

Bower Primary School Handbook

2026-2027



Small School Big Education



Bower Primary School

Bowermadden

Wick

KW1 4TT

Head Teacher: Mrs. Sylvie Sinclair

School Contact

Number: 01955 641225

Email: bower.primary@highland.gov.uk

Parent

Council Email: bower.primary@highlandpc.co.uk

Website: blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/bowerprimaryschool/

X(twitter): @BowerSchool

Contents Page

Welcome to Bower Primary School	4
School plan and contacts	5
Our School Staff	6
Our School Grounds	7
Our School Ethos	8
Vision, Values and Aims	9
Community Engagement, Partnerships with Organisations, Professional Partnerships	10
What our pupils are saying	11
School hours and dates	12
Enrolment	13
Transport and School meals	14
Uniform and Transitions	15
Pupil Care and Welfare	16-17
School closures	17-18
Travelling to School during Adverse Weather	19
Playground, behaviour Data protection and Health	20
Administration of medicine, drug misuse, fire safety, transition and	21
Complaints procedure and Our Learning	22-23
Play Pedagogy, Maths and Numeracy	23-24
Literacy, Language and Social Studies	25
Religious/Moral Education and Expressive Arts	26
Health, Wellbeing/Technologies and Sciences	27
Modern Languages and Assessment	28
Additional Support Needs, Primary	29
Secondary, Pupil Committees and Sporting Activities	30
Events, After School Club Activities, Swimming and Concerts	31

Contents Page . continued

Parental Engagement and Homework, communication with parents and Parent Forum	32
School Improvement Plan and School Quality Report (SQR)	34
Education Scotland Report, Policies, Photographs and equalities/ anti-bullying/ Highland Council Child Protection Policy	35
Appendix 1-Access to Pupil Records	36
Data Protection Legislation/ Transferring Educational Data about Pupils	37
Data Policy/ Why do we need your data?	38
Your data protection rights/ Concerns/ Equality and Inclusion/Military Families	39



Welcome to Bower Primary School

Dear Parent/Carer,

A warm welcome to Bower Primary School! It is both an honour and a pleasure to greet you and your family as you join our school community.

This handbook has been created to offer essential information for all parents of children currently attending or about to enrol in our school. Inside, you will find details about our school, and various aspects of the Curriculum for Excellence. We trust you will find it informative and helpful as you prepare for your child's time with us.

We are thrilled to welcome our new pupils and families into the Bower community. Our priority is to ensure that both you and your child feel supported, valued, and happy as part of our school. Together, we aim to provide an environment where your child can grow academically, socially, and emotionally.

We place great importance on building strong partnerships between home and school. Your involvement is crucial to your child's success, and we encourage you to engage in their learning journey. With your support, we can work together to offer your child the best possible educational experience.

If you would like to visit the school, we invite you to arrange a tour. We are also happy to answer any questions or address any concerns you may have. Feel free to call or email us, and we will respond promptly.

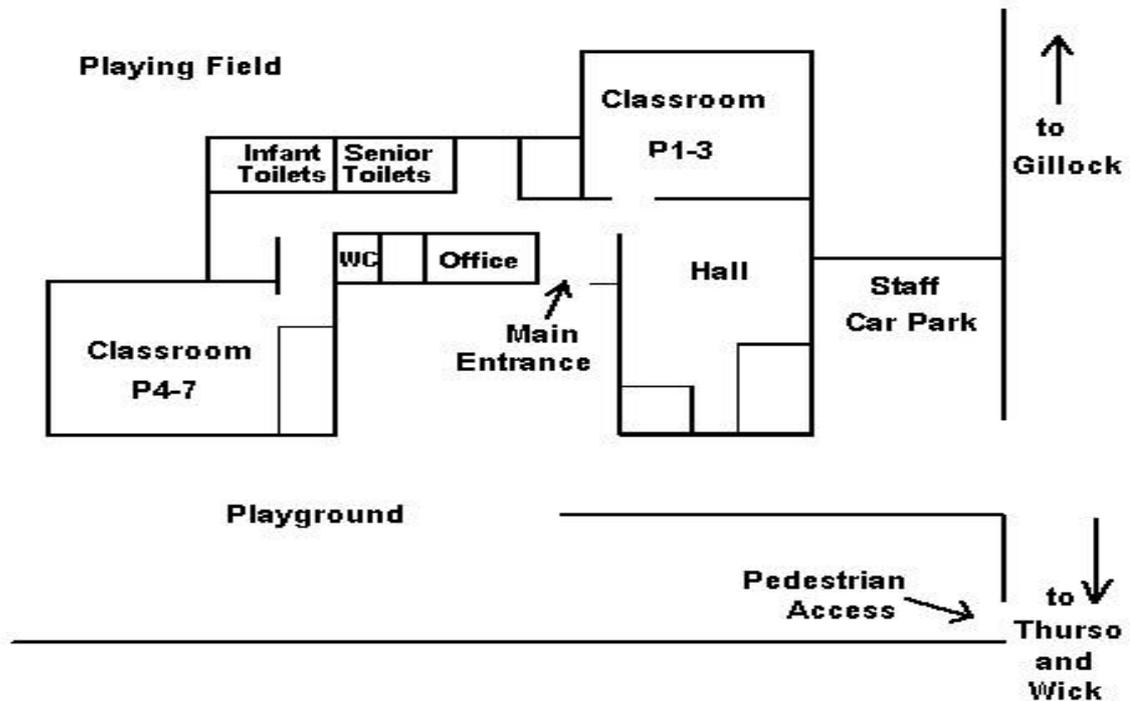
Thank you for choosing Bower Primary School. We look forward to working with you and your child in the coming months and years.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. Sylvie Sinclair

Head Teacher

Plan of Bower Primary School



Useful Contacts

Bower Busy Bees Play Group

Bower Community Centre
Bowermadden
Wick
Caithness
01955 661 397

Are Education Manager – North

Manager: Mhairi Macdonald
Highland Council
Inverness
07435 762 002

School Nurse:

Joanne Ross
01955 608124

Parentline:

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

Thurso High School

Mrs H Flavell, Rector
Ormlie Rd
Thurso
Caithness
01847 893822

Wick High School

Mr S Sandecki, Rector
Newton Road
Wick
Caithness
01955 603333

PDS Dental Clinic

Caithness General Hospital
Bankhead Road
Wick
KW1 5NS

School Staff

The staff at Bower Primary School can be described in one word: outstanding. They consistently go above and beyond to provide our pupils with a first-rate educational experience.

Our P1–P3 class is taught by Miss Cook, and the P4–P7 class is led by Mrs. Henderson. Miss Macleod covers the P4–P7 class every Wednesday morning during Mrs. Henderson’s Class Contact Reduction (CCR) time. Additionally, Mrs. Swanson, our dedicated Pupil Support Assistant, works with us on Thursdays and Fridays.

<p>Head Teacher</p>  <p>Mrs S Sinclair</p>	<p>Class Teacher (P1-3)</p>  <p>Miss A Cook</p>	<p>Class Teacher (P4-7)</p>  <p>Mrs C Henderson</p>
<p>CCR Teacher P4-7</p>  <p>Miss Macleod</p>	<p>Pupil Support Assistant</p>  <p>Mrs J Swanson</p>	<p>Clerical Assistant</p>  <p>Mrs S Davidson</p>
<p>Dining Supervisor</p>  <p>Natasha. Jenkins</p>		
<p>Minister Mr R. Petersen</p>		
<p>Cleaner Sue</p>		
<p>Janitor Mr T. Lowe</p>		

Our school and grounds

Our school is a non-denominational, and we do not offer Gaelic language instruction. It was established in 1976 , and is now almost 50 years old. It features a wooden structure that houses two classrooms and a hall. This hall serves multiple purposes, including P.E., music, drama, assemblies, and as our dining area. The building also includes cloakroom facilities for both infants and seniors, as well as toilets for each classroom.



Our school is surrounded by a spacious grassy field and features a large tarmac play area, providing ample opportunities for outdoor learning and play. The children particularly enjoy our fantastic timber trail, which adds to the fun and engagement during break times.

In the summer of 2023, we proudly added a polycrub to our school grounds. This exciting addition allows the children to grow their own fruits and vegetables while learning about sustainable food production and the importance of caring for the environment.

In session 2024–2025, our Parent Council successfully applied for funding to enhance our outdoor area. We were very fortunate to receive a generous grant from [insert funding source], which has allowed us to add several exciting new features. The new equipment includes an outdoor gym, a climbing wall, a multiverse centre, a three-way shooter, and a ball wall.

In October 2024, the school achieved the Bronze Level Accreditation from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This recognition reflects our commitment to creating a school environment that respects and promotes children’s rights. It acknowledges the steps we have taken to embed these principles into our policies, practices, and daily interactions.

Building on this success, we are now actively working towards achieving the Silver Level Accreditation, which requires further integration of children's rights into every aspect of school life. This next step will deepen our commitment and ensure that our practices continue to prioritise the well-being, inclusion, and voice of every child.

Our School Ethos

We are a small school with a big heart, dedicated to nurturing a strong sense of community where every child feels valued and supported. Our ethos is built on respect, inclusion, and a commitment to excellence, ensuring that every learner is given the opportunity to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. We celebrate individuality while fostering teamwork and collaboration, creating a safe and inspiring environment where children are encouraged to dream big and reach their full potential. At the core of everything we do is the belief that strong relationships between staff, pupils, parents, and the wider community are key to unlocking success and fostering a love of lifelong learning.





Small school

BIG EDUCATION

Our Vision

Our school is a place of learning where everyone (pupils, staff, parents and the wider community) works together in a responsible, respectful, creative hard-working and successful environment.

Our Values

We will work together to develop our school values:



Our Aims

At Bower Primary School we aim to:

- Provide exciting and memorable experiences.
- Provide an ethos that fosters integrity and respect.
- Encourage learners to be resilient, independent and make sensible decisions.
- Encourage learners to be confident, to accept and be willing to tackle challenges.

Community Engagement:

Our school organises various events, such as Dress Down Day to raise money for Children in Need, the Blythswood Box Appeal, and many others to support good causes. We also participate in or host local cultural events, including festivals, concerts, and art shows, to celebrate community engagement and cultural diversity. The school works closely with parents and local residents through the Parent Council, where they have a voice in school decisions and activities.

Partnerships with Organisations:

The school collaborates with local businesses on educational projects and sponsorships. We are grateful for the support from companies like Norscot, Subsea 7 and BES in Bower. The school partners with Active Schools and local sports clubs to offer extracurricular activities, promote physical fitness, and organise sports events.

Professional Partnerships:

Our school collaborates with professionals such as healthcare providers, including mental health professionals, speech therapists, educational psychologists, and social workers, who provide specialised support to students with additional needs or challenges.

At our school, we place a strong emphasis on Health and Wellbeing, fostering a positive and supportive environment through restorative, solution-focused, and nurturing approaches. We believe in promoting respectful and kind behaviour, where every child feels safe and valued. We support pupils throughout their learning by creating a space where they can thrive emotionally, socially, and academically. Individual needs are met through personalised support plans, tailored interventions, and regular communication with parents and external specialists when required. By understanding and addressing each pupil's unique needs, we ensure that all students receive the guidance and encouragement they need to reach their full potential.

[Relationships Policy](#)

[Equality and Diversity Policy](#)

What our pupils are saying:

Our children are at the heart of everything we do... so we asked the children what we should tell you about Bower School!

Levi P6: " I like Bower Primary School because the teachers are nice."

Lacey P4 : "The school is good because it helps us learn."

Bodey P6: "The school is really fun because it have lots of play time."

Aulay P2 ; "It is very safe and it feels like a home."

Lottie P1: "I feel safe because everyone is kind to me."

Uriel P3: "I like it because the teachers help me learn. I like to play with my friends and do spelling ."

Ollie P1:" I like coming in the school every morning."

Austen P5: "The school is pretty good. I like to play lots of games with my friends. I like learning lots of new strategies in maths so I can help my sister. "

Winter P7 : "I like the teachers. The playground is massive and fun. Teachers make learning fun. "



What our parents are saying:

'We love Bower Primary. It's a happy, inclusive place where each child is valued and encouraged to be themselves. Bower Primary is truly like a family.'

'Bower Primary really makes the pupils feel like part of a big family. The teachers and support staff are amazing, which enables the children to thrive. The school is so welcoming and has great parental involvement. I couldn't ask for a better start for my child and can honestly say it was the best decision choosing Bower Primary.'

School Hours and dates for 2026/2027

Monday - Friday

9.00am - 12.30pm

1.15pm - 2.30 P1-3 3pm P4-7

Parents are strongly encouraged to schedule family holidays during school breaks to avoid disrupting their child's education during term time.

Highland School calendar 2025/26

Please note - Dates may be subject to change

August 2025							September 2025							October 2025							November 2025										
Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
32					1	2	3	37	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	41			1	2	3	4	5	45						1	2
33	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	38	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	42	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	46	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
34	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	39	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	43	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	47	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
35	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	40	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	44	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	48	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
36	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	41	29	30						45	27	28	29	30	31			49	24	25	26	27	28	29	30

December 2025							January 2026							February 2026							March 2026										
Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
50	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	2				1	2	3	4	6						1		10							1
51	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	3	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	7	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
52	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	4	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	12	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	5	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	9	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	13	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
2	29	30	31					6	26	27	28	29	30	31	10	23	24	25	26	27	28	14	23	24	25	26	27	28	29		
																						15	30	31							

April 2026							May 2026							June 2026							July 2026												
Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su		
15				1	2	3	4	5	19					1	2	3	24	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	28				1	2	3	4	5
16	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	20	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	25	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	29	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
17	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	21	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	26	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	30	13	14	15	16	17	18	19		
18	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	22	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	27	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	31	20	21	22	23	24	25	26		
19	27	28	29	30				23	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	28	29	30						32	27	28	29	30	31				

School holidays
In-service days

School days

Highland School calendar 2026/27

Please note - Dates may be subject to change

August 2026							September 2026							October 2026							November 2026										
Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
32						1	2	37						5	6	41				1	2	3	4	45							1
33	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	38	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	42	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	46	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
34	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	39	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	43	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	47	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
35	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	40	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	44	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	48	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
36	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	41	28	29	30					45	26	27	28	29	30	31	49	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
37	31																					50	30								

December 2026							January 2027							February 2027							March 2027										
Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
50						5	6	2					1	2	3	6						6	7	10							1
51	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	4	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	8	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	12	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	5	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	9	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
2	28	29	30	31				6	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	10	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	14	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
																						15	29	30	31						

April 2027							May 2027							June 2027							July 2027										
Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
15					1	2	3	4	19					1	2	24						5	6	28							1
16	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	20	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	25	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	29	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
17	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	21	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	26	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	30	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	22	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	27	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	31	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
19	26	27	28	29	30			23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	28	29	30					32	26	27	28	29	30	31	

School holidays
In-service days

School days

Enrolment

PLACING REQUESTS - PARENTAL CHOICE

Each school serves its own particular catchment area. Children 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. It is important, however, that your child is registered at his/her local school in advance of making a placing request. Applications must be made to the Area Education Manager. katherine.vanvoornveld@highland.gov.uk

Placing request forms can be obtained online from

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

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

If children live out-with the school catchment area and their parents wish them to attend Bower School, the education Manager has to approve these requests and this can take up to a month before you might hear of the success of your request.

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

Parents are welcome to make an appointment to visit the school before they decide to enrol their child.

Bower School runs a programme of transition visits for pre-school children and holds an information session for parents. This is done in co-operation with our feeder playgroup – Bower Busy Bees.

Children starting school in Primary 1 should be enrolled at the school during enrolment week, usually the last week in January, **week beginning Monday the 27th January 2026**. When enrolling a child, the parent should bring the child's birth certificate and be prepared to give the name, address and telephone number of an emergency contact.

More detailed information on enrolment in a school outside your catchment area and placing request forms can be obtained from [Enrolment in a school outside your catchment area | Enrol your child for school | The Highland Council](#)

Parents wishing to enrol children during the session should phone or call at the school to get information and make arrangements for admission and/or a visit to the school beforehand if they wish.

Transport

New entrants to the school at any stage must make a formal application to the transport officer if transport is required. Transport will only be provided for children living within the school's catchment area. Any child under 8 years of age who lives 2 miles or more from the school and any child over 8 who lives 3 miles or more from the school is entitled to free transport, however they may be expected to walk to a convenient pick-up point. Concessions are sometimes made for those living within these distances, but the decision lies with the Transport Officer. School has no control over who has entitlement to a seat on the bus.

Transport forms must also be completed for Primary 7 children leaving school to go to High School. All children travelling by school transport are expected to behave well on the bus. This is essential for safety reasons.

School Meals

School meals are provided for children. They are cooked in Castletown School and are transported to us in time for lunch. The menus provide healthy, nutritionally balanced meals, which have been approved by a dietician. Menus are normally available in advance and are supplied twice yearly.

All children in P1-P5 are provided with a free school lunch each day. However, children in P6 and P7 need to pay for their lunches. The current cost of a school lunch is £2.40 per day or £12 per week. If your child wishes to have school lunches, there is a form available on our Seesaw app every week to order for the following week. Children taking meals on odd days should pay on the day or by the Thursday morning of that week. Credits can be carried forward to the following week should your child be absent after ordering. Children wishing to bring packed lunches also eat in the dining hall. Packed lunches must be carried in suitable boxes and glass bottles are **not** permitted. Can you please also ensure that your child does not bring fizzy drinks to school. Drinking water is available in the classrooms and at lunchtimes.

If a pupil has special dietary needs, please inform the school. Free meals can be claimed in certain circumstances, for information and application form please see

http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/899/schools_-_grants_and_benefits/10/free_school_meals_and_assistance_with_clothing

Uniform

Children are encouraged to wear school uniform every day. This consists of a navy blue sweatshirt with an embroidered school logo, to be worn with a pale blue or white polo shirt. You can also order good quality clothing at reasonable prices locally from

Highland Work Wear by logging on to www.highlandworkwear.com and choosing 'Bower' from the Primary School choice. Clothing grants are also available to all pupils whose parents receive Income Support or Job Seekers Allowance. Application forms are available online.

All children **must** bring shoes for indoor wear and **must** have a **gym kit** consisting of shorts, t-shirt and gym shoes for indoor gym. When the weather is fine, children will need suitable trainers for outdoor use.

For lessons such as Art and Technology, your child will require a **painting shirt** of some sort to protect their clothes. This can be an old shirt/blouse.

All articles of clothing **must have the child's name clearly labelled**. School cannot accept responsibility for any items of clothing which go missing.

We have a great selection of high-quality second-hand uniforms available in excellent condition. Feel free to reach out if you're interested—we'll be happy to assist you!

Transitions

Transition to Primary 1

Our main feeder nursery is Busy Bees Nursery, and we work closely with them to ensure a smooth and supportive transition for children moving into Primary 1.

In the summer term, a variety of planned transition activities take place to help the new Primary 1 children feel comfortable and prepared for their move to school. These include scheduled visits to the Primary 1/2/3 classroom, where children can explore their new learning environment and engage in activities that help build familiarity and confidence.

Before these transition visits, the Primary 1/2/3 teacher visits Busy Bees Nursery to observe the children in their current setting and discuss their progress with Nursery staff. This allows the teacher to gain a deeper understanding of each child's needs, strengths, and development.

During these visits, the teacher also connects with the children by reading them a story during story time.

For pupils transitioning to a new class or teacher within the school, we hold detailed transition conversations to ensure that all key information about each child is passed on effectively. This helps provide continuity in their learning and well-being as they progress through their educational journey.

Transition to High School:

During the summer term all P7 children pay a two-day visit to the High School of their choice. They take part in a normal timetable at the High School and meet staff. An evening meeting for parents is also arranged prior to transfer. Primary/Secondary liaison between the local High Schools and the feeder primaries is very good with primary and secondary teachers meeting throughout the year to ensure that a smooth transition for each child is achieved.

School Assemblies and Events

School assemblies take place regularly throughout the session. We are fortunate to have a visiting Minister, Mr R. Petersen who will lead some assemblies during the session.

Throughout the year, we celebrate a variety of special events that bring our school community together and honour our traditions, such as Burns Night and other cultural occasions. We also take pride in organising events to raise money for important causes. For example, we host a coffee afternoon, inviting the Bower community to join us in supporting the Macmillan Cancer Support charity. Additionally, we engage in activities like dress-down days, bake sales, and fun challenges to raise funds for initiatives such as Children in Need. These events not only strengthen our community bonds but also instil a sense of compassion and social responsibility in our pupils.

There are many opportunities for you to be involved in school life, for instance, helping on regular gardening days, by being on a committee, visiting to speak about your job/hobbies, coming in to read to the children, making costumes and props for concerts and at other events throughout the year.

We are very fortunate to be part of a wonderful community who supports the school with generous donations throughout the year for various charities.

Pupil care and Welfare

Absence of Pupils

Good attendance is vital if pupils are to achieve their full potential. Parents must inform the school by telephone of the reason for their child's absence on the first morning of absence **before 9.30am**. In accordance with Highland Council policy if a parent fails to contact the school before 9.30am we are obliged to phone parents to find out a reason for their child's absence.

If a pupil needs to leave during the school day for an appointment etc, pupils need to bring with them a note from a parent or guardian. Where at all possible, medical and dental appointments should be made outwith school hours.

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.

Parents who wish to take a child on holiday during term time must request permission of the Head Teacher. If parents have no control over the dates of annual leave, permission is possibly granted. **It should be noted that holidays taken during term time are recorded as unauthorised absence.**

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.

- Homework will not be given to children going on holiday, if possible, every effort will be made to ensure that, on their return to school the child covers any learning missed. Likewise, when children are ill, homework should not be expected of them. In the case of routine work (reading, spelling etc.) they may wish to ‘keep up’ at home but any new teaching requires to be supervised on their return.

Parents should note that should a child regularly be absent from school without notification the school is required to forward relevant details to the Area Education Manager.

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

Unexpected School Closure

It is sometimes necessary to close the school at short notice because of bad weather or power failure. Every precaution is taken to ensure that parents are informed. Parents have the responsibility during periods of severe weather to ensure that they or an emergency contact are available to take messages and to be prepared to take the children home. Parents should ensure that the school is informed immediately of any **change of address or phone number of either parents or emergency contacts**. Details of our closure procedure are sent out regularly. We would put out an announcement on our communications site, SeeSaw and also phone emergency contacts.

Adverse Weather

Parents can obtain information on the Highland Council school closures webpage <http://www.highland.gov.uk/schoolclosures>

If the school needs to close due to adverse weather conditions, parents will be notified through Seesaw as early as possible. This will provide sufficient time for parents to arrange childcare, if necessary, and ensure that families can plan accordingly for the day. Further updates regarding the reopening of the school or additional instructions will also be communicated through Seesaw.

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. Parents and pupils are often concerned that important examinations may be missed, but this should not over-ride good judgement. Schools normally make alternative arrangements for missed examinations.

The Highland Council Website, Facebook and X

- The Council's **website** <http://www.highland.gov.uk/schoolclosures> will be updated with information for individual schools
- The Council's **Facebook** page at <https://www.facebook.com/highlandcouncil> will show updated posts on the latest news of school closures and weather related problems
- The Council's x (formally **Twitter**) page at <https://twitter.com/HighlandCouncil> will list Tweets of the latest news of school closures and weather-related problems.

Local radio stations issue news and weather bulletins on traffic conditions and school closures. Transmissions may not cover all households and may be subject to re-scheduling but should be

helpful. Parents are advised to remain “tuned in” to ongoing road weather, or school information

updates.

BBC Radio Highland | Moray Firth Radio <https://hellorayo.co.uk/mfr>

Please do not telephone local Radio for advice but listen to appropriate broadcasts.

TRAVELLING TO SCHOOL DURING ADVERSE WEATHER

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. Parents and pupils are often concerned that important examinations may be missed, but this should not over-ride good judgement. Schools normally make alternative arrangements for missed examinations.

The school updates its procedures for adverse weather closure annually, therefore

- **parents** should advise schools of an alternative address, as close as possible to the school, which may be used by their children in emergencies
- **the school** will establish a system of communication with parents and local transport operators and ensure that parents are fully informed of any revised arrangements

For pupils using school transport

- Parents should note that the final decision on whether it is safe to operate rests with the driver of the school transport vehicle. Therefore there may be occasions on which a school is open but some routes, or parts of routes, are unable to operate.
- Parents should advise their children on how long they should wait at the pick-up point for their transport. This will depend on the prevailing weather conditions and the availability

of shelter at the pick-up point. During adverse weather conditions no pupil is expected to wait longer than twenty minutes past the normal “pick-up” time.

- Morning journeys may be delayed by an hour if road conditions are unsafe at the normal journey time but have improved within the hour. Before pupils return to a pick-up point parents should check for updated messages from their school. Please note that for some routes the transport operator may contact the parent directly.
- Drivers are advised not to drop off children where there is a risk that they may not safely reach home or other place of shelter. This may involve children being taken to an alternative place of safety, agreed in consultation with the school.
- Where parents are concerned about weather conditions at “drop-off” points, they should contact the school as early as possible

Please note: when weather conditions are poor, parents should ensure that children are met at the “drop-off” point, especially where public service transport is used.

Please note that transport is not a school responsibility and any queries should be addressed to the Local Transport Office or emailed to school.transport@highland.gov.uk.

Playground

Children are expected to play outside at morning, and lunchtime breaks unless the weather is unsuitable. They really benefit from the time they spend playing in the fresh air. If your child requires to stay in for any of these times, please let us know.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

At Bower School, we strive to foster a positive ethos where children are rewarded for good behaviour and feel valued, respected, and cared for. While we hold high expectations for behaviour, our ultimate goal is to help children develop self-discipline and a strong sense of personal responsibility.

In instances of negative behaviour, staff address issues promptly to ensure that concerns are resolved effectively and fairly. We use restorative practices to encourage children to take responsibility for their actions, understand the impact on others, and work toward repairing relationships. This approach helps to build empathy and provides an opportunity for meaningful reflection and personal growth.

Depending on the severity of the incident, parents may be contacted to ensure transparency and provide additional support for the child. Many incidents are one-off occurrences that serve as valuable learning experiences, allowing children to reflect, grow, and move forward positively. However, in cases of repeated misconduct, parents are always involved to collaborate on strategies that promote improved behaviour. Our approach emphasises fairness, communication, restorative practices, and the well-being of every child in our care.

Support for Learners Website

Data Protection

Any information you have supplied to the school or any information gathered from or about pupils will be used only for the purposes for which it was provided and any relevant procedures following from this. This data will be maintained in accordance with the Data Protection Act and will not be passed onto any other organisation without your prior approval unless this is a legal requirement. (Please see appendix 1 for more detailed information)

Health

It is important that parents inform the teachers of any particular medical condition that a child may have. (e.g. allergies, epilepsy, diabetes, etc.)

The School Nurse carries out a routine medical examination of all children in P1. Children throughout the school who have noticeable hearing/sight defects can be referred at this time. Parents can attend these appointments. Screening of P7 children is also carried out.

In the event of a child taking ill in school the parent is notified. Parents should make arrangements to transport the child home. **It is essential that each family have an emergency contact that can take over if the parent is not available.** Please advise us immediately of any change of emergency contact, address or phone number. In case of accidents at school requiring medical help, this is immediately sought and the parent contacted. In the case of minor accidents (scrapes, bumps and cuts) we ensure that any break of the skin is cleaned and a plaster may be applied. If there is a known allergy to plasters please inform us.

If your child has a vomiting bug the NHS Guidelines recommend that you keep your child at home for 48 hours from the last vomiting episode. This helps to stop the spread of the outbreak.

Administration of Medicines

If a child is receiving prescribed medication the school will follow the guidance laid down in the whole school policy and that of Highland Council relating to The Administration of Medicines.

All medications are kept in a safe place out of reach of children. Cuts or open sores should be suitably covered e.g. dressing secured with adhesive tape.

Generally, Council staff members are not permitted to routinely administer medication, but special arrangements may be made to do so in life threatening situations, e.g. where a child may require emergency treatment due to an allergic reaction to peanuts.

Should your child require any medication at school a form must be filled in (available from the school office) detailing the name of the medication, what the medication is for, dosage, times to be administered and the length of time the medication will be needed. Parents are also welcome to come into school to administer the medicine. Parents also have to complete a consent form before their child can be given medication. A record of regular / daily medicine given during the school day is kept.

Drug misuse

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

Fire Safety

Fire drills are held in school to familiarise staff and pupils with the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire and the 'Fire Action Plan' is displayed around the school to remind everyone of this important procedure.

Emergency Plan

The school has a plan in place in the event of there being a major emergency either in the school building or in the playground. If this were to occur, pupils would be sent home to parents or to emergency contacts. A major emergency would be coordinated by the Education Authority.

Complaints Procedure

We hope that you and your child's experience at Bower School is a very positive one and we welcome any suggestions you may have.

At Bower Primary School, we value open communication with parents and carers and encourage them to share any concerns they may have regarding their child's wellbeing, learning, or school environment.

If you feel you have a concern or a reason to complain, then please contact the school office to make an appointment with the Head Teacher. All concerns are taken seriously and will be acknowledged promptly. The school will work collaboratively with parents to address the issue, investigate where necessary, and provide appropriate support or guidance. If parents wish to seek additional advice or support, they can contact **Parentline Scotland** for confidential guidance: <https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/parentline-scotland/>

The school will always endeavour to resolve issues by listening to parents and seeking solutions in partnership. Should a situation not be resolved, parents can contact the Area Quality Improvement Manager, Mrs K. Van Voornveld at Katherine.vanvoornveld@highland.gov.uk.



Our Learning

Curriculum for Excellence

We follow 'Curriculum for Excellence' to ensure that your child is active in their learning which is cross-curricular, interesting, fun and outdoors whenever possible.

The curriculum areas in 'A Curriculum for Excellence' are: Expressive Arts (Art & Design, Music, Drama and Dance), Health & Wellbeing (which includes PE), Language, Mathematics, Religious and Moral Education, Sciences, Social Studies and Technologies.

Children are taught as a whole class, group or on an individual basis, so that they progress at a speed and in a manner suited to their levels of ability. There is particular emphasis on collaborative learning, which encourages children to discuss their learning and make choices together, each child accepting responsibility for the choices their groups make. In Bower School we often have whole school activities e.g. when preparing for a fundraising event, which allows the children to share multi-stage learning experiences and acquire skills and knowledge in 'real life' and active learning situations.

Both classrooms provide a stimulating learning environment, with every resource being used to its fullest potential. We are also fortunate to have ample outdoor space, which is utilised as an extension of the classroom for active, hands-on learning experiences. The focus is on engaging children in their learning, encouraging them to assess their own progress, and identifying areas for further improvement.

Last year, we introduced a Polycrub, which provides an exciting opportunity for children to plant fruits and vegetables, learn new skills, and engage in sustainable gardening projects. This space is not only a place for learning but also offers a calm, welcoming environment for all children, including those who need additional support, to relax and participate in meaningful, long-term projects.

A 'Curriculum for Excellence' details desired levels of learning and progression from the early to the fourth curriculum level, during the period from the preschool year to the end of S3.

The experiences and outcomes of a 'Curriculum for Excellence' are set out in lines of progress in learning. Progression is indicated through curriculum levels, which are explained in this table:

Level	Stage
Early	The preschool years and P1 or later for some.
First	To the end of P4, but earlier or later for some.
Second	To the end of P7, but earlier or later for some.
Third and Fourth	S1 to S3, but earlier for some. The fourth level broadly equates to SCQF level 4.
Senior phase	S4 – S6 and college or other means of study.

For more detailed information on the Curriculum for Excellence, please visit the following link:

[Curriculum for Excellence | Education Scotland](#)

Play Pedagogy

At Bower Primary School, we are proud to implement play pedagogy as a fundamental approach to learning. By integrating structured and free play into our curriculum, we create a rich, engaging environment where children can explore, experiment, and learn at their own pace. Play pedagogy supports the development of critical skills such as problem-solving, creativity, teamwork, and resilience, while also fostering emotional and social growth. Through play, children make meaningful connections to their learning, enhancing their curiosity and motivation. This approach aligns with modern educational research, emphasising the importance of hands-on, active engagement in building a strong foundation for lifelong learning.

At Bower, we see play not just as a method, but as a powerful tool to ensure every child thrives both academically and personally.



Maths and Numeracy

As part of the Numeracy and Mathematics curriculum, numeracy has been identified as an area that is the responsibility of all teachers. Being numerate is highlighted as a skill for life,

learning and work. As a life skill, being numerate permeates and supports all areas of learning and allows children to access the wider curriculum.

The children will be encouraged to be active in their learning of numeracy. The learning will be delivered using contexts whenever possible, so that it has real life meaning for them and can be related to the world outside the classroom.

It is important that children become quick and accurate in mental calculation. You can help at home by spending time working on counting, addition and subtraction number facts and later in a child's mathematical development, multiplication tables. Practise really does make perfect!

Children will play lots of numeracy games and use ICT to develop maths skills. Some work will take place using Heinemann and Leckie maths textbooks but this will be supplemented with problem solving and applying mathematical knowledge to other areas of the curriculum. There are three main organisers under which your child will learn mathematics, and these are further sub divided -

- Number Money and Measurement
- Shape, Position and Movement
- Information Handling

Literacy and Language

Competence and confidence in all aspects of literacy, including competence in grammar and spelling and the spoken word are all essential for progress in all areas of the curriculum. Our ability to use language lies at the centre of the development and expression of our emotions, our thinking, our learning and our personal sense of identity.

At Bower, our approach to the teaching of literacy is through Highland Literacy approaches which we use for the teaching of reading, writing and talking and listening. We use the Oxford Reading Tree in the early stages and Treetops supplemented by a range of other books and novels in the upper stages.

At the early stages, please do read to your child regularly. Look at the pictures and talk about what might happen next or which picture or character they like the best and why. Encourage your child to read fiction and non-fiction books, magazines about their interests, national geographic for kids, newspapers for children, etc.

We use Jolly Phonics and follow the phonic guidelines within the Highland Literacy Programme. Spelling is taught through a range of games and activities and this year we are still implementing Wraparound Spelling as a whole school phonological approach to spelling. The Highland Literacy approach supports the use of group and collaborative learning, and this further provides opportunities for the development of listening and talking skills. Children are encouraged to listen and respond to adults and other children. When possible, we encourage

opportunities for the older children to support the younger children in their learning. They have opportunities to take part in group and class discussions as well as giving talks to the class.

For writing, we have developed our own bespoke programme by combining the most effective strategies from Talk for Writing and the Stephen Graham Programmes. This approach provides a more structured and comprehensive method for teaching writing skills, ensuring that pupils are equipped with the tools they need to succeed in their writing journey.

Children are encouraged to write for a variety of purposes. Some written work is related to 'topic' or Social Studies. Children are encouraged to develop skills needed for the future: taking notes, looking up in reference books, recording data etc. A high standard of handwriting and spelling is encouraged.

Social Studies

Topics will be chosen through discussion with pupils in different classes, while at the same time there will be a focus on inter disciplinary learning about our own country of Scotland and the events that have shaped it. As they develop, pupils' experiences will be broadened using Scottish, British, European and wider contexts for learning. We link pupil learning in with the skills they will need for life, learning and work.

At the start of each topic, the teachers lead a 'brainstorming' session with the children, during which they ask them what they would like to learn about within that topic, which often proves very interesting! They revisit this at the end of the topic to evaluate what they have learned.

Religious & Moral Education

When possible, a minister visits our school to take part in assemblies. During this, they often read the children stories which have a moral message within them. We do recognise the right of every parent to withdraw their child from RE activities, so please do get in touch with the Head Teacher if you wish to do this.

A Curriculum for Excellence requires us to give the children an awareness of other world religions as well as Christianity and we hope to teach respect, tolerance and understanding of others points of view and beliefs.

Personal and Social Education is an on-going process, preparing our children to have socially acceptable behaviour thus preparing them for life. We use some 'Circle Time' materials and other activities, to help promote a sense of right and wrong and to help the children to learn about the importance of how they treat each other.

Expressive Arts (Music, Art, Dance and Drama)

Whenever possible, Expressive Arts learning activities will be linked to our topics. We are very fortunate that our P4-7 children benefit from music sessions with Feis Rois and P1-3 from Kodaly. These focus on traditional Scottish music and song.

There are opportunities in the classroom for role-play and imaginative play. Our children are also encouraged to dramatize their core reading books or to re-tell the story through drama. Children also take part in drama and dance workshops when these are available.

Health and Wellbeing

As stated in 'Curriculum for Excellence' - "the mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing of everyone within a learning community should be positively developed by fostering a safe, caring, supportive, purposeful environment that enables the development of relationships based on mutual respect".

PE is taught by each of our class teachers and our CCR teacher. Weather dependant, some sessions take place outside, making use of our extensive playing field and huge selection of equipment. All children must have a PE kit consisting of shorts, T-shirt and suitable footwear. Swimming is also part of our PE programme with all pupils from P1-7 have lessons. Our Active Schools Co-Ordinator also works closely with the school to organise a variety of experiences for the children in Bower which improves their strength, agility and abilities across different sports. Every year towards the end of last term we will take part in the Rural Schools Sports Events/Highland Games, competing in our school teams alongside 7 other rural Schools.

We refer to the Highland Council programme - Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood education (RSHP), is intended to support children and young people build positive relationships as they grow older and should present facts in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner within the framework of curricular values and an awareness of the law.

Before more sensitive topics are taught in school, parents will be informed via newsletters or our Seesaw platform and information about the learning can be provided by request.

Technologies

As technology becomes a natural part of children's lives, your child will be encouraged to develop their natural curiosity and problem-solving skills across a wide range of activities to equip them with the skills needed for life, learning and work. They will be encouraged to use the interactive smart boards, access the internet, take pictures, video and record their work and manipulate programmable toys at all stages in school. They will be encouraged to use a wide range of software programmes to enhance learning. Our school acquired Chromebooks which allows 1 Chromebook per child in P1-7. As part of inter disciplinary learning technology

aspects relating to food, design, craft, textiles, enterprise and graphics will be developed through a range of topic approaches.

We make regular use of our technologies in school, with all pupils utilising Chromebooks to share their learning on Seesaw.

Sciences

Through learning in the Sciences your child will have opportunities to develop their interest in, and understanding of the living, material and physical world. They will engage in a wide range of collaborative and investigative tasks, which allow them to develop important skills which lead to becoming creative, inventive and enterprising adults in a world where the skills and knowledge of the sciences are needed across all sectors.

At Bower, Science can also be built into the class topics, and these are covered on a cyclical basis to take account of our composite classes.

Bower also supports Caithness Science Festival where our learners make a number of visits to different scientific events during March. In order to motivate children to use their own imagination and resources to interpret a situation, STEM-focused activities will be delivered by teachers and other parties.

Modern Languages

Learning other languages helps children to make connections with different people and their ways of life and to play a fuller part as global citizens. Starting in August 2015, Highland Council began implementation of the Scottish Governments 1+2 languages initiative. All children will learn one language from P1 and a second from P 5. We are developing French and class teachers will cover a range of languages across topics including British Sign Language (BSL).

We are fortunate to have a French native Head Teacher, who delivers French to each class for 30 minutes every week to enhance language skills, build confidence in speaking, and develop cultural awareness. All staff are also encouraged to use French when greeting children and during everyday classroom interactions.

As a 'Rights Respecting School', all our lessons are linked to a right and the UN Sustainable Development Goals because we want our pupils to understand their own rights and the rights of others, develop empathy, and learn to take responsible action in their communities and the wider world.

We also focus on developing meta-skills, such as critical thinking, creativity, resilience, collaboration, and communication, to equip our pupils with the abilities they need to thrive both academically and personally.

At Bower Primary School, pupils are given choices in what they learn and how they are involved in planning their learning by participating in class discussions, contributing ideas for topics, and selecting activities that interest them. This approach empowers pupils, encourages ownership of their learning, and helps develop motivation, creativity, and independent thinking skills.

Assessment

Our class teachers are continually assessing our children's progress. Teachers assess learners' progress through a variety of means to ensure they are achieving as best as they can. This may take the form of observation of a child at work, looking at completed work, end of unit check-ups, High Quality Assessment (HQA) and a chat with the child as well as standardised testing. Pupil progress is formally discussed with the head teacher each term and the results of these discussions are recorded as part of the school's tracking system. We use our Seesaw app as our profiling and reporting system, which provides parents with ongoing information about their child's progress across all curricular areas, throughout the year. Parents can access these at any time from home. The app allows us to collate pupil progress from P1-P7. If they notice that a child is having difficulties, the Class Teacher will invite the parents into school for a discussion with regards to this. A Form 1 may be completed and sent home to the parents for their information. This would detail how the school is supporting their child.

Additional Support Needs

All children need support to help them learn. Some children require more help than others. We follow the 'Highland Practice Model Staged Approach' to assessing, identifying and supporting additional support needs. In this model every child has a 'named person' who is responsible for making sure that the child or young person has the right help to support his/her development and well-being. In Bower Primary School, the named person is the Head Teacher, unless otherwise stated. There are times when a Child's Plan may be put in place to help organise, monitor and regularly review a child's progress. Parents would be informed of and heavily involved in the writing and reviewing of this. They would also attend the meetings. If you wish to find out more about The Highland Practice Model or the Child's Plan you can access more information at:

http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/230/highland_practice_model_http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/230/highland_practice_model_-delivering_additional_support_for_learners_delivering_additional_support_for_learners_http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/11/co-ordinated_support_plan

Anyone wishing some advice on learning support can also contact:

- (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

Staff will also support the emotional development and wellbeing of pupils through formal and informal curricular activities. Schools have access to the Primary Mental Health Worker Service and consultation and advice can be sought if there are concerns that might require more targeted support.

We are lucky to have a Pupil Support Assistant for 2 days a week. She works throughout the school, supporting groups and individuals.

Primary

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

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

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

Secondary

For young people with severe and complex needs, there are Enhanced Provisions for secondary aged pupils in both Thurso and Wick High Schools. Placements may be offered on a full or part-time basis.

Airport House (the 'Intensive Support and Vocational Training Unit' for pupils at secondary school) offers part-time support for up to 15 secondary pupils from the Thurso and Wick High Schools who have social, emotional or behavioural needs and find it difficult to attend their local school full-time. Targeted support is provided on an individual basis, catering for the specific requirements of each individual, with the aim to progress towards full-time attendance.

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

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

School Activities and Pupil Committees

In Bower, we have various child led committees - a Pupil Council, a Polycrub, Right Respectful School and Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSOs). Children are invited to volunteer for one of the committees and these meet periodically. They often make up competitions and arrange different events for their school mates and they share these ideas and initiatives with them during our assemblies. These committees promote responsibility and leadership skills, and contribute to decision-making on projects and initiatives that benefit the whole school community.

At Bower Primary School, we place great value on outdoor activities as they offer opportunities for active learning, foster physical and mental wellbeing, and encourage a deeper appreciation of the natural environment.

Classes frequently venture outdoors as part of their social studies topics or other learning experiences. These outdoor sessions allow pupils to engage hands-on with their learning, develop teamwork and problem-solving skills, and make meaningful connections between the classroom and the world around them.

To facilitate these types of activities, parents are asked to sign a general permission form upon enrolment for local excursions. All off-site trips are carefully planned and adhere to Highland Council's policy and guidelines for Off-Site Excursions to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all participants.

Sporting Activities, Events and Clubs

An annual sports day is held during the summer term to which our parents, friends and pre-school children are invited. Highland Games and Rural Schools Sports events are also arranged through our Active Schools Coordinator, Steven Hughes. Steven is a brilliant addition to our school, he recently worked with our P6 and P7's to achieve their Playground

Leaders awards. He is also available to provide support and guidance for parents running clubs and works closely with pupils to inspire them to lead lunchtime clubs themselves.

Swimming

Swimming lessons have been scheduled for Term 4, with sessions taking place at Thurso Leisure Centre . Parents are welcome to make a voluntary contribution to support transport if they wish.

Concerts

At the end of the Christmas term, the children perform a musical or play at the Bower Community Centre, showcasing their talents and festive spirit. Similarly, at the end of the Summer Term, they delight in putting on a short concert for parents and friends, where they perform poems, songs, and stories they have rehearsed for the Caithness Music Festival.

If you have any skills or hobbies that could inspire or engage our children, we would love to hear from you. Please contact the Head Teacher to discuss potential ideas for activities. Whether it's chess, gardening, football, sewing, drama, arts and crafts, music, spinning, or any other interest, we welcome the opportunity to enrich our children's learning experiences.

Caithness Music Festival

Our children are welcome to take part in the Caithness Music Festival; this is held in Wick Assembly rooms. The festival includes the option to perform a dramatised song, choral verse, music making etc. In the past we have had assistance with the Feis Ros musicians who encourage the children to achieve a better knowledge of performing in front of an audience as well as learning a new skill.

Individuals can also take part in; Performing Poem's, Caithness Dialect or playing an instrument. For individual entries, this is done through parents taking their own children along to the Assembly Rooms.

Parental Engagement and Homework

The headteacher will keep you informed about upcoming events through a monthly newsletter. Additionally, each Class Teacher provides a termly overview that outlines what the children will be learning across literacy, maths and numeracy, topics, health and wellbeing, as well as any other key events for the term.

At Bower Primary School, we use an app called Seesaw, which connects parents to their child's learning in real time. This platform allows you to engage with your child's day-to-day activities, and we share learning progress across all eight curricular areas throughout the year. We also use Seesaw to update you on your child's next steps in learning. In some cases, we may also ask for your ideas or resources to support specific learning activities.

In the early stages, reading practice is often the main homework assignment. Children greatly benefit from the interest you show in their reading progress. The time spent discussing books and stories together is invaluable in developing their reading skills, vocabulary, and comprehension. Your involvement plays a vital role in supporting their growth as readers.

Communication with Parents

Consultation between staff and parents take place throughout the year through parents evenings and open mornings/ afternoons. Parents are kept up to date with learning via Seesaw throughout the year and a written report of each child is issued to each parent in the summer term. Parents, are of course, welcome to discuss any concerns regarding their child's progress or welfare at any time, by contacting the Head Teacher, so that an appointment can be arranged.

Parent Forum

Our school benefits greatly by having a very supportive, enthusiastic and hard-working Parent Forum. Our well attended meetings are held regularly throughout the year and I do hope that you will be able to come along to these. The Parent Forum is very active in fundraising which has assisted us in purchasing resources which we could not otherwise afford. Our Parent Forum are committed to doing the very best for our School and were described as a strength of our School in our 'Education Scotland' report in June 2013.

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 link works.

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/>

School Improvement Report and Plan (SIRP)

Each year in June, the Head Teacher collates views and evidence from all stakeholders to collate and evaluation of the school against HIGIOS 4 indicators (Government publication, *How Good is our School?*). We gather this information in a variety of ways e.g. questionnaires, focus groups. We use our evaluations to form a plan for the following year with reference to school, council and national priorities. Our staff work collegiately on the plan and are committed to improving the learning experiences for children in Bower.

Last year, we introduced and implemented the *Playful Pedagogy* approach, placing play experiences at the heart of learning. This method allows pupils the flexibility to explore and find their own solutions to both new and familiar challenges. Through play, children engage in personally meaningful activities, develop their understanding of themselves and others, and build essential skills such as autonomy, creativity, and intrinsic motivation.

To enhance writing skills across the school, we created a bespoke writing programme by combining key elements from two highly regarded approaches: *Talk for Writing* and the *Stephen Graham Programmes*. This tailored approach provides a structured and effective framework for teaching writing, ensuring pupils develop confidence, creativity, and proficiency in their written expression.

In October 2024, our school proudly achieved the Rights Respecting Schools Bronze Award, recognising our commitment to fostering a culture of respect, inclusivity, and children's rights. We are now actively working towards Silver Accreditation, further embedding these values into every aspect of school life. Our goal is to achieve Silver Accreditation by January 2026. In session 2025–2026, we continued to strengthen our focus on writing and outdoor learning, while also enhancing our planners to ensure thoughtful preparation, clear alignment with curriculum outcomes, and evidence of ongoing assessment and reflection.

OVERALL PERFORMANCE AT Cfe LEVELS OVER THE LAST 2 YEARS

	2023–24	2024–25
Numeracy	86%	88%
Reading	72%	89%
Writing	64%	89%
Talking & Listening	91%	100%

Our school's standard and quality report is available on our website:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/bowerprimaryschool/>

The school remains dedicated to closing the attainment gap by continuing to prioritise equity, foster inclusivity, and address the barriers faced by disadvantaged pupils. We are ...

- Allocating resources to provide tailored support in literacy and numeracy, including one-to-one and small-group sessions for students identified as disadvantaged.
- Providing digital devices to ensure equitable access to online learning and educational software.
- Establishing wellbeing programs to address emotional and social barriers to learning.
- Organising clubs, trips, and cultural experiences to ensure all children can participate regardless of financial background.
- Training staff to recognise and address the specific challenges faced by children from low-income households.
- Adopting inclusive teaching strategies to meet diverse learning needs, with a focus on equity in classroom practices.

- Involving children in the community and local initiatives to build connections and confidence.
- Using detailed data analysis to identify attainment gaps and monitor the impact of interventions.
- Regularly reviewing strategies and gathering input from staff, students, and families to ensure continuous improvement.

SIP

SQR

Education Scotland Report

Our School was visited by 'Education Scotland' in June 2013 and the full report can be found on the 'Education Scotland' website. The following were identified as strengths

- The caring, inclusive and ambitious ethos.
- The children's behaviour, ambition and commitment to their learning.
- The contribution made by parents and the whole community to '*Small School, Big Education*' by delivering a broad range of stimulating learning experiences.
- The impact of the head teacher and all staff in improving the school.

For more detailed information about inspection reports, please visit the following link: <https://education.gov.scot/inspection-and-review/find-an-inspection-report/find-an-inspection-report/>

Policies

Bower Primary School has number of policies. These are subject to constant review so that our practice and approaches reflect our school and nursery community in line with national developments.

Please access at:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/bowerprimaryschool/policies-and-documents/>

You can also access authority policies at https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/893/schools_-_general_information/29/school_policies_procedures_and_guidelines

Check if policies have been updated

Photographs

In line with Highland Council's guidelines –

- A child's photo will only be included in newsletters, in the local press, etc, if their parent has signed the generic consent form thus giving written permission for this. (completed as part of enrolment)
- Parents are only permitted to post photographs of their own child(ren) on social media.
- Commercial Agencies, the Press and any other media, retain copyright of all photographs that they take, e.g. – school or class group photos taken by Tempest Photographers.

Equalities and anti-bullying

All staff ensure that everyone is treated fairly and equally. Class topics and our new Health and Wellbeing resource '*Jigsaw*' will further integrate these key messages. Any incidents reported would be dealt with sensitively and quickly. The staff have contributed to writing 'Equalities' and 'E-Safety' policies and in doing so, have been made aware of possible issues and solutions.

Highland Council Child Protection Policy

From time to time incidents may 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. Information may be passed on without immediate reference to a pupil's parents or guardians and 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

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Appendix 1

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

Data policy

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

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

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

Information on why we collect data about pupils and who we share this data with can be found in

Highland Council's Privacy Notice which is available here:

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

Why do we need your data?

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

Accurate and up-to-date data allows us to:

- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of all pupils
- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of specific groups of pupils
- better understand some of the factors which influence pupil attainment and achievement o share good practice o 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 out with 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

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.

Military Families

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

We understand some of the challenges that mobility of service life can bring, and we look forward to working with you to ensure a smooth transition for your Child/Young Person coming into or moving on from our School or Early Years setting. Please get in touch with us as soon as you can so we can work with you to ensure the transition is as smooth as possible. Highland Council have proudly committed to the Armed Forces Covenant and as such support our Armed Forces community. There is a dedicated Highland Council partnership, **The Military Liaison Group (Education)**, often referred to as “The MLG” which has been formed to promote and ensure the equity and equality for your Children and Young People within an educational context.

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

A Welcome to Your Children and Young People

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

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

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