These relationships must be nurtured by a healthy exchange of information between teachers and pupils, between home and school. We always welcome parental interest in the welfare of our pupils. Whatever the nature of the issue, you can be assured of our help.

The school works very hard to keep parents informed regarding their child's progress and any key decisions being made about their education. This includes:

- Monthly school newsletters, termly curricular overviews, notes regarding department/class activities, questionnaires, Curriculum Newsletter, Home-School Diary.
- Parent Council meetings.
- Educational and Social evenings give an opportunity for formal and informal exchange of opinion and information.
- learn with your child activities such as open doors, drop in sessions etc
- Parents' evenings, Open Afternoons and pupils' reports
- Parental help with classroom, library, leisure and extra curricular activities.
- Information on the school website at <https://sites.google.com/fortroseacademy.org.uk/avoch-primary-and-elc/home>

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

The school always seek to involve parents in any key decisions about their child's education and keep parents informed about progress.

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

A Parent Council is a group of parents selected to represent all parents of children at the school. Any parent who wishes to raise an issue for the Parent Council to consider can do so by contacting <insert Parent Council Contact details – avochprimarypc@gmail.com

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/>

As well as finding our most up to date school policies on our website, you can use the link to find the most recent Highland Council policies. [Authority Policies](#)

Child Protection

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

In terms of Highland Child Protection 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 from Lynsey Third, Child Protection Officer, or online at

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

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:

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.

Equality and Inclusion

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->

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 [here](#).

Military Families

Our school welcomes and supports families and their children and young people from **Armed Forces families: Serving, Reservists and Veterans**.

We understand some of the challenges that service life can bring. These may be more difficult during times of mobility, separation due to a deployment, long training exercise or weekending. We look forward to working with you to ensure your child or young person thrives whilst with us in Highland.

Please get in touch with us as soon as you can so we can work together to ensure we are ready for your child or young person joining us. This is particularly important if they have additional support for learning (ASL) needs so that we can where possible have the appropriate support in place. (ASL is the term used in Scotland, in England a similar term is SEND).

Highland Council proudly committed to the Armed Forces Covenant many years ago and have built positive relationships with its Armed Forces community. There is a unique and dedicated partnership, **The Military Liaison Group (Education)**, often referred to as "The MLG" extend a warm welcome to you. This was formed to promote and ensure the equity and equality for any child or young person from an Armed Forces family, within an educational context, so that they thrive whilst with us in Highland.

There is a dedicated website in Highland, [Armed Forces Families Website](#) that has been developed and informed by our Armed Forces community's needs. It is an easy to navigate website with helpful information, guidance and support for families, educators, children and young people and communities. Here is a link to take you directly to the [Enrolment page](#) which may be particularly helpful.

Our children and young people have co-created a warm welcome to you and your family. Click the links here [Primary School Welcome](#) | [Secondary School Welcome](#)

Please get in touch with the Headteacher if you have any queries or if you would prefer, contact the MLG (Education) lead [here](#)

Confidentiality

All staff are expected to conduct themselves with the utmost professionalism including the highest level of confidentiality, at all times, whether in school or not. Children's behaviour and work should only be discussed with the class teacher, Support for Learning teacher or Head Teacher and this should be conducted within the school or by telephone.

Complaints and Requests for Service

If a parent has any concerns they should contact their child's Named Person in the first instance, Mrs

Lynsey Third, Head Teacher. The school will always endeavour to resolve issues by listening to parents and seeking solutions in partnership. Should a situation not be resolved, parents can contact Annika Jansson, Area Quality Improvement Manager, annika.jansson@highland.gov.uk

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

Handbook updated November 2025

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