



BALNAIN PRIMARY SCHOOL



SCHOOL HANDBOOK 2026 - 2027

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to Balnain Primary School!

We hope that you will find the information in this handbook useful.

We are committed to providing all our pupils with a positive and rewarding primary education, which is planned to provide rich experiences, skills and knowledge on the journey of lifelong learning. Our small class sizes enable staff to develop very positive relationships with our pupils and provide them with the individualised attention and support they need to achieve their very best.

Pupils, parents and staff are all part of a vibrant school community in Balnain. Many of our former pupils and families continue to keep in touch and continue to support our school. Strong links between home and school help children become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to the world. We look forward to welcoming you and your child to our school community and working in partnership with you.

We hope that your child's time with us will be happy, fun, successful and memorable!

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Mrs Julie MacLeod
Head Teacher

Balnain Primary School

Balnain, Inverness

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01456 476262

Email: balnain.primary@highland.gov.uk

Website: <https://sites.google.com/glenurquharthigh.org.uk/balnainprimary/home>

General Information

Location, Location, Location!

Our small primary school is located in the village of Balnain, in Inverness-shire on the road between Drumnadrochit and Cannich. The catchment area spreads linearly along Glenurquhart. It includes the village of Balnain, Kilmartin, Shenval, Corrimony and Millness to the west of the school, and Rychruggan to the east.

The School Buildings

We are a modern, forward-looking school set in an old Victorian building. When originally built, the main school building included a School House for the Headmaster. This was converted many years ago to provide a school office and staffroom area, and upstairs an office for the Head Teacher and two rooms used for storing resources. The main building also has a large classroom and a second smaller room with attached kitchen, which is used for small group teaching and serving lunches. During the autumn of 2013, the main school building was extensively refurbished, giving a bright, fresh feel whilst maintaining the original character. Our other classroom is currently housed in a demountable unit across the playground from the main building. Both classrooms have computing facilities and Smartboards linked to the internet through a modern wireless network.



As there is no general-purpose hall in the school, we are lucky to be able to make extensive use of Balnain Community Hall, a short distance across from the school. The hall is used weekly for P.E., sport activities and after school clubs. Concerts and assemblies are also held there, along with visiting workshops, as well as various fundraising and community events.

We have a tarred playground, which overlooks a woodland, a large playing field that children love to use throughout the school year, a pond area and a spacious garden in front of the school, which enjoys a beautiful view towards Loch Meikle and the surrounding hillside. We also have a 'Trim Trail', a traverse climbing wall and a mud kitchen. We try to use the outside space as much as possible. We are within walking distance of Balnain Forestry and the picturesque Loch Meikle, which we have ready access to and use for outdoor learning experiences.



School Organisation

There are currently 2 classes: P1-3 and P4-7 (2025-2026).

There are currently 21 pupils in our school (2025-2026).



The School Day

Our school times are as follows:

Monday - Thursday (Playground open to pupils from 8:30am)

School starts	8.50 to 10:45 am
Morning Break	10:45 - 11:00 am
	11:00 - 12:30 pm
Lunch Break	12:30 - 1:10 pm
	1-10 to 3-10 pm

Friday

School starts	8.50 to 10:45 am
Morning Break	10-45 - 11:00 am
	11:00 - 12:25 pm

Meet the Staff

HEAD TEACHER	Mrs Julie MacLeod	
TEACHING STAFF	Mrs J MacLeod Mrs M Johnstone (Wed-Fri) Miss I Pettigrew	
SUPPORT STAFF	Mrs S McCloskey	Pupil Support Assistant
CLERICAL ASSISTANT	Mrs F Purvis	Clerical Assistant
VISITING STAFF	Mrs L Fraser Mrs M Everitt	Physical Education [P4-7] ASN
MUSIC TUITION	Mr M Osbourne Various tutors	Strings Instructor Youth Music Initiative
ANCILLARY STAFF	Vacant position Ms K Mackintosh Mr A Paterson	Kitchen Assistant Cleaner Janitor
	Janitorial support is provided by Highland Council through the Facilities Management Service.	
ACTIVE SCHOOLS COORDINATORS	Colin Marshall Storm Bennett	
VISITING MINISTERS	Various Ministers	Local Churches
PARTNERS	Eilidh Parr Moira Calder Clare MacDonald	School Nurse Children's Services' Practice Lead Children's Service Worker

We also work closely with a wide variety of partners within our community, such as Abriachan Forest Trust, Aigas Naturedays, Science Skills Academy and many more, to offer our children exciting learning experiences and opportunities.

Balnain Primary School's Positive Ethos

Our Vision:

To provide engaging and motivating learning experiences to develop our pupils' skills and talents which will prepare them for learning, life and work in the future. We will do this within a supportive, challenging and safe environment where everyone is valued and respected as an individual. At Balnain Primary School, we work together in a caring community to bring out the best in each other and support all our learners to achieve their best in life.

We aim to do this by:

- Providing a safe, welcoming, caring and happy environment where all children are valued as individuals and have their rights respected.
- Ensuring that our pupils are listened to and are actively involved in their learning.
- Developing positive relationships based on respect for each other with a focus on inclusion and equality.
- Providing an engaging and challenging curriculum with opportunities to develop every child's personality, talents, and abilities to the full, encouraging achievement and celebrating success.
- Working with community partners to offer exciting, engaging and relevant learning experiences.
- Preparing pupils for their lifelong journey of learning and help them develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work in the future.
- Developing an awareness of the world of work.
- Providing a sense of local community, culture and heritage.
- Connecting our learners to the wider world, beyond our local community, to learn about global issues and encouraging them to be respectful of diversity in the world.
- Encouraging an active, healthy and environmentally sustainable lifestyle, showing care and respect for the natural environment.
- Evaluating and reflecting on our work regularly and identifying areas for improvement.



Our school values are:

Kindness Respect Creativity Teamwork

School Improvement

Balnain Primary School has a Standards and Quality Report, which details the school's self-evaluation for the past 12 months, and a School Improvement Plan, which outlines our plans for improvement areas for the current school year. A copy of this can be requested from the school office or found on the school website <https://sites.google.com/glenurquharthigh.org.uk/balnainprimary/home>

This year we intend to improve:

- Attainment in Writing through our teaching, learning and assessment of writing
- Outdoor learning through Eco Schools Award

Curriculum Overview

Balnain Primary School aims to provide a curriculum and an appropriate education for all its pupils in line with the Scottish Curriculum: Curriculum for Excellence.

Our curriculum is planned to be:

- Broad:** -providing a wide and enriching range of knowledge, skills and experiences.
- Balanced:** -so that each subject makes an effective contribution to learning.
- Relevant:** -ensuring learning can link the pupils' experiences to applications in the real world.
- Coherent:** -so that topics can be taught in context, making the learning experience more meaningful.
- Progressive:** -meaning what is taught builds logically and systematically upon previous learning.
- Differentiated:** -ensuring that what is taught and the tasks that are set are matched to each child's personal aptitude and ability.
- Accessible:** -providing equality of opportunity for all.

The purpose of the Curriculum for Excellence is to ensure that all the children and young people of Scotland develop the attributes, knowledge and skills they will need if they are to flourish in life, learning and work, now and in the future. These are summed up in the detailed wording of the four capacities:

successful learners	confident individuals	responsible citizens	effective contributors
<p>attributes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> enthusiasm and motivation for learning determination to reach high standards of achievement openness to new thinking and ideas <p>capabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use literacy, communication and numeracy skills use technology for learning think creatively and independently learn independently and as part of a group make reasoned evaluations link and apply different kinds of learning in new situations. 	<p>attributes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> self-respect a sense of physical, mental and emotional well-being secure values and beliefs ambition <p>capabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> relate to others and manage themselves pursue a healthy and active lifestyle be self-aware develop and communicate their own beliefs and view of the world live as independently as they can assess risk and make informed decisions achieve success in different areas of activity. 	<p>attributes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> respect for others commitment to participate responsibly in political, economic, social and cultural life <p>capabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop knowledge and understanding of the world and Scotland's place in it understand different beliefs and cultures make informed choices and decisions evaluate environmental, scientific and technological issues develop informed, ethical views of complex issues. 	<p>attributes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an enterprising attitude resilience self-reliance <p>capabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> communicate in different ways and in different settings work in partnership and in teams take the initiative and lead apply critical thinking in new contexts create and develop solve problems

Lessons are carefully planned to ensure that the four capacities are taught through a series of experiences. Planning also considers what is to be achieved as outcomes from the learning.

'Experiences' and 'Outcomes' are taught through a broad general education covering eight curriculum areas: - Languages, Mathematics, Health and Wellbeing, Expressive Arts, Sciences, Social Studies, Technologies and Religious and Moral Education.

At Balnain, we are committed to a cross-curricular, thematic approach to teaching and learning. Wherever possible, we build logical links and connections between subject areas to provide coherence and achieve greater depth of understanding.

Learning takes place both in and out with the classroom environment and some topics may involve a visit to somewhere local to further motivate children and stimulate their learning. We link with local partners to help us enrich learning opportunities whenever possible.

More information about the Curriculum for Excellence can be found at: [Curriculum for Excellence | Education Scotland](#)

Our Primary curriculum is divided into three levels:

- Early level the pre-school year and Primary 1
- First level (to the end of Primary 4)
- Second Level (to the end of Primary 7)

Languages

Language and literacy are of personal, social and economic importance. Our ability to use language lies at the centre of the development and expression of our emotions, our thinking, our learning and our sense of personal identity. Language is itself a key aspect of our culture. Through language, children and young people can gain access to the literary heritage of humanity and develop their appreciation of the richness and breadth of Scotland's literary heritage. Children and young people encounter, enjoy and learn from the diversity of language used in their homes, their communities, by the media and by their peers.

The development of each child's language skills is pursued through an integrated programme of language work involving listening, talking, writing and reading. Children are encouraged to read a wide variety of material and types of texts. This is linked to the child's writing, combined with speaking and listening. Children develop reading through appropriate fiction and non-fiction material.

They also learn skills of comprehension and reference to help them understand what they read and to assist them in searching for and using information. Alongside this they will develop the necessary skills of spelling, punctuation, language structures and handwriting. Writing will form an important part of this development, and the children are encouraged to write for a variety of purposes from the very earliest age. They then follow a structured programme to develop the necessary skills.

Much emphasis is placed on talking and discussion. There is a focus on presentation skills culminating in preparing and delivering talks to classmates, debates, performing at school shows and at the Verse Speaking Competitions at the Inverness Music Festival.



The school has a recently updated library of fiction and non-fiction books to encourage the children to develop a love of language and reading. In addition, we also have regular visits to our local public library in the Craigmorie Centre, Drumnadrochit.

Throughout the year, we also have Bookbug Sessions in school when we invite preschool children to join us for stories, rhymes and games. Parents can help at home by reading a variety of material with their child - e.g. books, newspapers, magazines, TV programmes, even road signs and labels in supermarkets.

All of these encourage children to take a real interest in the language around them.

Languages - French and Gaelic



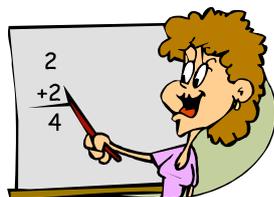
All pupils in P1-7 receive lessons in conversational French. The children in P5-7 also have a weekly Gaelic lesson. Learning these additional languages contributes to our learners' wider education and life experiences. Pupils will see a purpose to their language learning and develop skills that they can use and enjoy in work and leisure throughout their lives.

Gaelic

The study of Gaelic supports learners to gain a deeper understanding of Gaelic language, culture and heritage. The children will also recognise the links between Gaelic and English through, for example, local place names. Children will enjoy Gaelic as a living language with a rich culture and heritage. Our teacher will use the framework of experiences and outcomes to heighten the awareness children and young people have of what is special, vibrant and valuable about Gaelic culture and heritage.

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Numeracy & Mathematics



Mathematics is important in our everyday life, allowing us to make sense of the world around us and to manage our lives. Using mathematics enables us to model real life situations and make connections and informed predictions. It equips us with the skills we need to interpret and analyse information, simplify and solve problems, assess risk and make informed decisions.

The numeracy and maths programme includes:

- Information handling, or the gathering, organising, display and interpretation of data.
- Number, Money, Measurement in which children learn to add, subtract, multiply and divide as well as to work with time, length, weight, area and volume.
- Shape, Position and Movement in which children learn about the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes and to comprehend position and movement, symmetry and angles.

In each of these aspects, children will develop problem-solving and enquiry skills. Mental maths is an important daily element of our mathematics programme, which is done in a variety of lively and stimulating ways. Active based learning in maths and numeracy encourages the development of the child's skills and much practical work is given. Children

will also learn to use calculators and have access to ICT to reinforce their mathematical skills.

Each child proceeds at their own rate in an appropriate group. Every encouragement is given to each child to think and reason for him/herself.

Children's mathematics can be helped at home by parents taking an active interest in their progress and encouraging the children to use their mathematical skills in a variety of everyday situations.

Further advice is available from the class teacher.

Health and Wellbeing

Experiences of Health and Wellbeing help children to develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes they need for their mental, social, emotional and physical wellbeing now and in the future.



Physical Education lessons are taught weekly for 2 hours in total and during the year cover all aspects of P.E. e.g. Gymnastics, Athletics, Team Games and Swimming.

We support pupils to develop skills that will enable them to plan for choices and change. Pupils will learn to recognise their own skills and create targets for future learning. They will also learn about the wider world of work.

Topics on keeping healthy and safe such as Emotion Works, Substance Misuse, Internet Safety etc. are taught through a variety of special events as well as within themed work within the classroom. We often invite partners to support our learning e.g. by delivering first aid training for pupils.

Parents are informed through letters about plans for teaching more sensitive aspects of health and wellbeing such as, relationships, sexual health, parenthood and drugs awareness.



We also learn about food and health through our Cooking Club where all pupils get to experience making their own food by following recipes and developing their cooking skills.



Social Studies

Many of the experiences and outcomes of Social Studies are taught through topic work. Children will develop their understanding of the world by learning about other people and their values, in different times, places and circumstances. They develop their understanding of the environment, and how to care for it, and about human achievement and understand changes in society in particular in relation to Scotland and its place in the wider world. We learn about our own local community and heritage too.



Sciences



Sciences can be taught both discretely as a subject and through topic work as appropriate. Through practical work and encouragement, children gain a curiosity and knowledge for the living, material and physical world. Thinking is challenged and children are encouraged to work using scientific methods and develop an understanding of scientific language to use in science lessons and topics.

Technologies

Technological sessions are creative, practical and fun! Children develop technological skills through a variety of different projects linked to topics. Through exploration, children develop knowledge and understanding of different materials, creating and developing design briefs. Completed projects are evaluated. Pupils also have access to our woodwork bench and can use woodwork tools to create projects.

ICT is used extensively in lessons both by the teacher as a teaching tool and by children to practise skills, seek information and to present work in a variety of ways e.g. create a graph, use spreadsheets, make a piece of music, make a PowerPoint for a presentation on a topic. Pupils have access to devices such as Beebots and Microbits to develop their coding skills. Children are given individual logins for the school's computer network, which is organised by Highland Council. All of our pupils benefit from having access to individual chrome books.

Expressive Arts

Each child is encouraged to develop their creativity, skills, knowledge and understanding to be able to express him/herself confidently and with a personal sense of achievement

in several art forms, e.g. Music, Dance, Art and Drama. The subjects are taught by the class teachers and are enhanced through the expertise of visiting experts occasionally.



Religious and Moral Education

Our programme deals with the development of the pupils' understanding of religion as a significant area of human experience while promoting the child's sense of moral responsibility. We aim to develop understanding and respect for the views and beliefs of others, and to encourage a sense of wonder. Children learn about Christianity and other main world religions and are encouraged to reflect on their learning and to apply ideas shared to their own life experience.

Throughout the year, the local ministers may support a few assemblies. Arrangements will be made for pupils whose parents do not wish them to participate in religious observance.

Additional Support Needs

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

http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/230/highland_practice_model_-_delivering_additional_support_for_learners

http://www.highland.gov.uk/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.

Should you have any concerns that your child's additional needs are not being met, you should contact the Head Teacher, Mrs Julie MacLeod. If your concerns continue, there are a number of means of resolving difficulties and disputes and information on this can be found at Support for Learners Website; <http://enquire.org.uk/>

We are proud to be an inclusive school that meets the personal and educational needs of every pupil. Our staff work closely together to ensure appropriate support is provided wherever it is required. We are supported by well-developed links with external specialists.

All children need support to help them learn. Some children may require more help than others and for different periods of time. 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 the Head Teacher, Mrs Julie Macleod.

The Just Ask helpline can also be accessed between 1-4pm every Tuesday and Thursday on 0300 303 1365 if you have a concern about your child.

This enquiry line is for parents, carers, children, young people, and those who work with them. The phone line is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1pm to 4pm.

Staff usually available are:

- Autism Practitioner
- Community Learning Disability Nurses
- Occupational Therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Educational Psychologists
- School nurses
- Pre-school Home Visiting Teachers
- Primary Mental Health Workers.

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

http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools_-_additional_support_needs/1/support_for_learners

Further information and support can be found for parents of children and young people with ASN through the links 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) **Thriving Families**: <https://thrivingfamilies.org.uk/>

Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)

We work within the Scottish Government's guidelines on 'Getting It Right for Every Child' (GIRFEC) to support children and their families to ensure children's rights are being met.

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

We also use the following Well Being Indicators to reflect on the holistic well being of our pupils:

Well Being Indicators:



S = Safe	-protected from abuse, neglect or harm
H = Healthy	-experiencing the highest standards of physical and mental health, and supported to make healthy, safe choices
A = Achieving	-receiving support and guidance in their learning - boosting their skills, confidence and self-esteem
N = Nurtured	-having a nurturing and stimulating place to live and grow
A = Active	-having opportunities to take part in a wide range of activities - helping them to build a fulfilling and happy future
R = Respected	-given a voice and involved in the decisions that affect their wellbeing
R = Responsible	-taking an active role within their schools and communities
I = Included	-getting help and guidance to overcome social, educational, physical and economic inequalities; accepted as full members of the communities in which they live and learn

Pupil Welfare

A Gold Rights Respecting School



Balnain Primary School has achieved the Gold Rights Respecting Schools Award. The Award recognises our achievement in putting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into practice within the school. UNICEF works with schools to create safe and inspiring places to learn, where children are respected, their talents are nurtured and they are able to thrive.

Positive Behaviour and Discipline

We promote positive behaviour through respecting the rights of every child. We create Class Charters, which serve as a visual reminder of an agreed set of rights-based principles to promote a positive learning environment for all.

Our basic school rules are based on this and are shared and agreed by the pupils and staff. They allow us to work in harmony with one another and ensure the safety and wellbeing for all our school community and to promote the concept of 'caring'.

- Treat others as we would like to be treated
- Listen to each other and try our best

- Be kind and respectful to everyone in our school
- Make sure our actions do not harm others
- Keep our classroom and our school environment tidy

Inappropriate behaviour is met with a fair and assertive response. Children are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour through restorative discussions. They are encouraged to have their views heard and they are encouraged to listen to the views of others and reflect on the rights of others. Pupils are supported to find solutions which are based on kindness and respect. Any sanction needed to be used is directed at the action and not the child. Our Positive Relationships and Behaviour Policy can be found on our school website.

House Groups

We operate a house system in school. All children become a member of one of our three houses, which are named after wild animals in our local environment - The Badgers, Red Deer and The Squirrels. Our school sorting hat is used to decide which house group they are in!

Children have the opportunity to earn points and rewards for their house through hard work, effort and good behaviour.

Senior pupils in each house lead regular house meetings where all children have the opportunity to share their opinions on aspects of school life.

House Groups take turns to plan and organise assemblies, activities and charity events each term.



Listening to our pupils



Balnain Primary School places great importance on our pupils' involvement through Pupil House & Focus Groups. Focus groups involve pupils in developing aspects of the School Improvement Plan. Focus Groups have included our Rights Respecting Ambassadors, Playground Leaders, Digital Leaders, Junior Road Safety Officers and Eco Committee.

House Groups meet each term with staff members to put forward new ideas, suggestions, and ways of solving problems.

The aims of the House Group meetings are:

- to ensure that every single pupil has their ideas and opinions represented.
- to influence decisions regarding the school.
- to take action to help plans be achieved.

Bullying

We recognise that most children argue and fall out with friends as part of the growing up process. Staff support children to resolve any issues and ensure that all children are listened to. However very occasionally a child can take matters further and be very mean to others. We do not tolerate bullying in any form and work in line with Highland Council procedures. We provide a number of opportunities for children to express any worries they may have about their relationships with other children. Each P1 child is given a Buddy to support them at school in their first year. We always continue to check how things are going even when an issue is resolved. Should you suspect that your child is experiencing difficulties with other children at school please inform staff immediately. We investigate any complaints fully and support children following all incidents.

To view the Highland Council's anti-bullying policy please see: https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19358/anti_bullying_-_guidance_for_schools

Exclusion

Should a child's behaviour be considered to put the safety of other pupils or staff at risk, then school will follow the Highland Council's Exclusion Policy. https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/212/exclusion_policy

Equality, Inclusion and Diversity

For up-to-date information please see:

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

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

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. Our Rights Respecting Schools Activities help to promote kindness and respect to others.

Racial Equality

The school has a fundamental role to play in eliminating racism and promoting and valuing racial diversity. Racism and racist attitudes exhibited by staff, pupils, parents or visitors

to the school, are totally unacceptable. All racist incidents will be recorded and dealt with appropriately; this includes informing parents of any racist name-calling, however young the children involved. We adhere to the Highland Council's policy on racial equality.

Child Protection

Balnain Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. In terms of Highland Child Protection Committee Inter-Agency Protection Guidelines, staff have a duty to report incidents which cause concern to Social Work Services which can lead to a joint Social Work/Police investigation. All agencies involved in Child Protection regard the welfare of children as paramount and this will be their priority.

A copy of our Child Protection Policy can be found on our school website.

More information about Child Protection Procedures within Highland can be obtained from: <https://hcpc.scot/>

Family Learning (Homework)

During your child's time at Balnain, family learning will be set as and when it is appropriate. Family learning may take different forms, but the over-arching philosophy is that it will consolidate or further develop key skills being taught in school. Parental involvement in children's home learning and reading is greatly valued and actively encouraged; your input will add significantly to your child's development. It is the school's policy to provide home learning, which is geared to the needs and interests of individual pupils. Home learning for P1-4 children generally focuses on developing their literacy skills. The P5-P7 children are given a variety of different types of home learning around the particular topic being studied in class. Home learning also gives the parents the opportunity to see some of the areas of work covered by their children in school and to discuss this with their children. Recently, we have successfully utilised Google Classrooms as a way of continuing our learning online. Our school website also offers suggestions for how families can support learning at home.

Assessment and Reporting

As a school, we seek to provide information to pupils, parents and staff to assist in the effectiveness of learning and teaching process and in raising attainment.

Teachers will use the assessment process as an evaluative, diagnostic and formative tool to provide



evidence of pupil attainment and progress and to inform learning and teaching approaches and pupil targets.

Pupils should view the assessment process as a motivating experience, which takes place within the overall context of a supportive school. Pupils should make use of feedback, in all its forms to inform next steps for the improvement of their own learning.

Parents will receive feedback on their son's or daughter's progress regularly throughout the school year, through open afternoons, Parent's Evenings, pupil learning profiles, end of year pupil reports, progress checks, and target setting information. Pupils will reflect on their progress, achievement and best work in their learning profiles.

Parents wishing additional information about a pupil's progress are invited to get in touch with Mrs Julie MacLeod.

Further guidance can be found at Parentzone:

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

Information regarding the school's performance at local and national level can be obtained from:

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

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

Communications with Staff

Good communications are essential to support learning, teaching and administration. We wish to be open, honest, friendly and accessible to parents. The school communicates with home mainly by via our website and email, which include letters, newsletters, surveys and general school information.

In addition to this, further parental engagement occurs through:

- * Parents' Evenings
- * School events
- * School Website
- * Learning Profiles
- * Parent Council Meetings
- * Classroom visits/Open Afternoons
- * Parents' Information sessions
- * Telephone Conversations

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

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

We encourage parents to keep up to date with children's progress by staying involved with home learning, meeting with the teacher for advice and consultation, and discussing children's learning.

Parent's evenings are held in November and March each year to discuss your child's progress and next steps in their learning. This is followed by a report issued in June. Digital Learning Profiles are accessible to families throughout the year.

We actively encourage parents to meet with teachers throughout the year to discuss progress. If parents wish to discuss any concerns regarding their child's progress outwith these set times, then an additional appointment can be made.

Parents can communicate with the school in the following ways:

- Telephone
- Email
- Note in your child's school bag

Parents may also call in at the school office to pass on information or drop off items.

Teachers are available most days after school to meet with parents. The Head Teacher is usually available at the start and end of the school day. An appointment or contact will normally be made as soon as possible, should the member of staff be unavailable.

Our Parent Council

All parents automatically become members of the Parent Forum when their child starts school. All parents are eligible to serve on the Parent Council committee and attend meetings. Some parents choose to be active members and become involved in supporting the school with things like organising after-school clubs, fund raising, organising the Halloween/Christmas Party and other local community events. Meetings are held regularly to plan events and to discuss aspects of school life so that parents' views are included in the school's evaluation of how it can improve further.

Currently the following parents have a key role in Parent Council:-

Chair - Barbara Girvan
Vice Chair - Lois McDonald
Secretary - Rosalind Salter
Treasurer - Aaron Miller

The Parent Council can be contacted via balnainprimarypc@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://parentzone.org.uk/home>



Enrolment

Enrolment will take place late January 2026, dates to be confirmed once announced by Highland Council.

If you live within the catchment area and wish to enrol your child to the school, please visit the Highland Council website.

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

Catchment Area



OS Ordnance Survey

Our catchment area extends from Millness and Corrimony in the west to Rychraggan in the east.

Transport Link to Childcare

Families are welcome to use our recently established transport link to and from Glen Urquhart Childcare Centre. Pupils can use their Breakfast Club facilities and be transported to school for the start of our school day. Pupils can also use the transport link to After School Care at the end of our school day. This transport service is being offered to parents' courtesy of Loch Ness Hub, as part of their community transport hub ambitions. Loch Ness Hub will be providing the vehicle and drivers to facilitate the service. Please contact the school to find out more about this service.

School Placing Requests - Parental Choice

- Each school serves its own particular catchment area. Pupils whose homes are 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. Applications must be made to the Area Quality Improvement Manager, Tina Stones - Tina.Stones@highland.gov.uk.

Placing request applications are made online at:

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/887/enrol_your_child_for_school/2

Placing requests are not required for Gaelic Medium education. For all information available to parents, please go to the Highland Council website:

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/18/gaelic_medium_education

If pupils live outwith the school catchment area and their parents wish them to attend Balnain Primary School they can contact Mrs Julie MacLeod in the first instance to arrange a visit to the school.

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

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.

For those outside the catchment area, there is no automatic progression from the primary school to its associated secondary and therefore parents should still enrol their child at the local secondary school for the area in which they live. This should be done well before the child's entry to the secondary school in August.

School Uniform



The pupils, parents and staff at Balnain Primary School firmly believe in the benefits of a school uniform. We believe it helps children to develop a sense of belonging and pride in their school. We have selected clothing that we believe is smart, practical, not too expensive and suitable to wear throughout the year.

Red Balnain school sweatshirts and other items are available for purchase from Schoolwear Made Easy at <https://schoolwearmadeeasy.com/>

We also offer the opportunity for families to reuse pre-loved school uniforms. Please contact the school to find out more about the availability of items of second-hand uniform.

Please help us by writing your child's name on sweatshirts, coats, gloves, scarves and footwear.

If you think your child may be entitled to a clothing grant, please contact the school office or Highland Council.

[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)

All children **MUST HAVE** a pair of soft indoor shoes to change into for school.

For P.E. lessons children will need: black slip-on pumps/trainers, a T-shirt, shorts, PE bag.

For all sporting activities long hair **MUST** be tied back.

All watches and jewellery **MUST** be removed for PE lessons. The responsibility for their care rests with the pupil.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

- **Property**

It is in your interest and would be very helpful for us if all belongings are clearly marked with the child's name. This is especially important for items which are similar e.g. sweatshirts and gym shoes.

Should anything go missing in school please report this promptly. Items which remain unclaimed in classrooms or cloakrooms will be kept in our lost property box. Children should be discouraged from bringing items of value to school, as this often leads to upset if they are lost or broken. We expect all pupils to be very careful with all school property.

- **Mobile Devices/Electronic Toys etc.**

We request that children do not bring these into school as they can be a distraction and may also get damaged or lost. Should you feel that your child needs to bring in a mobile phone for activities out with school, we request that it is turned off when they enter the school, and it is handed to the class teacher for safekeeping throughout the school day. It would be returned to your child at home time. Further details on our Mobile Device Policy can be found on our school website.

Attendance/Absence

Good attendance is vital if pupils are to achieve their full potential and it is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually.

When your child has to be absent because of illness, please let the school know as soon as possible either by telephone (01456 476262) or email (Balnain.primary@highland.gov.uk) by **9.15am**. All absences must be covered by a parent's explanation. A satisfactory explanation of your child's absence is required or it will be recorded as **unauthorised**.

Planned absences such as medical appointments should be notified to the school in advance for this to be classed as an authorised absence. Where at all possible, medical and dental appointments should be made outwith 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 daytime contact numbers and emergency contact numbers for all pupils.

Parents are encouraged to book family holidays during the school holiday time. Only under exceptional circumstances can the school give permission for children to be absent to go on holiday. Should there be an exceptional need for holiday during term time (such as to recover from a distress, return of parents from active duty with the armed forces or long-term absence from home), parents must discuss this in advance with the Head Teachers in order to authorise the absence.

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 time, this should be confirmed in writing to the Head Teacher.

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 we need to know the whereabouts of absent pupils.

Any absence from school may affect your child's progress.

Please Note:

Where a child fails to attend school, without appropriate and satisfactory notification from parents/guardians, we are obliged to make every effort to check that your child is safe. We do this by telephoning home, emergency contacts and, if necessary other agencies. This may involve a house visit. We would follow these Highland Council procedures:

THREE DAY RULE FOR UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE OF PUPILS

DAY 1: First day of unexplained absence of pupil the school will endeavour to make contact by telephone or e-mail to parents, carers or emergency contacts informing them that the child is absent and requesting a reason for the absence. If no contact can be made with the parent/carers or emergency contacts on the first day of absence, this will be noted by the school. If the family is known to other agencies, because of possible concerns about his/her wellbeing, then contact will be made with these agencies.

DAY 2: Second day of unexplained absence of pupil the school will make vigorous attempts to contact a carer or family member by telephone, text or e-mail. If no contact can be made on the second day of absence, this will be noted by the school.

DAY 3: Third day of unexplained absence of pupil if no contact is established, secondary schools and schools with support staff, will arrange a home visit to check the situation. If the child is not found and no satisfactory explanation is given for absence, the police will be notified of the child's non-attendance. The police will treat this as a missing persons alert. For small schools, the police may be involved to conduct visits where it is not possible for the school to do so.

For these arrangements to work effectively it is essential for us to have your help with the following: Steps for Parents:

- Keep the school up to date with your telephone number, including mobile phone if you have one, and other details for emergency contacts.
- Be responsible for the safety and well-being of your child/children whilst they are not in school.
- Inform the school or pre-school of any prearranged absence, e.g. attendance at a hospital appointment or other unavoidable event, prior to the absence taking place.
- Inform the school or pre-school of your child's absence by 9.15am on the morning of the first day of absence. For afternoon sessions, inform the school no later than half an hour into the afternoon session.
- Respond promptly to contacts from the school.
- Provide written confirmation of absence as soon as possible. You will note that where contact cannot be established in relation to an unexplained absence, schools may inform

other relevant services, e.g. social work and/or police. Whilst cases of children going missing on the way to school are very infrequent, it is essential that we take all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of pupils.

Requests for removing children from school during term time should be addressed to the Head Teachers in writing. However, current National and Local Authority advice to parents, states that, where at all possible, parents should avoid booking holidays for their children during school term time. All such absences will be recorded as 'unauthorised'. There are exemptions including fixed allocations of leave to parents/carers in the armed services and emergency services. Holidays taken to allow pupils to celebrate religious or ethnic festivals are also recorded as 'authorised'. Please make your reasons for requesting term-time absence clear to ensure the correct recording of the same.

You can help by phoning the school if your child is unable to attend.

Please keep children at home for 48hrs after the last bout of sickness or diarrhoea.

Lateness

It is very important that your child arrives at school on time each day. Children who frequently arrive late feel rushed and different from everyone else; this often makes them feel uncomfortable. Children need all the help they can have to feel confident and successful. Lateness will be recorded on the attendance register.

Transport



Free transport is provided for all pupils who live more than three miles from the school. In the case of children less than eight years old, the distance is reduced to two miles. Forms are available from the school office to apply for transport. Please see Highland Council's School Transport policy for further details: https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/12/school_transport

Please note that transport is not a school responsibility and any queries should be addressed to the Local Transport Officer, Transport Office.

Parking

As parking is limited outside the school, we request that families who drop-off or collect their children park away from the school gate, as we are required to keep this area clear so that children can cross the road safely. Parking is available in the layby outside school, the street opposite, the recycle centre, or at Balnain Hall.

School Closure/Adverse Weather



We try to keep school open as much as we possibly can when we have adverse weather. Occasionally it is necessary to close school early or not to open school on a particular day for safety reasons.

The school will email families if the school is closed due to adverse weather and post on our school website.

Sometimes the school will open for those who can travel there safely.

It is the responsibility of parents or carers to decide if a pupil should attempt to travel to school, by transport or on foot, in adverse weather conditions. The Council encourages full attendance at school, but in severe weather conditions the safety of pupils is much more important.

It is usually possible to give advance warning to parents of early closing. In some circumstances such as power failure this may not be possible, and parents are asked to ensure that pupils know what to do and where to go if dismissed early from school. We shall contact you or your alternative emergency contact number if we need to close the school.

It is crucial that emergency contact numbers are kept up to-date.

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

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

School Meals and Snacks



School meals are prepared at Glen Urquhart High School, Drumnadrochit and transported to Balnain Primary School where they are served in the canteen. The school meals provided are well balanced and both hot and cold options are available. Menus are sent out to all families to let you know what is being offered that week. The cost of a school meal is **£2.40** per day at the time of writing this brochure. Currently all P1-5 pupils are entitled to a free school meal.

If you think your child may be entitled to a free school meal, please contact the school office or Highland Council.

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/9/school_meals

Please let us know if your child has any special dietary requirements so that we can inform our school cook.

Packed lunches are also eaten in the canteen. The following notes of guidance, issued by the Education Authority, take the form of strong recommendations designed for the safety and protection of pupils and parents are requested to carry out these instructions.

Notes of guidance for parents.

- * All food must be carried in a semi-rigid container with a secure lid e.g. Tupperware, ice-cream containers or similar. Containers should be clearly marked with the name of the pupil.
- * Glass bottles or containers are not permitted under the Health and Safety Regulations.
- * Fizzy drinks in cans and bottles are not permitted.
- * We encourage pupils to stay hydrated throughout the school day by drinking water.
- * We encourage children to have waste free packed lunches in order to support our **ECO** agenda.
- * Children are encouraged to bring a snack for morning break. As a Health Promoting School we would encourage pupils, parents and staff to consider healthy options.

Our senior pupils organise and run a weekly tuckshop during the school term serving a variety of drinks and snacks for 50p. Children eligible for Free School Meals would not be required to pay. Our Tuckshop has proven to be very popular with all pupils!

Safe and Healthy



Medicine to Pupils

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 type of the medicine, the dosage required to be given, the time it has to be administered.

As far as possible, prescription 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, which parents are required to complete.

Minor Injuries

The school will only deal with minor cuts and bruises, and current guidance will be followed by our trained first aiders. 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.

Mental Health & 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.

Emergency Contacts

When a child is admitted to school, parents are requested to provide information about the person to be contacted should an emergency arise. It is the parents' responsibility to update this information if any changes occur.



If a child becomes ill or is involved in an accident in the school, he or she is monitored by the staff. Where there is any doubt or concern about his or her condition, parents are contacted. It is for this reason that the school must be notified immediately of any change in emergency contact or your own telephone number. Parents are also informed of any accidents which happen during the school day but do not require the child to be sent home.

Transition

The Associated Schools Group

Balnain Primary is part of the Glen Urquhart Associated School Group (ASG) The Primary Schools in the catchment area for Glen Urquhart High School are Glen Urquhart Primary, Balnain Primary and Cannich Bridge Primary. The Schools in the A.S.G. liaise closely on curriculum issues, through regular Head Teacher meetings. Glen Urquhart High School can be contacted by phone on 01456 459134 or by email glenurquhart.high@highland.gov.uk.

From Nursery to Primary School

Balnain Primary School works closely with Glen Urquhart Childcare Centre and other early learning providers to ensure smooth transitions for our pupils. A programme of visits is planned to help children prepare for the next step in their education. Staff from Balnain Primary School organise some visits to meet our new entrants in their early learning centre. Once relationships have been established, the new entrants are invited for a number of visits to our school. In June, we plan a sequence of visits to our school during a transition week. In addition to



these events, nursery children are invited to attend our Bookbug Sessions throughout the year which are led by our Pupil Support Assistant.

If your child does not attend Glen Urquhart Childcare Centre, please contact us directly so that we can work with you to arrange transition visits for your child.

From Primary to Secondary School



To ensure that the move from Primary School to Secondary School is positive, regular contacts are made between the High School and the associated Primary Schools which help make the transition as smooth as possible. P7 pupils are invited to a number of transition events held at Glen Urquhart High School throughout their P7 year. The Guidance

Department of the High School visit Balnain Primary in May/June to meet with the pupils and discuss any worries the pupils may have about the transition process. An extensive programme of transition events takes place for all P7 pupils in the ASG throughout the year. Glen Urquhart High School arranges a four-day induction visit to Secondary life during Transition Week in June.

According to the Parents Charter, parents have the choice of Secondary Schools to which they may wish to send their children.

If parents decide to choose any other school as their choice of Secondary school, they must still enrol their child at Glen Urquhart High School and then make a placing request to the authority. They must also be able to provide their own transport for their child to and from the school.

Community Links

Balnain School is well supported by the local community and a wide variety of partner agencies such as Soirbheas and our Local Heritage Group.

We try our best to reduce waste, use water and electricity wisely, and educate our pupils to make good choices for themselves and the environment.

We also work with Aigas Field Centre and Abriachan Forest Trust to arrange outdoor learning opportunities throughout the year.

We receive significant support from Highlife Highland through the Active Schools Programme. In addition to the provision of physical education, we receive visits from a variety of sports development officers, cycle training and young leader training.





Balnain Primary School is well supported by our Active Schools Co-ordinator and parents to offer a variety of after school clubs. Information regarding these clubs will be distributed to pupils.

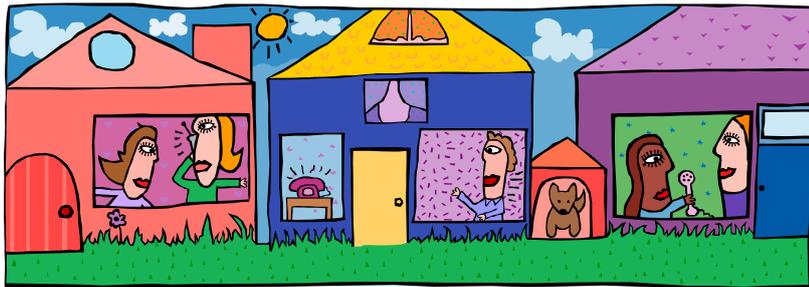
Our pupils are encouraged to participate in a variety of sporting opportunities within our local area. We have competed in local football and shinty tournaments, cross-country and orienteering events.



After School Clubs

We have a number of After School Clubs in Balnain throughout the year including Multisport, Cards Club and Orienteering.

There are also lots of clubs on offer in nearby Drumnadrochit and Cannich which our pupils are welcome to attend: Dancing, Shinty, Mountain Biking, Karate, Brownies, Boys Brigade, Badminton, Tennis and Wildlife Explorers to name but a few. Further details of local clubs can be found on our school website.



When something goes wrong – Complaints Procedure

If a parent has any concerns, they should contact their child's Named Person (Julie MacLeod) in the first instance. We hope to respond to any complaints within 24 hours.

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:

Tina Stones
Area Quality Improvement Manager
South Area Education Office,
Glenurquhart Road,
Inverness IV3 5NX
Telephone: 01463 702000
Email: tina.stones@highland.gov.uk

You can also access guidance on Parentline:

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

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

When we get it right!

If you are happy with the school, please tell a member of staff. It is good to know when things have gone well - however small! 😊

School Holidays Academic Year 2025 - 2026

SCHOOL OPENS

Tuesday 19th August 2025
Monday 27th October 2025
Wednesday 7th January 2026
Monday 20th April 2026

SCHOOL CLOSES

Friday 10th October 2025
Tuesday 23rd December 2025
Thursday 2nd April 2026
Thursday 2nd July 2026

OTHER SCHOOL CLOSURES

Monday 15th & Tuesday 16th September 2025 - In Service
Monday 16th & Tuesday 17th February 2026 - Mid Term Break
Wednesday 18th February 2026 - In Service
Monday 4th May 2026 - May Day
Thursday 7th May 2026 - In Service

School Holidays Academic Year 2026 - 2027

SCHOOL OPENS

Wednesday 19th August 2026

Monday 26th October 2026

Wednesday 6th January 2027

Monday 12th April 2027

SCHOOL CLOSES

Friday 9th October 2026

Tuesday 22nd December 2026

Thursday 25th March 2027

Thursday 1st July 2027

OTHER SCHOOL CLOSURES

Monday 17th & Tuesday 18th August 2026 - In Service

Monday 14th September 2026 - In Service

Monday 15th & Tuesday 16th February 2027 - Mid-term break

Wednesday 17th February 2027 - In Service

Monday 3rd May 2027 - May Day

Thursday 6th May 2027 - In Service



PLEASE NOTE - DATES MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE - the most up to date information can be obtained from

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

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION

A full list of school policies is available from the school office which can be viewed at any time as well as past and current programmes of study etc.

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, parents 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 <https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-exchange-of-data-scotxed/>

Data policy

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

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

The individual data collected by Scottish Government through the Pupil Census is used for statistical and research purposes only.

Information on why we collect data about pupils and who we share this data with can be found in Highland Council's Privacy Notice which is available here:

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

Why do we need your data?

In order to make the best decisions about how to improve our education service, Scottish Government, education authorities and other partners such as the SQA and Skills Development Scotland need accurate, up-to-date data about our pupils. We are keen to help all our pupils do well in all aspects of school life and achieve better examination results. Accurate and up-to-date data allows us to:

- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of all pupils
- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of specific groups of pupils
- better understand some of the factors which influence pupil attainment and achievement
- share good practice
- target resources better
- enhance the quality of research to improve the lives of young people in Scotland

Your data protection rights

The collection, transfer, processing and sharing of ScotXed data is done in accordance with data protection legislation. We also comply with the National Statistics Code of Practice requirements and other legislation related to safeguarding the confidentiality of data. Data protection legislation gives you the right to know how we will use your data. This note can give only a brief description of how we use data. Fuller details of each individual ScotXed survey, including the purpose of each and the published data, can be found on the ScotXed website

<http://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-exchange-of-data-scotxed/>

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.

Protection of Children

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

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

All agencies involved in Child Protection are obliged to make the welfare of children their paramount consideration and this will be the priority for Education Service staff. COPIES OF CHILD PROTECTION POLICY GUIDELINES are available online at

http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/1361/childcare_and_family_care/438/child_protection

Military Families

Our school welcomes and supports families, their children and young people from Forces families: serving, veteran and reservists.

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 of your child/young person coming into or moving on from our school. Please get in touch with us as soon as you can so we can work with you to ensure transition is as smooth as possible.

Highland Council have proudly committed to the Armed Forces Covenant and as such support our veteran and reservist families as well as those currently serving. There is a dedicated Highland Council Military Liaison Group (MLG) which has been formed to promote and ensure equality and equality for your children and young people in their education.

Visit the Highland Council Armed Forces Website for lots of helpful information and support https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools_-_additional_support_needs/833/armed_forces_-_support_for_families_and_schools

Please get in touch with your child's Named Person or the Head Teachers if you have any concerns.

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.