

# Gairloch Primary School Bun-sgoil Gheàrrloch



## Handbook Leabhran 2026-27

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# Gairloch Primary School

Gairloch Primary School and Nurseries cater for primary and nursery aged children. At the end of 2025, there were 49 primary school pupils and 13 children in the English and Gaelic nurseries, with a further 7 enrolled before the end of the 2025/26 session. The school catchment area is extensive, stretching as far as Red Point and Rua Reidh.

The school is set in a central location in the picturesque village of Gairloch, next to the High School and with a pleasant outlook over the loch. The school has a school hall, a library, a garden with vegetable beds, playgrounds with soft surfaces and tarmac, as well as access to the Gairloch High School playing field. There is no kitchen, but children eat lunch in the High School canteen.

We are the only school in our area to offer Gaelic Medium Education, total immersion from the age of 3. Children from anywhere within the Gairloch High School catchment area may attend Gaelic Medium Education at Gairloch. Transport is provided for these children from Primary 1.

We hope your child enjoys their time at Gairloch Primary.

## Bun-sgoil Gheàrrloch

Tha Bun-sgoil agus sgoiltean-àraich Gheàrrloch solair do chlann a tha aois sgoile agus sgoil-àraich. An-dràsta, tha 49 sgoilear againn agus 13 pàiste anns na sgoiltean-àraich Beurla agus Gàidhlig, le 7 pàiste eile clàraichte ro dheireadh seisean 2025/26. Tha sgìre-ghlacaidh na sgoile farsaing, cho fada a-mach ri Rubha Dearg agus Rubha Rèidh.

Tha an sgoil suidhichte ann an meadhann baile Gheàrrloch, ri taobh an Àrd-sgoil le sealladh meallach den loch. A' measg na goireasan tha talla, leabharlann, raointean—cluiche, gàrradh glasraich agus cothrom achadh an Àrd-sgoil a' chleachdadh. Chan eil cidsin againn, ach tha a' chlann ag ithe lòn ann an ionad-bìdh an Àrd-sgoil.

Is sinne an aon sgoil anns an sgìre a tha a' tamhainn Foghlam tro Mheadhan na Gàidhlig, le làn-bhogadh bho aois 3. 'S urrainn do phàiste bho àite sam bith san sgìre a' dhol tro Foghlam tro Mheadhan na Gàidhlig ann an Geàrrloch. Tha goireas-siubhail ann airson na sgoilearan seo nuair a thòisicheas iad 's an sgoil.

Tha sinn an dòchas gun còrd Bun-sgoil Gheàrrloch ri do phàiste.

## **GAIRLOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL VISION, VALUES AND AIMS**

**OUR VISION – Brilliance in Every Child**

**OUR VALUES – We are:**

- **Honest**
- **Caring**
- **Respectful**
- **Determined**
- **Ambitious**
- **Responsible**

**OUR AIMS –**

- **Create a positive and energetic ethos**  
Demonstrate a shared and recognised set of values against which we continually measure our actions.
- **Take responsibility for our own learning**  
Understand why we learn and how to improve.
- **Set high expectations and work towards them in stimulating surroundings**  
Collaborate to devise imaginative and interesting challenges to meet the needs of all learners.
- **Forge and strengthen partnerships beyond our school boundaries**  
With parents, other schools, the local community, as well as the wider world.
- **Celebrate effort and achievement in English and Gaelic**  
Share and take pride in every success, both in and out of school.
- **Reach our potential in an inclusive, respectful and nurturing environment**  
Work and play in safety in an atmosphere of tolerance to develop confident, imaginative and adventurous children.
- **Celebrate the languages and cultures of Scotland**  
Promote and embed into teaching and learning across the school.

## BUN-SGOIL GHEÀRRLOCH LÈIRSINN, LUCHAN AGUS AMASAN

**AR LÈIRSINN – Sàr-mhathas anns a h-uile pàiste**

**AR LUACHAN – tha sinn:**

- Onarach
- Coibhneil
- Urramach
- Coileireach
- Àrd-amasach
- Dleastanach

**AR AMASAN –**

- **Dealbhaich ethos posataibh agus sgairteil**  
Seall luachan air a bheil sinn uile eòlach, agus is urrainn dhuinn leantainn anns a h-uile gnìomh.
- **Gabh dleastanas na ar ionnsachadh fhèin**  
Tuig carson a tha sinn ag ionnsachadh agus ciamar a nì sinn adhartas.
- **A bhith an dùil math a’ dhèanamh ann an suidheachadh bhrosnachail**  
Cò-obrach airson dùbhlain mìneachail agus ùidheil a’ chruthachadh airson coileanas a thoirt do gach sgoilear.
- **Tòisich agus neartaich com-pàirteachas a-mach as an sgoil**  
Le pàrantan, sgoiltean eile, an coimhearsnachd, agus nas fhaide a-mach.
- **Comharraich oidhirp agus coileanas ann am Beurla agus Gàidhlig.**  
Co-roinn agus bi moiteal anns gach buaidh, anns agus a-mach as an sgoil.
- **Ruig ar comas ann an àrainneachd a tha in-ghabhalach, urramach agus altramach**  
Obraich agus cluich ann an sàbhailteas le fulangas airson clann a bhith earbsach, mac-meanbhnach agus dàna.
- **Glèidh na cànan agus cultaran aig Alba**  
Brosnaich agus cleachd ann an teagaisg agus ionnsachadh tron sgoil air fad.

**GAIRLOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**BUN-SGOIL GHEÀRRLOCH**

Achtercairn  
Gairloch  
Ross-shire  
IV21 2BP

Tel: 01445 712165

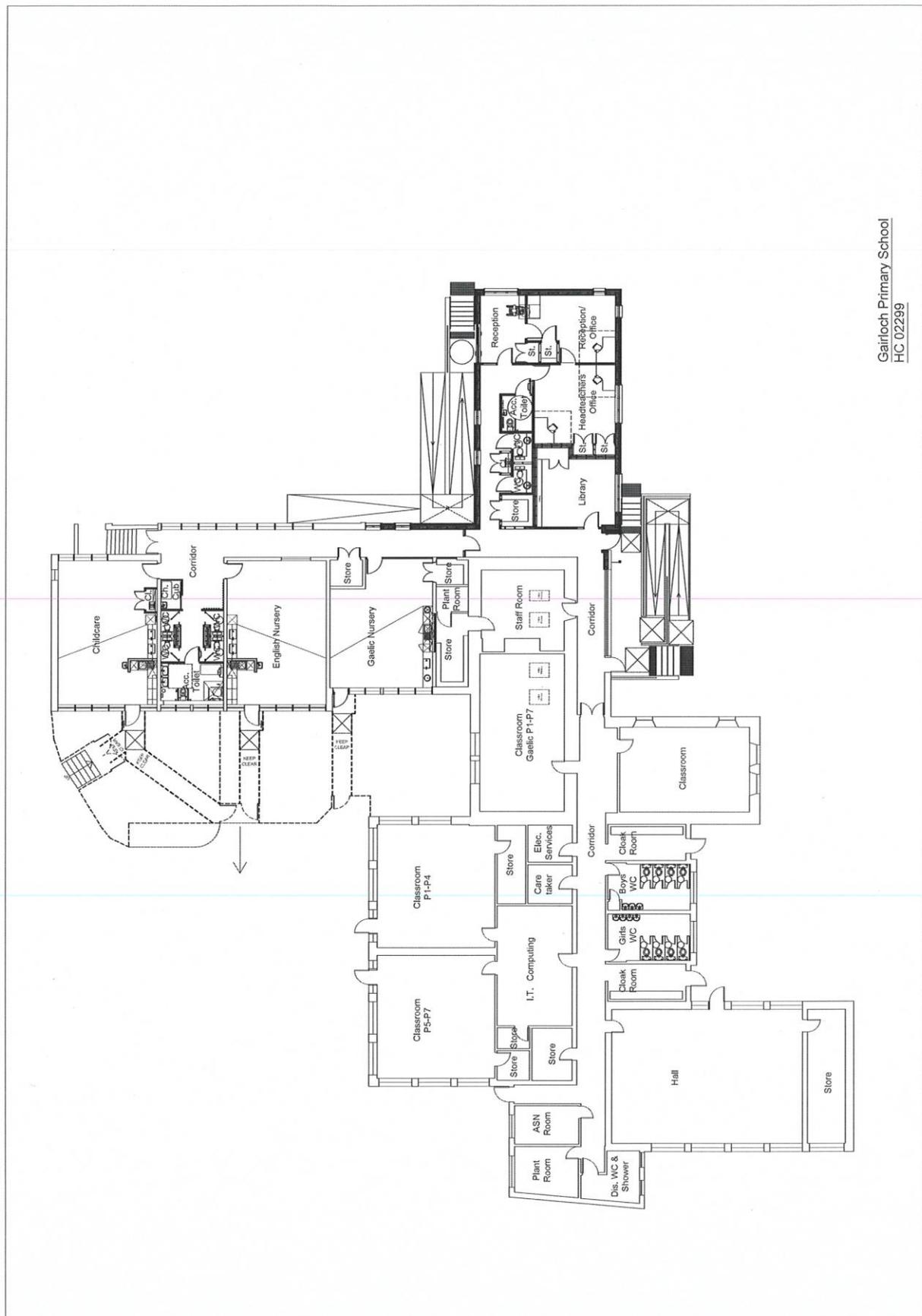
Email: [gairloch.primary@highland.gov.uk](mailto:gairloch.primary@highland.gov.uk)

Website: <https://sites.google.com/highlandschools.net/gairlochprimary/home>

Facebook: [Gairloch Primary School | Facebook](#)

Head teacher / Ceannard	Mr S McDonagh
Class Teacher P1-4 / Tidsear P1-4	Miss M MacRae
Class Teacher P5-7 /Tidsear P5-7	Mr S McDonagh
Gaelic Medium Teacher /Tidsear P1-7	Mrs M MacKenzie
CCR Cover	Miss J Harrison
ASN teacher (part time) / Tidsear ASN pàirt-ùine)	Mrs A Wyatt
Office / Oifis	Ms A Grove
Pupil Support / Taic Sgoilear	Miss A Cleary Miss A Cockburn Mrs A Maclean Miss P Drummond Miss S Macdonald
Nursery / Sgoil-àraich	Ms W Powell Mrs M McNeil Mrs M Macleod Mrs P Paterson Miss A Cockburn
Cleaning / Glanadh	Mrs S Lee
Facilities / Goireasan	Mr K Lee Mr A Flowers

# GAIRLOCH PRIMARY FLOOR PLAN



Gairloch Primary School  
HC 02299

## **SCHOOL DAY / LATHA NA SGOILE**

### **SCHOOL:**

Mon–Thur: 8:50 am – 3:30 pm

Friday: 8:50 am – 1:15 pm

On Fridays, parents may (by arrangement) pick up before lunch at 12.15 pm.

Morning break 10.30 am – 10.50 am

Lunch break (P1 – 3) 12.10 pm - 1.15 pm

(P4 – 7) 12.25 pm – 1.15 pm

Afternoon break (P1 – 3 only) 2.15 pm - 2.35 pm

### **NURSERIES – GAELIC & ENGLISH:**

Mon-Thu: 9:00 am - 3.30 pm

Friday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

## **TERM DATES / SAOR-LAITHEAN 2026-27**

[School term dates | Highland School Calendar 2026 to 2027](#)

Autumn term starts – 19 August 2026

Autumn term ends – 9 October 2026

Winter term starts - 26 October 2026

Winter term ends - 22 December 2026

Spring term starts - 6 January 2027

Mid term break – 15-17 February 2027

Spring term ends – 25 March 2027

Summer term begins – 12 April 2027

Summer term ends – 1 July 2027

### **Casual Holidays and Staff In-Service Training**

17-18 August 2026

14 September 2026

17 February 2027

6 May 2027

## **ENROLMENT**

Annual enrolment into P1 and Nursery takes place in January/February and is advertised locally.

We welcome pupils at any time of year and parents who would like to enrol during the session should contact the Head Teacher.

You are encouraged to enrol your child online at: [www.highland.gov.uk/schoolenrolment](http://www.highland.gov.uk/schoolenrolment)

Nursery pupil start dates will vary in line with the age of your child.

Arrangements are made for P1 induction in June.

## **TRANSITION FROM NURSERY**

Children usually spend up to two years in nursery and will then transfer into Primary 1 in school. Nursery works closely with school throughout the year, taking part in activities alongside the older children such as playtime breaks, assembly, performances, World Book Day activities, Christmas play etc. In this way, nursery children feel part of Gairloch Primary School from the very start. In the Summer term, before children transfer into school, P1 class teachers will spend time in the nurseries and the children will also visit the primary classrooms. The younger primary children will work alongside the nursery children on a shared learning topic. The children's 'Learning Journeys' are shared and discussed with the P1 class teachers so that learning targets and other information about the children are available before they enter Primary 1.

## **PLACING REQUESTS – PARENTAL CHOICE**

Parents may specify the school they would like their child to attend even if they live outside the school's catchment area. It should be noted that children who live within the school catchment area take priority. Enrolment should be into the catchment school and a Placing Request may then be submitted to the Area Quality Improvement Manager. Placing request forms may be completed here:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/887/enrol\\_your\\_child\\_for\\_school/2](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/887/enrol_your_child_for_school/2)

Pupils living outside the school catchment whose parents wish them to attend Gairloch primary may contact the Head Teacher to arrange a visit.

Transportation to and from school for pupils enrolled following a placing request is the responsibility of parents/carers.

Parents of children with additional support needs, (including those who have Coordinated Support Plans) may make placing requests to any school in Scotland. All appeals about placing requests to special schools will be referred to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal.

## **GAELIC MEDIUM EDUCATION / FOGHLAM TRO MHEADHAN NA GÀIDHLIG**

Our Gaelic medium classes offer the same curriculum as the rest of the school, taught through the medium of Gaelic. Pupils are immersed in Gaelic during Primary 1, 2 and 3 to develop fluency. Reading and writing in English begins in Primary 4. By Primary 7, pupils in Gaelic medium classes are equally fluent in English and Gaelic, including reading and writing. Almost all children in our Gaelic medium classes come from non-Gaelic speaking homes, so do not worry if you don't speak any Gaelic – your child may still access Gaelic Medium

Education. Some of the benefits of bilingualism and much more information can be found on the Highland Council website:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/17/gaelic\\_medium\\_education](https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/17/gaelic_medium_education)

As it is advantageous for children to hear some Gaelic in the home, it is helpful if parents learn some basic Gaelic phrases. Please ask to visit our Gaelic classes where you can see the classes in action and speak to our staff. We are also happy to introduce you to other parents who can tell you about their experience of Gaelic Medium education.

## **PUPIL VOICE**

The school and nurseries are divided into three clans – Foxes, Stags and Pine Martens. Each is headed by clan chiefs, elected by the whole school. Pupils regularly come together in their clan groups to take part in a variety of activities. Clan points promote achievement and reward effort in all aspects of school life. At the end of the school year, points are totalled and medals awarded to members of the winning clan.

Pupils are encouraged to express their views and ideas for the school both formally via the Pupil Council and on a day to day basis. Assemblies are regularly led by pupils in the upper school. Clan chiefs and the other senior pupils also organise whole school activities including parties, charitable fund raising events and school open days. A classroom economy is operated in the P5-7 class, run entirely by the pupils.

## **ATTENDANCE / ABSENCE**

Good attendance is vital if pupils are to achieve their full potential. Every parent of school age children has a duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly. Attendance is recorded twice a day. Levels of attendance and lateness are monitored and parents are informed where levels of absence/lateness are causing concern.

If a pupil is absent from school, a parent or guardian should phone the school on the first day of absence, on 01445 712165. If we have not received notification by phone or email before 9.15am, the school will phone to check the child is safe at home. Parents should continue to notify the school on subsequent days of absence.

If a pupil leaves during the school day for an appointment etc, the school should be informed in advance. Pupils must sign out of school and in again if returning the same day. Wherever possible, medical and dental appointments should be made outwith school hours. If pupils fall ill during the day, parents are contacted to collect their child. It is therefore essential that we have up to date emergency contact information for all pupils.

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

Every effort should be made to avoid family holidays during term time as this both disrupts the child's education and reduces learning time. Under guidance issued at a national level, most family holidays will be coded as unauthorised absence. Should parents decide to make holiday arrangements during school term, this should be confirmed in writing to the Head Teacher.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Effective learning and teaching are dependent on a positive relationship established at school and classroom level through interactions between staff and pupil and between pupils themselves. Positive behaviour is achieved in two ways:

- Prevention – preventative strategies which encourage each pupil to develop a sense of personal self-discipline
- Management – when negative behaviour occurs, we need to be able to respond positively and effectively.

It is the responsibility of pupils, parents and staff to ensure that standards of behaviour are met within the school.

## **SCHOOL UNIFORM**

All pupils are actively encouraged to wear school uniform to assist in identifying positively with their school. Uniforms embroidered with the school badge (designed by pupils) are available online at [www.myclothing.com](http://www.myclothing.com) The school receives a 5% cash donation on every purchase. School ties are available from the school office.

We keep a cupboard of outgrown uniforms in every size, available free of charge.

The Parent Council supports the following policy:

Pupils should wear school uniform on a daily basis. The uniform is designed to be smart, yet practical and economical. It comprises a combination of the following:

- Plain white or purple polo shirt – no logo required . Children may wear a white shirt and tie if they wish.
- Navy blue school sweatshirt, fleece or cardigan with the school logo.
- Black or dark grey trousers, skirt, joggers or pinafore.
- Gingham style school summer dress in blue, navy or purple.
- White, dark grey or black socks or tights.
- Sturdy school shoes
- Indoor shoes, such as inexpensive black plimsols.
- PE kit consists of a change of T-shirt (plain), shorts or leggings/joggers, trainers.

Clothing grants are available towards the cost of school uniform.

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

## **LUNCH**

### **School Lunch**

Gairloch Primary School children take lunch in the High School canteen. A wide choice of meals is offered over a three week menu. Currently, the cost of a meal is £2.40 for P6-7 pupils. P1-5 pupils receive lunches free of charge. The Highland Council operates a 'Cashless Catering' system. For further details, see:

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/9/school\\_meals/2](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/9/school_meals/2)

Free school meals are available depending on family circumstances:

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

If your child requires a special diet to allow for allergies, intolerances, diabetes etc, you should complete a Special Diet Request Form, available from the school office. The request will be considered in consultation with the school meals service and where appropriate advice will be sought from a dietician. If you are requesting a diet for health reasons but this has not been prescribed by a dietician or doctor, we recommend that you inform your GP so that they may provide any necessary supervision or advice.

### **Packed Lunches**

Pupils taking packed lunch are supervised in the High School dining hall. The Education Authority has issued advice regarding packed lunches:

- All food to be carried in a semi-rigid container with a secure lid and separated from school books, Chromebooks etc.
- Glass bottles or containers and vacuum flasks containing hot food or liquid or fizzy drinks are not permissible in school.

### **TRANSPORT**

Children under 8 years are eligible for free transport to and from school if they live 2 or more miles from their designated school. This distance is increased to 3 or more miles when the child is aged 8 or over. Transport is also available for pupils with medical or additional support needs, or those who would have to walk a route considered to be unsafe. An application form for transport is available from:

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/12/school\\_transport](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/12/school_transport)

Pupils must carry a bus pass on school transport. A pupil whose home address changes must reapply for school transport.

Concessionary places for those not entitled to free transport may be available on application.

Please note that transport is not a school responsibility and any queries should be addressed to the Local Transport Development, Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, IV3 5NX, or emailed to: [school.transport@highland.gov.uk](mailto:school.transport@highland.gov.uk)

### **EMERGENCY CLOSURE / ADVERSE WEATHER**

In exceptional circumstances, for example severe weather, a power or water failure, it may be necessary to send children home early. When parents cannot be reached at home, the school will telephone the emergency contact supplied by parents to arrange pick up of their children. In the event that no contact is made with either the parents or emergency contact, the child will be kept in school until he/she is collected. This is not a desirable outcome and parents are strongly advised to ensure that the names of emergency contacts are kept up to date.

If there is risk of closure due to adverse weather, parents may visit the school closure page on the Highland Council website:

[www.highland.gov.uk/schoolclosures](http://www.highland.gov.uk/schoolclosures)

Information will also be posted on the school's Facebook page, which can be found at:

[Gairloch Primary School | Facebook](#)

### **SCHOOL POLICIES**

The full documents for the following policies may be found on the Highland Council website:

Teaching and Assessment Policy, Respecting Confidentiality, Child Protection, Promoting Positive Behaviour, Race Equality, Anti Bully Policy (See Appendix), Transition Policy, Intimate Personal Care, Quality Assurance, Monitoring and Evaluation Policy, Administration of Medicines, Homework Policy.

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/893/schools\\_-\\_general\\_information/29/school\\_policies\\_procedures\\_and\\_guidelines](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/893/schools_-_general_information/29/school_policies_procedures_and_guidelines)

## **HIGH SCHOOL**

Pupils usually transfer to Gairloch High School at the end of Primary 7. The High School and Primary Schools collaborate on a transition programme during which P7 pupils meet their peers throughout the Area Schools Group and become familiar with the High School. There is a staged transition process for children with additional support needs to provide whatever extra support is needed for a successful transition.

Gairloch Primary is situated next door to the High School and we share some facilities. The High School can be contacted on 01445 712275. [Gairloch High School](#)

## **PARENTS/CARERS AS PARTNERS**

Much of the strength of our school lies in the positive relationships between staff, pupils and their parents. These relationships must be nurtured by a healthy exchange of information between teachers and pupils, between home and school. We always welcome parental interest in the welfare of our pupils. The school works very hard to keep parents informed regarding their child's progress and any key decisions about their education. We communicate regularly via newsletters, open days, parents' evenings, plus regular posts on our Facebook page.

The support of parents in their children's education is key to success. Taking time with them, discussing work, practising language, helping them manage their homework and encouraging responsibility are important ways of supporting children's learning. The school always seeks to involve parents in key decisions about their child's education and to keep parents informed about progress. To ensure parental input, the school works closely with the Parent Forum and the Parent Council.

We operate an open door policy at Gairloch Primary, where parents are welcome to call at the school and visit the Head Teacher to discuss any problems, complaints etc.

### **Reporting to Parents**

Pupil progress is reported verbally to parents as considered appropriate, or as requested by them. Parents are invited to see or discuss their child's work 3 times a year.

- In autumn term, usually November, parent interviews are held to update you on how your child is settling in and performing in the new session. Another update is given in February/March.
- In June, children invite parents to an Open Afternoon where they share their work, giving an opportunity to self-evaluate and talk about what they feel has improved over the last two terms.

- Before your child is due to move into a new school year or is transferring to High School, a written report is sent home with a feedback form for parents.

Parents wishing to enquire about their child's progress are invited to get in touch with the class teacher and arrange a time to visit or call outside teaching hours.

## Parent Council

Every parent is a member of the Parent Forum which elects a Parent Council each year. Gairloch Primary has an active Parent Council, which represents the views of parents and supports the school in providing valuable educational experiences for the children.

At the end of 2025, office bearers were:

Chair	-	Terri Hendry
Secretary	-	Scarlet Trevett
Treasurer	-	Gemma King

The Gairloch Primary Parent Council meets once or twice a term.

The objectives of the Parent Council are:

- To promote partnership between the school, pupils and all parents
- To develop and engage in activities which support the education and welfare of pupils
- To identify and represent the views of parents on the education provided by the school and other matters affecting the education and welfare of the pupils
- To raise funds, apply for and receive grants and accept gifts for the benefit of the school.
- The Parent Council is accountable to the Parent Forum and minutes are sent to all parents. The Annual General Meeting is usually held in the summer term of each year.

Any parent who wishes to raise an issue for the Parent Council to consider may do so by contacting [gairlochprimarypc@gmail.com](mailto:gairlochprimarypc@gmail.com)

Read more on the website here: [Home](#) or follow on Instagram.

Useful information for parents on how to get involved in your child's education, how to support the school, information on curriculum developments etc may all be found at

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

## Community

Gairloch is a close-knit community with strong links to the Primary School. Members of the community enrich the pupils' experience by offering their time and skills as well as substantial support for our fundraising activities. The success of the school is integral to the life of the community and pupils and members of the community all benefit from shared cultural and intergenerational activities.

## How Parents/Carers Can Support the School

Our school values and welcomes the help of parents and family members.

Can you help on a regular basis during the day?

- With art or drama activities
- With the school library
- Helping with computers
- Running a lunchtime club
- Transport for swimming lessons
- General help in the class, for example with reading

Do you have a skill to share?

- Gardening in the school grounds
- Painting, for example scenery for a school play or help with a frieze or sculpture
- Storytelling either to a whole group or one to one
- Cooking for special occasions or life skills
- Sports to further develop skills and abilities or just for fun

Could you talk about your life or work?

- Languages – teach the children a few words in another language, tell them about another culture
- Older members of the community can talk about their experiences growing up - the children would love to interview you
- Talk about your work, how you use numeracy and literacy and what other skills did you develop to make you successful in your role

Just be there!

- For school trips
- Support special events
- Help to supervise and be an extra pair of hands

Whatever you can do and at whatever level you would like to get involved, we would like to welcome you to our school.

## **Supporting Your Children at Home**

There are many ways to support children's learning at home and this is by no means an exhaustive list. Please meet with your child's teacher if you would like further ideas about how to support your child.

### **Numeracy**

Numeracy is a vital skill and is important in everyday life. Families can support children by providing them with opportunities and experiences which allow them to apply their skills.

**Time** – Encourage your child to use a watch or clock both analogue and digital. Younger children can use rhymes for days of the week, seasons and months of the year. When a little older, children can read timetables and TV schedules. Ask them to work out durations, length of programmes. Encourage your child to use a calendar. Ask them how many days are in a month, or how many weeks until their birthday etc.

**Money** – Let your children become familiar with coins, or add using money. Older children can think about best deals and budgeting.

**Estimating** – encourage familiarity with metric measurements and for older children, the equivalences in imperial measurements. Ask them to estimate how long something is, how much time something will take or how much something holds. For example, what length of paper to wrap a present, or how many cups will this bottle fill?

**Logical thinking** – ask your child to explain their thinking, consider consequences, draw conclusions, sequence actions. Use newspapers, activities, magazines, TV or Internet as stimulus for discussion.

### **Literacy**

Your child is developing skills to be able to read and write accurately, to listen carefully and to talk clearly about ideas. You play a crucial role in this development.

- Read to your children every day. If your child is in the upper school read a book that is slightly more difficult to develop listening skills, increase vocabulary and fire the imagination. Encourage children to read a wide variety of material – books, blogs, papers or magazines, the back of the cereal packet. Discuss with your child what they are reading; ask them questions about their thoughts on a character and why they think that way. What they think might happen next.
- Teach your child nursery rhymes, rhyming poems and stories so that they recognise the patterns in language.
- Make sure they form their letters correctly, that capitals are in the correct place, encourage them to join their letters. Ask them to keep a holiday diary, write a letter or email to a friend or relative, make an invitation, review a computer game.
- Encourage them to discuss topics which come up in the family or from the news. Ask them to offer opinions and justify them.

## **LEARNING AND TEACHING AT GAIRLOCH PRIMARY**

Each learner should feel safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. The teacher has a central role to play and should develop and maintain good working relationships with pupils, as a class and as individuals if successful learning is to take place. They should engage with the key principles below to inform learning and teaching:

### **Engagement**

Learners need motivation. Children should feel positive about being involved and although learning brings its own emotional and intellectual rewards, sometimes learners require an external incentive or recognition such as certificates.

### **Participation**

Learners should be active and take as much responsibility as possible for their own learning. They should lead whenever possible. They should be aware of their learning styles and confident enough to seek help, whatever form it takes.

Learners should talk through their learning regularly with their teachers and peers. We have a regular review of learning through Learning Logs every Friday morning.

### **Thinking**

Learners should be positively critical: questioning, investigating, testing, seeking after the truth about themselves, others and the world in which they live.

An excellent learning experience will include many aspects of the following:

- People welcoming other people, enjoying each other's company and having fun through challenge and hard work.
- Learners reviewing prior work, making choices and agreeing what needs to be done, how it is to be done, where and when and using appropriate resources.

- Learners leading – asking each other meaningful questions which require thought, engaging in dialogue as a class and in groups, modelling processes and demonstrating knowledge and skills to each other and audiences.
- Learners understanding and sharing of standards, self and peer assessing, receiving meaningful feedback about what has been achieved and agreeing next steps to improve.

We sincerely wish your child to enjoy their learning experience in our school.

## THE CURRICULUM

The Curriculum for Excellence (3-18 year olds) has an emphasis on seeing the whole child and recognising achievement both in and out of school. It has been introduced to raise standards in learning and teaching and to help improve our children's life chances.

### A Curriculum For Excellence

It aims to provide:

- Greater choice and opportunity for pupils
- A single coherent curriculum for all young people aged 3-18.
- More freedom for teachers

Curriculum for Excellence challenges us to think differently about the curriculum. It encourages those working in education to plan and act in new ways.

The implementation of Curriculum for Excellence goes beyond the provision of guidance on curriculum content. It has implications for the way teaching is approached, the organisation of the curriculum, attainment levels and the qualifications system and the recognition of wider achievement.

### Curriculum For Excellence aims to:

- Focus classroom practice upon the child and around the four capacities of education:
  - successful learners
  - confident individuals
  - responsible citizens
  - effective contributors
- simplify and prioritise the current curriculum
- encourage more learning through experiences
- create a single framework for the curriculum and assessment 3-18

The intention is to alter the balance between a curriculum that is heavily dependent on content, to one where we have learning and teaching approaches that improve pupils' understanding of what is being taught and to make learning active.

### Principles for Curriculum Design

We focus on the following principles as we try to take the curriculum forward:

**Challenge and Enjoyment** - Children should find their learning challenging, engaging and motivating. The curriculum should encourage high aspirations and ambitions for all. At all

stages, learners of all aptitudes and abilities should experience an appropriate level of challenge, to enable each individual to achieve his or her potential. They should be active in their learning and have opportunities to develop and demonstrate their creativity. There should be support to enable children to sustain their efforts.

**Breadth** - All children should have opportunities for a broad, suitably weighted range of experiences. The curriculum should be organised so that they will learn and develop through a variety of contexts within both the classroom and other aspects of school life.

**Progression** - Children and young people should experience continuous progression in their learning from 3 to 18 within a single curriculum framework. Each stage should build upon earlier knowledge and achievements. Children should be able to progress at a rate which meets their needs and aptitudes and keep options open so that routes are not closed off too early.

**Depth** - There should be opportunities for children to develop their full capacity for different types of thinking and learning. As they progress, they should develop and apply increasing intellectual rigour, drawing different strands of learning together, and exploring and achieving more advanced levels of understanding.

**Personalisation and Choice** - The curriculum should respond to individual needs and support particular aptitudes and talents. It should give each child increasing opportunities for exercising responsible personal choice as they move through their school career. Once they have achieved suitable levels of attainment across a wide range of areas of learning the choice should become as open as possible. There should be safeguards to ensure that choices are soundly based and lead to successful outcomes.

**Coherence** - Taken as a whole, children's learning activities should combine to form a coherent experience. There should be clear links between the different aspects of children's learning, including opportunities for extended activities which draw different strands of learning together.

**Relevance** - Children should understand the purposes of their activities. They should see the value of what they are learning and its relevance to their lives, present and future.

## **Curriculum Breakdown**

The following information breaks down the curriculum and gives a brief outline of our current practice. We review the curricular areas on a regular basis to help us aim towards best practice.

### **Language**

Language covers: Listening and Talking, Reading, Writing and Modern Languages. To provide learning experiences in these areas, teachers use a wide range of methods and contexts. At times skills may be taught separately or integrated through other curricular areas; writing reports is a necessary part of a science project, discussing books, experiences or news and media develops talking and listening skills, taking part in music, art, drama helps to develop listening skills.

## **Writing**

This involves imaginative writing, personal writing, functional writing and poetry. In writing we use a variety of approaches supported by schemes and initiatives such as 'Talk for Writing', 'Write to the Top' and the 'Highland Literacy Approach' which links reading and writing skills. The school is part of cohort 5 of the 'National Improvement in Writing Programme'. Writing is also shared at class level or at assembly.

## **Reading**

We try to provide a full range of purposeful reading tasks in as meaningful a context as possible. In the Nursery classes the children are encouraged to become familiar with books through listening to stories, role play and the provision of story sacks. The school uses books in the Little Wandle phonic scheme supported by the Oxford Reading Tree scheme, before progressing to novels at the upper stages. In Gaelic medium, reading is initially based on the Storytellers scheme. In Primary 1 your child will begin by bringing home a storybook and extended version of the same story for the parent to read to the child. Once children have the mechanics of reading the emphasis is then on higher order reading skills, for example, selecting the main idea, inference, and prediction, skimming and scanning. The children are also helped to use reference material in books, posters, tables and from the internet. Children are given many opportunities to read for pleasure. We aim to foster a love of books. All children visit the Community Library on a regular basis. Responsibility for books borrowed from the Community Library rests with the parents. School and Nursery staff are participating in Education Scotland's 'Learning to Read in Early Years' programme.

## **Talking and Listening**

Talking and listening is encouraged through the curriculum. Younger children are encouraged to talk about their experiences, while older children are asked to present prepared talks to their classmates and to debate and discuss ideas and issues in class. The children are encouraged to put forward their views and opinions on varied topics and issues and are given opportunities to question other speakers.

## **Modern Languages**

In Gairloch Primary a new initiative means that French is introduced at P1 in English classes and from P5 in Gaelic classes. The children will concentrate on simple conversation covering topics such as the weather, birthdays, naming everyday objects etc.

## **Mathematics**

The school has recently reviewed its maths programme.

We use a variety of resources to support the teaching of maths from ICT based materials, Scottish Heinemann Maths, Maths in Action, Active Maths and NZ Maths approaches. Most concepts are developed through practical activity and interactive lessons. Every attempt is made to ensure that pupils are given work appropriate to their needs. To this end, other schemes such as 'Maths Made Easy' or 'Maths Connections' are used.

Interactive mental maths and problem solving is integral to our approach to maths.

## **Environmental Studies**

Environmental Studies includes History, Geography and Modern Studies, Science, ICT and Technology.

Gairloch Primary has developed a cyclic plan, which provides a progression of skills, and a balance of topics which develop knowledge and understanding and concepts. Children are required to gather information about our environment through various activities: by measuring, tape recording, reading weather recording equipment, and by interviewing. They are required to record, interpret and discuss the information they discover. They have opportunities to become aware of local, national and international issues.

## **ICT**

ICT is a cross-curricular resource and the children become familiar with its use through discrete lessons as well as applying this knowledge to access information and to display results. There is a SMART board in each class and all pupils have access to Chromebooks. More information on these devices can be found in the Homework section of this handbook.

## **Health and Wellbeing**

Health and Wellbeing is a core curricular area. Physical, emotional and social health are all covered. The school makes good use of the packs offered to schools on safety and drugs education.

An effective programme of education about Relationships and Sexual Health is best built on parents and school working in partnership and assuming shared responsibilities. We aim to keep parents informed about the nature and purpose of the learning programme their children will follow. Parents will be offered a chance to preview the programme of work if they wish.

In Personal and Social Education, the children will consider the relationships within the school. It is important in creating a happy and caring atmosphere in the school. The children are helped to acquire self-discipline, self-efficacy, self-esteem and consideration of others. We expect to give children increasing responsibility, as they get older to help develop a positive and responsible attitude towards their work, peers, school and the community.

## **Religious and Moral Education**

The multicultural nature of the world is examined in stories and project work and every effort is made to help the children to understand different cultures and the needs of people in different parts of the world, as well as covering Christian education. The children also investigate and understand the responses which religious and non-religious views can offer to questions about the nature and meaning of life.

The concept of equal opportunities is acted upon in Gairloch Primary and gender and race stereotyping is avoided. Children are helped to develop moral values such as honesty, justice, freedom and fairness for others and involvement with charities.

## **Assembly**

Assemblies are held on a weekly basis. They provide a valuable opportunity for the whole school and nurseries to meet and to share in news of events going on in and around the school. Star Pupil awards are presented to pupils from each class as a celebration of

achievement. Pupils are encouraged to share out of school successes at assembly for example swimming badges or certificates or a new tune they have learned to play on their instruments.

On occasion, local faith groups may attend assemblies to share stories from the Bible. Parents have the legal right to withdraw children from religious observances if they wish. Parents must inform the head teacher in writing. Special arrangements will be made for pupils whose parents do not wish them to participate in religious observance.

### **Expressive Arts**

In the Primary School, expressive arts fall into four categories, music, art and craft design, physical education and drama. The school aims to give pupils as wide an opportunity as possible to experience and explore these areas of creativity.

#### **Music**

Children are given opportunities to sing, listen, compose, learn tunes on tuned and un-tuned percussion and give an opinion on music.

Highlife Highland offers additional instrumental tuition on a variety of instruments, now free of charge. Currently, tuition is available on strings, piping and pipe band drumming at Gairloch Primary. Further information at [www.highlifehighland.com/music](http://www.highlifehighland.com/music)

#### **Art and Design**

The main areas for development are drawing, painting, collage and three-dimensional work. Learning experiences in the use of different techniques and the appreciation of the work of others is encouraged.

#### **PE**

Class teachers provide a well-balanced range of activities for all pupils. Children have a block of swimming lessons at our local pool. The school also has a school sports day and takes part in local and county sports events. Every class has two hours of PE each week.

#### **Drama**

The school offers regular opportunity to take part in drama activities. These activities help to develop self-confidence and audience awareness. They help children through role play and exploring emotions and situations. As well as class drama sessions, the school performs an annual show or concert at Christmas.

#### **Visits Outwith School**

To broaden children's experiences and to support learning, the children may be taken out of school on trips. These trips will enhance areas of the curriculum such as social studies, science or PE, or allow for competition. Some trips are purely for the enjoyment of the children such as the Beach Day in the summer term, where we encourage the children to interact and mix socially. We do not require parental permission for all local trips. All trips further afield require parental permission, which is obtained in writing.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Key priorities for the school are:

1. Learning and Teaching - Literacy – Improving Writing Attainment
2. Learning and Teaching – Literacy – Improving Reading Attainment in Early Years.
3. Curriculum and Community engagement – Improving tracking and profiling, and communication of pupil's progress to parents

Gairloch Primary School Improvement Plan may be found here:

[Gairloch Primary School SIP 2025-26 .pdf - Google Drive](#)

Gairloch Primary latest Standards & Quality Report may be found here:

[SQR 2024-25 Gairloch Primary.pdf - Google Drive](#)

Gairloch Primary School Inspection Report may be found here:

<https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/inspection-reports/reports-page/?id=2666>

## ASSESSMENT / LEVELS

'Building the Curriculum 5' states that, 'Assessment approaches should help learners to show their progress through levels and enable them to demonstrate their achievements in a range of ways which are appropriate to learning'.

We aim to do this by showing a breadth of learning, showing children can meet the challenges set out in the experiences and outcomes and can apply what they learn in new situations.

The expectations about progression through the curriculum levels are shown in the table below

Early	The pre-school years and P1 or later for some
First	The end of P4, but earlier or later for some
Second	The end of P7, but earlier or later for some
Third/Fourth	S1 to S3, but earlier for some. The fourth level broadly equates to SCQF level 4
Senior	S4-S6 and college or other means of study

### Assessment

The levels used to describe pupil achievement are arrived at by teacher observation rather than formal tests. The latter are used to help validate these judgements. This focuses children's attention on what they are learning and why and encourages them to share ideas. It allows children to be open about which aspects of their learning they find easy or difficult and opens up dialogue between the child and teacher about possible next steps, offering opportunities for children to self and peer assess.

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 and inform next steps for the improvement of their own learning.

We also use summative assessment in the form of end of topic tests and maths/spelling tests when appropriate. We follow the Highland Council policy and implement benchmark testing using Sottish National Standardised Assessments at P1, P4 and P7 in English medium and P4 and P7 in Gaelic classes.

Highland Schools have systems in place, which assure the quality of their summative assessment. All staff involved in teaching share standards at regular meetings throughout the year. They meet to discuss and cross mark children's work; they build examples from pupils who carry out work with no support or a minimum of teacher support. This gives a truer picture of the child's attainment. They compare these examples anonymously with examples from other schools within the Gairloch school group and national examples, which are provided for teachers online [School information dashboard | My school | Parentzone Scotland | Education Scotland](#)

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework is a very important part of a child's education and can add much to a child's development. The Government made clear its commitment to homework in the 1997 White Paper, 'Excellence in Schools', where homework was seen as 'an essential part of good education'.

Homework plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. We also acknowledge the important role of play and free time in a child's growth and development. While homework is important, it should not prevent children from taking part in the wide range of out-of-school clubs and organisations that play an important part in the lives of many children. We are well aware that children spend more time at home than at school, and we believe they develop their skills, interest and talents to the full only when parents encourage them to make maximum use of the experiences and opportunities that are available outside school.

### **Homework – Aims and Objectives**

- To enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development
- To help pupils develop the skills of an independent learner
- To promote a partnership between home and school in supporting each child's learning
- To enable all aspects of the curriculum to be covered in sufficient depth

- To provide educational experiences not possible in school
- To consolidate and reinforce learning done in school and to allow children to practise skills taught in lessons
- To help children develop good work habits for the future

We set a variety of homework activities. Older readers may choose their own books to encourage a love of reading. In P1-3, children will learn to read and will take words, extended stories and reading books home to consolidate their skills. We also ask children to learn spellings usually through games, or mathematical tables. Occasionally, maths activities and sheets are sent home to help consolidate the work done in school. Children will be asked to research for a class or personal topic or have some other activity related to the topic of study in school. For example, in the history topic on toys, we ask children to find out what toys were popular when their grandparents were young and, if possible, to bring examples into school to show the class. When we ask children to study a topic or to research a particular subject, we encourage them to use the school and local libraries, the Internet and CD-ROMs. We set homework for all children as a normal part of school life. We ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to the ability of the child. If a child has additional support needs, we endeavour to adapt any task set so that all children can contribute in a positive way. When setting homework for pupils who have specific needs, we refer to the Individual Education Plans (IEP).

### **Chromebook Devices**

As part of the Highland Council ICT Strategy, primary school pupils are provided with Chromebook devices. These devices are used in the classroom and at home, enabling the children to complete homework tasks, access their school work, and use ICT. Pupils and parents must sign an agreement on the use of the Chromebooks before a device may be taken home.

Since their introduction, the use of Chromebooks has enhanced the children's learning and allowed older children to access ICT at home as well as at school. We would emphasise that more and more of the children's work will be carried out on the Chromebooks, so it is therefore very important that these are brought to school, fully charged, each day. Members of staff do not have access to the children's log in details / passwords, it is therefore the child's and parents' responsibility to ensure that these machines are used responsibly at home.

If you would like to find out more about the Chromebook roll-out and digital learning within the Highland Council, please visit: <http://www.digilearnhighland.co.uk/>

### **Where should children do their homework?**

Individual children have their preferences, but in general the following conditions are thought best:

- In a warm, well lit area of the house.
- On a flat surface, preferably a table/desk for all written activities.
- For reading find a comfortable chair.
- Away from distractions like TV, pets or other family members who are not involved in homework.

From P1-P7, parents should check their child's work is of a suitable standard and where appropriate sign their homework diary.

## ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

Class teachers, in conjunction with an Additional Support Needs Teacher monitor the progress of pupils requiring additional support. The needs of such pupils are generally catered for within the normal curriculum but with specialist advice and support as required. If necessary, a Child's Plan may be put in place to help plan, organise, monitor and regularly review a child's progress. Parents and pupils will be involved in these procedures and in reviews. More information can be found at: [Support for Learners Website](#)

Sometimes a Children's Service Worker will be involved in supporting a child. A Children's Service Worker 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 need identified within the school and any additional support suggested for their child. Highland Council seeks to work in partnership with parents at all times, but sometimes you may have a concern that you don't feel is being addressed, or may want to talk to someone outwith the school. Should you have any concerns that your child's additional needs are not being met, you should contact your child's named person in the first instance. This is the Head Teacher for primary school pupils and the Health Visitor for nursery pupils.

If your concerns continue, there are a number of means of resolving difficulties and disputes and information on this can be found at: [http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools - additional support needs/1/support for learners](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools_-_additional_support_needs/1/support_for_learners)

Parents wishing to enquire or who have concerns about a pupil's progress are invited to get in touch with their class teacher or the Head Teacher.

Parents of pupils with additional support needs may find the following links useful:

- Support for learners on the Highland Council website: [https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools - additional support needs/1/support for learners](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools_-_additional_support_needs/1/support_for_learners)
- Enquire – the Scottish advice and information service for additional support for learning <http://enquire.org.uk/>
- My Rights, My Say – an advocacy and advice service for young people over 12 with additional support needs <http://enquire.org.uk/myrightsmysay/>
- Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance, an advocacy service to support parents and children <https://www.siaa.org.uk/>
- Scottish Child Law Centre, an organisation providing free legal advice to young people <https://sclc.org.uk/>
- Thriving Families – Highland charity supporting families of children with ASN [Home - Thriving Families](#)

Information about the 2009 Additional Support for Learning Act may be found in the Appendix to this document.

## APPENDIX

### CHILD PROTECTION

Occasionally incidents may occur within the school setting, which cause concern about a child's safety. Under Highland Child Protection Committee Inter-agency Protection Guidelines, Education Service staff have a duty to report such incidents to Social Work Services and this can lead to a joint social work/police investigation. All agencies involved in child protection regard the welfare of the child as paramount. Copies of Child Protection Policy Guidelines are available from school or online at: [Getting it Right for Every Child & Young Person in Highland: Interagency Practice Guidance & Child Protection Procedures 2024](#)

### HEALTH CARE

#### School Nurse

A school nurse and other health professionals visit the school on a regular basis to carry out health screening and health promotion. The school nurse provides a link between children, parents, teachers, GPs, and a variety of other health care professionals.

With parental consent, all P1 pupils are offered health screening in the second or third term. This includes recording, weight, height, hearing, vision and sometimes a few simple fine and gross motor skill exercises. Parents are very welcome to attend these sessions. If a referral is required, this will be in discussion with and with the consent of the child's parent or carer. P7 Children are usually assessed in P7 or S1. This may include issues around transition, and general health screening. Screening is not necessarily repeated unless requested by parents, pupils or teachers. Please do not hesitate to make contact if you have any concerns about aspects of your child's health.

Health Promotion is provided depending on the level of need/as requested.

School Nurses follow strict guidelines in order to provide a confidential service.

Child Protection: School Nurses follow strict guidelines and work closely with the multiagency team in order to protect children.

Periodically, the school nurse role is reviewed, therefore there may be changes to the above.

The School Nurse can be contacted by writing, to Unit 1, Achtercairn, Gairloch, IV21 2BP, or by telephone on 01349 781574.

#### Illness

Pupils feeling unwell should not be sent to school. Following sickness or diarrhoea, pupils should wait 48 hours before returning to school. If a pupil becomes ill during the school day, the parent will be contacted and the child sent home or into the care of the emergency contact. The school must be informed of any medical condition that may put the pupil at risk during any school activity.

## First Aid

Minor cuts and bruises, bleeding noses or upsets through squabbles between pupils will be dealt with by a member of staff, but where an injury causes greater concern, parents/carers are immediately contacted. In certain cases, a member of staff will take the child to the doctor without the parents present if it is deemed necessary for the safety of the child.

## Administration of Medicines

National Guidance on the Administration of Medicines in Schools has been issued by the Scottish Government. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/supporting-children-young-people-healthcare-needs-schools/>

This guidance is based on a number of common principles that will be consistently applied when identifying, supporting and reviewing the healthcare needs of children and young people in Highland schools to enable them to make the most of their learning.

Under Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, all children have a right to the highest attainable standard of health and to health care services that help them attain this. Article 7 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states that children with disabilities have the right to express their views freely on all matters affecting them. The arrangements for each individual will therefore take account of the health professionals' advice, the pupil's views and, where appropriate, their parent's views. NHS Highland, Highland Council and school staff will work collaboratively to ensure that pupils receive the service they need in the way most appropriate to their personal circumstances.

We will work with pupils and parents/carers to support the healthcare in our school, making any reasonable adjustments that children and young people with healthcare needs might 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. Assistance with intimate care may be needed by children in any school and this will be provided to promptly support these needs and with respect for children's privacy, dignity and rights.

If your child requires medication, please note that this will only be administered by staff when there is clear written guidance from a parent/carer, providing:

- **The name of the medicine, and dosage quantity, time and frequency.**
- **As far as possible prescriptive medication should be given at home by parents/carers. If it must be given in school, medication should be clearly marked with directions from the pharmacist and administered as part of an agreed medical protocol.**

## Head Lice

Head Lice are a common problem in school aged children. They cannot be prevented, but we ask you to check your child's head at least once a week during hair washing. You need your usual shampoo, conditioner, and a detection comb – which can be obtained from the Pharmacy. Remember that you are looking for living moving lice, the only evidence that your child is infected. If you find a living louse, ask your local pharmacist, school nurse, health visitor or GP for advice regarding treatment. Treatment will only work when lice are present. They will not prevent them. Close contacts will also need their hair checked –

siblings, parents/carers etc. Please do not automatically treat the whole family, only those with head lice. If your child has head lice, please inform the school.

### **Mental Health and Wellbeing**

Staff will support the emotional development and wellbeing of pupils through formal and informal curricular activities. Any concerns about a pupil's wellbeing can be discussed with the named person. The school has 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. Parents would generally be involved in discussions beforehand, however a young person over the age of 12 may ask for support themselves.

### **Employment of Children**

The employment of children byelaws regulate the types of occupation in which children under school leaving age may be employed and other conditions of employment. For further information please see: <http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/19/>

## **ACCESS TO RECORDS**

### **Access to Pupil Records**

The school pupil 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 <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/ScotXed>.

### **Why do we need your data?**

In order to make 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

## **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](https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/1095920/enrol_your_child_at_a_school)

## **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 [Scottish Exchange of Data \(ScotXed\) - gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot/Topics/Information/Data/Exchange)

Scottish Government works with a range of partners including Education Scotland, Skills Development Scotland and the SQA. On occasion, in order to help meet our aim of improving the life of young people in Scotland, we may make individual data available to partners such as the National Registers of Scotland to carry out research relating to the national population census and also academic institutions and organisations to carry out additional research and statistical analysis to meet their own official responsibilities. Any sharing of data will be done under the strict control of Scottish Government, and will be consistent with our data policy. This will ensure that no individual level data will be made public as a result of the data sharing and that these data will not be used to take any actions in respect of an individual. Decisions on the sharing of data will be taken in consultation with relevant colleagues and individuals within and outwith Scottish Government. At all

times pupils' rights under the Data Protection Act and other relevant legislation will be ensured.

## Concerns

If you have any concerns about the ScotXed data collections you can email the Head of Schools Analysis at ScotXed@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to The ScotXed Support Office, Area 2D, Victoria Quay, Leith, EH6 6QQ. Alternative versions of this page are available, on request from the ScotXed Support Office, in other languages, audio tape, Braille and large print.

## EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

At Gairloch, we actively teach, practise and embrace differences. We ensure that all have the necessary tools to access the curriculum. We have an active Pupil Council and work hard to encourage pupil voice.

For up-to-date information please see: <http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/751/equality>  
And [Ministerial Foreword - Presumption to provide education in a mainstream setting: guidance - gov.scot](#)

In summary, our activities in school should ensure that we eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and promote good relations. Activities should not discriminate against any of the following 'protected characteristics' age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child has now been incorporated into Scots Law. To find out more about this and the rights for all children in Scotland, you may access information [here](#).

Gairloch Primary has achieved the Unicef Rights Respecting Schools Bronze Award and we are working towards the Silver Award.

You may find a Parent Guide to Children's Rights here: [Parent Club UNCRC - Your guide to children's rights.pdf](#)

## Anti-Bullying / Anti-Racist Policy

Bullying and racism in any form is unacceptable. At Gairloch, we work to challenge behaviour and attitudes which lead to bullying, before incidents arise. When incidents do arise, it is important there are proper procedures in place to ensure the appropriate action is taken. Gairloch Primary follows the guidelines issued by Highland Council, Care and Learning Service to all schools in Highland, which may be found here:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19358/anti\\_bullying\\_-\\_guidance\\_for\\_schools](https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19358/anti_bullying_-_guidance_for_schools)  
Additional useful information may be found at [respectme | Scotland's anti-bullying service](#)

## Racism

Racism is the belief that some 'races' are superior to others – based on the false idea that different physical characteristics (like skin colour) or ethnic background make some people inferior/superior to others. Racial discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably because of his/her racial, national or ethnic origins/background.

## **Bullying**

Bullying is an unacceptable form of behaviour through which an individual or group of individuals are or feel threatened, abused or undermined by another individual or group of individuals. Bullying can be expressed through physical verbal or intimidating behaviour or in the form of marginalisation.

Bullying can be subtle or it can be overt.

It can cause short-term suffering for the victim or it can have long-term effects.

It is always damaging and it must always be taken seriously and addressed.

All incidents will be investigated and action taken.

Parents will be informed.

Incidents will be recorded and sent to Highland Council.

## **Military Families**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE 2009 ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING ACT**

### **Legal Information:**

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 came into force in November 2005. In June 2009, the Act was amended. These amendments form the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009 and it came into force on 14 November 2010.

### **What does this mean for pupils and parents?**

The new Act doesn't change the basic purpose of the 2004 Act – it aims to strengthen some duties under the Act and clarify parts that have been confusing.

### **Here are some of the main changes:**

- Under the 2004 Act 'additional support' means support that is provided in a classroom or school. The 2009 Act changes this to include support that is given out of school but that helps a child get the most out of their school education. This could include a social worker helping a child who refuses to go to school or a mental health nurse supporting a child to cope with issues affecting their school life.
- Children who are looked after by a local authority will automatically be assumed to have additional support needs. For looked after children who don't need extra help this will have little impact. For those who do need help it will make sure their needs are considered as they move through school or if they change school. Local authorities will also be expected to check whether these children require a Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP).
- The 2009 Act allows parents to ask their local authority for a specific type of assessment at any time. Under the 2004 Act parents had this right only when asking the education authority to identify whether their child had additional support needs or when asking the education authority whether their child required a CSP.
- The duties that local authorities have towards young disabled children have been strengthened. Under the new Act local authorities have a duty to assess disabled children aged between 0 and 3 and provide them with additional support, if required, in agreement with their parents.
- Local authorities will have to publish information on where parents and carers can find help, information and advice, including contact details for Enquire. Local authorities will have to make sure that a summary of this information (including details of dispute resolution and mediation services) is available from all schools (and other sites that provide education). They also need to make sure this information is included in school handbooks and on their website.
- There is a section about placing requests that states that parents of children with additional support needs, (including those that have CSPs) 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 (whether the child has a CSP or not) will be referred to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal. Some of the changes made in the 2009 Act deal specifically for children who have, or may require a CSP, and in particular to disagreements between local authorities and parents about the CSP.

- The Act extends the reasons that a parent or young person can make a referral (called a reference) to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal. Parents can make a referral when a local authority decides that a child does not need a CSP but also when local authorities have: failed to provide the additional support set out in the CSP; not responded to a parent's request to find out whether their child needs a CSP within a given time; or, after having said they will consider whether a CSP is required have not made a decision (within a given time) on whether the child needs a CSP or not.
- The Act also gives the Additional Support Needs Tribunal extra powers to force local authorities to provide, or make arrangements providing additional support that is set out in a CSP if they have not done so.
- The new Act includes a duty for the Scottish Government to fund a national independent advocacy service (on request and free of charge) to support parents and young people in Additional Support Needs Tribunal proceedings.

The above points do not include all the changes resulting from the 2009 Act but simply cover the main points.

Further information at <https://enquire.org.uk/>

More information about the 2009 Additional Support for Learning Act can be found at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2009/7/contents>

## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE AND REQUEST FOR SERVICE**

If a parent has any concerns, they should contact their child's class teacher in the first instance, or the Headteacher for more serious issues.

The school will always endeavour to resolve issues by listening to parents and seeking solutions in partnership with Mhairi MacDonald, Area Quality Improvement Manager, who can be contacted at [mhairi.macdonald3@highland.gov.uk](mailto:mhairi.macdonald3@highland.gov.uk).

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.