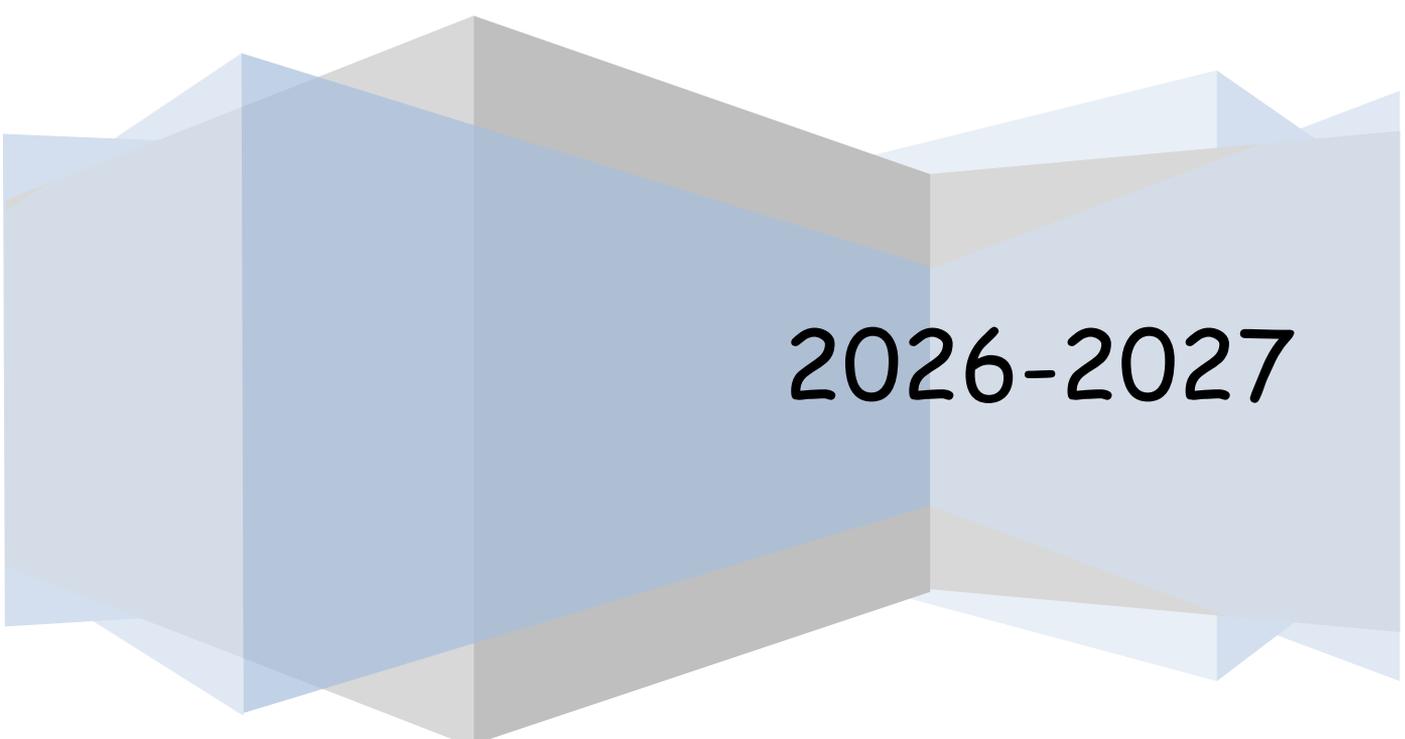


**MOUNT PLEASANT  
PRIMARY SCHOOL  
& ELC  
HANDBOOK**



**2026-2027**

## A NOTE FROM THE HEAD TEACHER

Welcome to the Mount Pleasant Primary School Handbook. We hope it will acquaint you with procedures and practices in our school. For those of you who are receiving this guide for the second, third or even fourth time I hope that you will see and understand how we are taking the school forward and will join us and help us on our Journey to Excellence.

We always welcome parents and visitors into the school and we hope you will make the most of our open door policy. Contact can be made via telephone, email, by appointment, or even just popping in! Should you have any questions regarding the topics covered in the handbook, or any other aspect of school life or your child's education, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

MRS SUZANNE URQUHART  
Head Teacher  
Mount Pleasant Primary School

 "Mrs Urquhart is a fab and funny head teacher. I love her dancing"

## HOW TO CONTACT THE SCHOOL

Mount Pleasant Primary School  
Castletown Road  
THURSO  
Caithness KW14 8HL

Tel: 01847 893419  
Email: [mount.pleasant@highland.gov.uk](mailto:mount.pleasant@highland.gov.uk)  
<https://mountpleasantprimary.wordpress.com/>

NB: Mrs Suzanne Urquhart is the "Key Adult or Named Person" for children attending our school.

## HANDBOOK INFORMATION

It is our hope that this working document will be a source of information for both current and prospective new parents of Mount Pleasant Primary School.

This document has been written in accordance with The Education (School and Placing Information) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 and is very much a team effort involving staff, parents and pupils. We welcome comments and suggestions for improvement to our handbook at any time throughout the school year.

 Throughout our handbook we have included supporting comments from parents and pupils which are indicated where you see this symbol.

The handbook is available online at [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk), however if you would prefer this in an alternative format please contact the School Secretary who will make appropriate arrangements for you.

Please note that whilst the information contained in our School Handbook is considered to be correct at the time of printing, it is possible that there may be changes affecting a matter dealt with in the document.

This handbook was last updated:

NOVEMBER 2025

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# OUR VISION, VALUES AND AIMS

Our vision, values and aims are at the core of everything we do at Mount Pleasant. They underpin our teaching and learning and provide a safe environment which prepares our pupils to be confident, happy and responsible citizens.

## SCHOOL VISION

Mount Pleasant Primary School and ELC's Vision Statement is quite simply:

"We care..."

## VALUES

We nurture each member of our learning community ensuring they feel welcomed, cared for and valued.

We demonstrate a "can do" attitude and value collaborative work to achieve success.

We value inclusion for our children and young people ensuring opportunities for all.

## AIMS

- Our school and wider community aim to provide an inspiring environment with high quality learning experiences for our children and young people.
- We aim to support our children and young people to be all that they can be, both in the classroom and the community.
- Through close working relationships between the school, our pupils, their families and partners, we aim to ensure the best possible start in education and life-long learning for our children and young people.

We will do this through working in genuine partnership with all stakeholders and will learn from looking inwards, outwards and forwards.

 *"I like Mount Pleasant Primary School because all the pupils and teachers respect each other"*

# ABOUT OUR SCHOOL



Mount Pleasant Primary School was built in 1966. The location of the school is a very pleasant one overlooking Thurso River and the Harbour. There are magnificent views of the Pentland Firth, the Orkney Islands and the Old Man of Hoy, Thurso East and Thurso Castle and much of the town of Thurso.

The school is fortunate in having good-sized classrooms, a large assembly hall with stage, a gymnasium, a library and a nurture room. Within the main building we also have a ELC and an Enhanced Provision Unit. There is a generous tarmac area around the school and a large grass area with two junior size football pitches. We have an all-weather accessible path around the pitches. Throughout the school year children have opportunities to experience and explore our enclosed Nature Garden.

Currently there are 135 mainstream pupils in straight year classes from Primary 1 through to Primary 7 plus 7 pupils within our Gaelic Medium Provision Unit and 11 pupils in the Enhanced Provision with additional provision for drop-in sessions for pupils from mainstream classes.

Our ELC operates five days a week with flexible attendance slots available from 8.30am to 3.30pm. All our sessions cater for mixed groups of three and four year olds. Our ELC currently has 32 children for the forthcoming year.

In 2013 we were given the honour of launching the first Gaelic Medium Class in Caithness. This has increased the linguistic and cultural dimension of the school. It allows a smooth transition from ELC to Gaelic Medium Primary 1. We view this as a new beginning for language development in the school and the local community.

*“I have made new friends, learned new things and had great fun”*

*“My child amazes me every day with the amount of Gaelic vocabulary he has already learnt*

## HOW TO ENROL YOUR CHILD(REN)

Choosing the best school for your child can be an extremely daunting and worrying process for any parent, whether they are starting school for the first time or changing schools at any point during their education. At Mount Pleasant Primary our aim is to make this transition as easy and seamless as we possibly can.

To get a real feel for our school we would strongly recommend that you and your family visit the school for our "guided tour". It is a good time to meet staff, show your child(ren) the different areas of the school and discuss any queries or concerns you may have.

For families living within the school catchment area the registration process is simple, straight forward and, as long as class numbers allow, your child will be able to join us immediately. Full assistance with registration will be given by the School Secretary.

A map of the Mount Pleasant Primary catchment area can be found by visiting:

<http://highland.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=531a30ee33564231866ff94e96607f26>

Parents have the right to ask for their child(ren) to be educated in a school other than their local school. This applies only to primary and secondary school. Parents pre-school and ELC children can place their child at any pre-school or ELC provision centre.

Families living out with the school catchment area are required to complete a placing request which is passed to the Area Quality Improvement Manager for approval.

Advice or placing requests can be arranged with the school office or by visiting:

[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)

## Standards & Quality Report & School Improvement Plan

<https://mountpleasantprimary.wordpress.com/document-links/>

Please contact the school office for a copy of the School Improvement Plan

## HMIe - Inspection Report

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

 "I think that Mount Pleasant is a great school and I completely recommend coming to this school. We do clubs and activities and there is always space for more. Here in Mount Pleasant we are a family and we are very happy to make our family bigger."

## STAFF LIST

Management Team	Head Teacher	Mrs Suzanne Urquhart
	Depute Head Teacher	Mrs Audrey Robson
Class Teachers	Gaelic Clas 1 - 7	Mrs Lynsey MacFarlane
	Primary 1/2	Mrs Laura Tait
	Primary 1/2 (Wed Thu Fri)	Mrs Jennifer Gordon
	Primary 2/3	Mrs Audrey Robson
	Primary 4 (Mon Tue Wed)	Mrs Lorraine Geddes
	Primary 4 (Thu Fri)	Mrs Laura Macdonald
	Primary 5	Mr Simon Harper
	Primary 6	Mrs Charlaine Sanz
	Primary 7	Mrs Shona McNicol
Support for Learners	Support for Learning Teacher	Ms Amanda Gibbon
	Pupil Support Assistant	Mrs Elizabeth Elder
	Pupil Support Assistant	Miss Laura Farquhar
	Pupil Support Assistant	Mr Richard Hogg
	Pupil Support Assistant	Mrs Isobel Miller
	Pupil Support Assistant	Miss Laura McLean
	Children's Support Worker	Mrs Sarah Hogg
Support Teachers	Class Contact Reduction Teacher	Mr James McHardy
	Management Time Teacher - DHT	Mrs Laura Tait
Enhanced Provision	Support for Learning Teacher	Mrs Hollie Suttar
	Pupil Support Assistant	Mrs Linda McIntosh
	Pupil Support Assistant	Mrs Jacqueline Sinclair
	Pupil Support Assistant	Mrs Carla Jackson
	Pupil Support Assistant	Miss Caitlin Coghill
ELC	Early Years Practitioner	Mrs Donella Boulton
	Early Years Practitioner	Mrs Jane McPhee
	Early Years Practitioner	Mrs Fiona Malcolm
	Early Years Practitioner	Mrs Catriona Smith
	Early Years Practitioner	Ms Kim Cormack
Auxiliary Staff	Secretary	Mrs Sandra Noble
	Facilities Assistant (Mon Wed Fri)	Mr Wayne Clark
	Crossing Patroller	Mrs Audrey Mulgrew
Visiting Tutors	Active Schools Coordinator	Mr Alyn Gunn
	Piping Instructor	Mrs Carol Anne Farquhar
	Woodwind Instructor	Mrs Karen Anderson
	Guitar Instructor	Mr Andy McLeod

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## SCHOOL TIMES

	PRIMARIES 1 to 3	PRIMARIES 4 to 7	ENHANCED PROVISION
Monday - Thursday	09.00 to 14.50	09.00 to 15.25	09.00 to 15.25
Friday	09.00 to 12.25	09.00 to 12.35	09.00 to 13.45
Morning Interval	10.45 to 11.00		
Lunch Break	12.45 to 13.30		12.00 to 12.30

## SCHOOL OPENINGS

(Please note these dates are subject to change)

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

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

WK	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
6							1
7	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
9	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
10	23	24	25	26	27	28	

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

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

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

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

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

WK	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
32						1	2
33	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
34	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
35	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
36	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
37	31						

WK	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
37		1	2	3	4	5	6
38	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
39	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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41	28	29	30				

WK	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
41				1	2	3	4
42	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
43	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
44	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
45	26	27	28	29	30	31	

WK	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
45							1
46	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
47	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
48	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
49	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
50	30						

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

WK	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
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4	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
5	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
6	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

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

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

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

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

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

School holidays  
In-service days

School days

 "I like going to Mount Pleasant Primary School"

## IN-SERVICE TRAINING

In-service training days are organised to allow staff to attend Professional Development Training and Curriculum Development Meetings throughout the Highland Area. The school will be open to **staff only** on these dates.

## CROSSING PATROL

A School Crossing Patroller on the Castletown Road serves the school. The patroller is on duty at the following times and pupils should not cross the road to school until she arrives:-  
**8.40 am - 9.10 am**                      **2.50 pm - 3.35 pm**      **(Friday 12.25pm to 12.55pm)**  
if the crossing patroller is not in place then children should not cross the road without an adult.

## SCHOOL MEALS

School meals are served in the Main Hall at 12.45 pm. Supervision is provided by a member of the Senior Management Team. The menu is displayed, at the servery and be accessed electronically by visiting

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/22860/primary\\_3-choice\\_menu](https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/22860/primary_3-choice_menu)

Should a child require a special diet on medical grounds or for certain matters of conscience, every effort is made to accommodate such a request. Special diets should be arranged by completing the attached online request form:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/9/school\\_meals/4](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/9/school_meals/4)

All meals are cooked on the premises. Menus are formulated by dieticians with careful note of sugar, fat and salt content.

School lunch costs £2.40 per day. When paying by cheque, it should be made payable to Highland Council, with the school, child's name and class and the name and address of the person who signed the cheque written on the back.

PACKED LUNCHES - lunch boxes should be clearly marked with the pupil's name. No glass containers, fizzy or canned drinks are allowed as part of a packed lunch. Lunch boxes should be transported in a separate bag to avoid leaky containers destroying schoolbooks. Pupils should bring a plastic bag so they can take home what they have not eaten to show their parent. No nuts or items such as Nutella or Bueno please -we have a number of children with severe nut allergies.

TUCK - Pupils can purchase toast, bottled water and milk at break time.

Free school meals are available to families who are on a low income. For more information please see section School Meals and Clothing Grants on the next page. All ELC and Primary 1 to 5 pupils receive free school lunches.



"The lunches are awesome"

## SCHOOL CLOTHING

We strongly encourage the wearing of school uniform by all children during the normal school day, during school excursions and when representing the school at special occasions such as the Caithness Music Festival.

The school colours are black and white and the school uniform is as follows:

**School sweatshirt, hooded sweatshirt and polo shirt,  
Black/dark grey trousers or skirt**

We have now moved to online ordering for our school uniform.

<https://www.schoolwearmadeeasy.com/badged-school-uniform/m-p/m/mount-pleasant-primary-school/>

Please name all clothing so if lost we can return it. Clothing should be comfortable and safe. Parents should bear in mind that children are outside for some considerable time at interval and lunchtime and ensure children are dressed appropriately for Caithness weather.

## SCHOOL MEALS & CLOTHING GRANTS

Free school meals and assistance with school clothing can be claimed if you are receiving any one of the following:

- Income support
- Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance
- Income-based Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Universal Credit (where their monthly earned income is not more than £850)
- Pension Credit Guaranteed Credit

The clothing allowance, in normal circumstances, is made once per school year, and payment is made directly to the applicant for every eligible child in Primary or Secondary school.

Applications for free school meals and the clothing grant must be completed online by visiting : [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)

You must include proof of entitlement with your application form. Queries should be directed to:

**Operations Team, PO Box 5650, Inverness. IV3 5YX Telephone: 01463 703645**

## MAKEUP AND PIERCINGS

At primary school level the assumption is that no makeup should be worn during the school day. If children have piercings, they should be able to remove them themselves before PE or swimming. If not able to do so then they will not be able to take part in physical activities.

## TRANSPORT

Free transport to school is available for children living within the delineated area of the school:

- if under eight years of age and over two miles from school,
- or are eight years of age and over three miles walking distance from the school.

Applications for free transport should be made by visiting:

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

For inquiries please email ***school.transport@highland.gov.uk***

## SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES

The school is non-denominational. In its religious observances, the school aims to engender humanity, compassion and caring attitudes in our pupils towards themselves and others. Assemblies are held once a month. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from religious observance.

Our assemblies also act as a focus for our positive behaviour system, with good work and behaviour being rewarded by presentation of badges, stickers and certificates.

Every day, at all stages in the school, children are encouraged to develop a sense of self and social responsibility.



*“My child is happy in school and loves to come home and talk about her interesting day.”*



*“Mount Pleasant is the best school because it is fun and people are kind, helpful and funny.”*

# SCHOOL RULES & DISCIPLINE

## WHAT TO BRING TO SCHOOL

Children should arrive in school each day with homework books or jotters they require. We will provide everything that the children will need but if they wish they can also bring their own pencil, eraser, pencil sharpener and a few colouring pencils and pens. Ideally this should all fit in one pencil-case. Primaries 6 and 7 have their own personal Chromebook devices issued to them. These should be brought in each day fully charged.

All children require shorts, t-shirt and gym shoes for PE. Since this kit is also used for other activities, we ask that this is kept in school. All kit should be clearly marked with the pupil's name and stored in a suitable bag.

As we have carpets throughout the school children are required to change into soft shoes at the beginning of the day, gym shoes ideally double up as soft shoes to avoid extra unnecessary expense for parents.

## NAMING/LOSS OF PROPERTY

It is of enormous help if all belongings, especially items of clothing, are marked with the pupil's name. It is extremely difficult to trace unnamed items.

Any loss of property should be reported promptly to the class teacher or janitor. Children finding items in school should hand them in to the class teacher or janitor to allow them to be claimed. Lost items are displayed on the Lost Property Trolley on the ground floor. Any unnamed and unclaimed items of school uniform will be rehomed via our second hand uniform stock. Any other unclaimed lost property is donated to local charity shops at the end of each school term.

 I feel I can discuss any issues I have or may have worries about with various members of staff and they always make time to listen.

## BULLYING

There may be times when children are being bullied or believe that they are. It is important that parents, who are concerned about possible bullying incidents, contact the school at the earliest opportunity to discuss the problem. At Mount Pleasant we have an Anti-Bullying Policy, which clearly details the action that will be taken and how all children concerned may be supported to ensure incidents are not repeated.

[Policies and guidance - support for learners | Anti Bullying - Guidance for Schools](#)

## BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE

A high standard of discipline is expected of pupils within, and out with the school, when taking part in school related activities. Children are encouraged to show respect and consideration for their peers, other children in school, the adults they come into contact with, people and property and to accept responsibility for their own behaviour.

Each child is made aware of the school and class rules which they should follow. The co-operation of parents is essential to encourage pupils' self-discipline and sense of honesty, fair play and mutual respect.

When incidents of inappropriate behaviour do occur the children are encouraged to talk through the incident with staff and resolve issues before they become bigger and more serious. Where possible playground incidents are dealt with at the time, and passed onto the class teacher if necessary. Most class time issues are dealt with in the classroom. If necessary, teachers will phone home or send a Dojo message to Parents/carers. Involving the Senior Management Team is only used for more serious incidents.

Sanctions used may be

- Quiet word/reminder of expectations
- Stern reprimand/threat of sanction
- Red card - equates to 15mins loss of breaktime
- Removal from classroom for a short time
- Exclusion from school (a last resort only used for very serious offences)

If a pattern of inappropriate behaviour seems to be building up, or the incident is very serious, the teacher or Head Teacher will contact parents to seek a joint approach to the problem. Co-operation between home and school usually results in an improvement in behaviour and can prevent more serious action by the school.

In the playground there are two simple rules which underpin everything else:

- Be safe in the playground and help everyone else to be safe
- Enjoy the playground and help everyone else to enjoy it



*"I like Mount Pleasant because we have Reward Intervals when we get enough house points"*

## ABSENCES AND APPOINTMENTS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

For your child to gain the maximum benefit from school, he/she needs to attend each day of the school year if at all possible. Any absences from school, however short, have a detrimental effect on a child's learning. Lost teaching and learning time cannot be made up however willing parents can help complete work at home if they wish.

Parents/carers must inform the school of the reason for absence of their child(ren) on the first day of absence preferably before 9:30am. Please do not use Class Dojo to notify us of appointments or absences.

The best way of doing this is to leave a message noting your child's name, class, date and reason for absence on our

### **SCHOOL'S ABSENCE MESSAGE LINE      01847 896030**

The benefit of using this system is that you do not have to wait until the school opens to leave a message and as the school receives a high volume of incoming calls at the start of each day you will no longer have to keep phoning because the line is busy.

A great deal of our time is spent phoning parent/carers of children who are not in school and we have not been advised of a reason. Please ensure that you make contact if you know your child is not going to be in school to prevent time wastage.

If the school has not been advised of the reason for absence then the school has a responsibility to contact parents to find out the reason for the absence, this is in line with Highland Council policy. If the school cannot make contact with the parents/carers within three days then the school has an obligation to pass this information to Social Services, Area Education Manager and the Police. This procedure is strictly adhered to.

The school should be advised in advance of any medical or dental appointments during the school day. Children should be collected from the office. Children must not be removed from the school without first informing the office staff.

Parents are responsible for their children's prompt attendance at school. Lateness not only disrupts the class but it also means the child will be missing a part of his/her education.

Highland Council discourages the practice of taking children out of school for holidays and parents should give careful consideration to the disruption in their child's education before removing them from school in term time. Pupils find it difficult to try to catch up work missed. This also puts additional unnecessary stress on the child.

 *"I really like school because it is a fun place to go"*

## SCHOOL GROUNDS

Pupils should not arrive in the school grounds before 8.45 am. Access to the school building will not normally be given before 9.00 am as there is limited adult supervision before then. However, children who need to book a school lunch will be given access to the kitchen area to do so.

In bad weather children should spend as short a time as possible in the playground before school and during breaks. We would ask parents to plan their child's arrival in school to be as close to the opening time as possible. Only limited supervision is available for children who stay in school for a school lunch or a packed lunch, however if the weather is very bad indoor supervision is organised.

When the weather allows, children play in the playground under the supervision of the Pupil Support Assistants, who have had training in playground games.

Children who have a packed lunch or school lunch **must not** leave the playground during the lunch hour and **no child** should leave the school playground during morning interval.

In the interest of security, parents should **not** approach their own child or any other child in the playground. Parents should always make arrangements with the office if they need to make contact with their child during the school day and children should be met/collected at the school office **not** directly from their class.

## CAR PARKING

Parents are requested **not** to use the staff and visitors' car park at the front of the school as a drop off point for children.

Children are not permitted to cross the car park. Parents should use the parking area on the opposite side of Castletown Road in Castle Terrace and the children cross at the Crossing Patrol.

Children should be encouraged to walk to school or parents may choose to drop children a short distance from the car park to encourage healthy walking habits and ease congestion in the drop off car park.

Parents collecting children during the school day can use the staff and visitors' car park, as there will be no Crossing Patrol available during the school day.



*"I like the Cook's Toast - she makes the best"*

# CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT

## INTRODUCTION

The curriculum aims to better prepare children for the challenges of the future and places a far greater emphasis on not just acquiring skills but being able to use them effectively and creatively. It places literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing at the heart of the curriculum.

We aim to plan and deliver a broad and balanced curriculum which will ensure our children achieve their full potential. Children are taught using a variety of teaching methods, in small groups, individually or as a whole class depending on the activity or on the needs of the children involved.

For more information please visit:

[About the 3-18 curriculum | Curriculum in Scotland | Parentzone Scotland | Parentzone Scotland](#)

## LANGUAGE & LITERACY

The main components are Talking, Listening, Reading and Writing. All classes follow the Highland Literacy Progression, using Oxford Reading Tree, Treetops, novels and Collins resources as well as a wide range of non-fiction supporting language development. The children work at differentiated levels according to their ability.

Primary 3 to Primary 7 are involved in an Accelerated Reading Programme, where their reading age is assessed and they are encouraged to participate in a programme of reading and assessment at their individual level. This programme has been proven to significantly improve children's reading capabilities and performance. Many parents also use the "Home Connect" feature which allows them to sign up and receive e-mails which inform them of their child's progress each time they take a quiz.

At Mount Pleasant we support the Scottish Government's commitment to work towards the European Union 1 + 2 Language acquisition model. We are keen to create a learning environment where children will be able to learn two languages in addition to their mother tongue. We are lucky to have a strong Gaelic language base in our school and in addition French is integrated into the children's learning journey from Primary 1.

## MATHEMATICS & NUMERACY

The mathematics programme is based on The Highland Numeracy Progression with active maths at the heart of our teaching. We encourage children to progress in maths using a wide range of resources such as Numicon, numeracy games, ICT, textbooks and workbooks. We put great emphasis on direct, interactive teaching methods and the development of strong mental maths, strategies and proficiency.

Using maths in real life contexts ensures that our pupils have as broad and comprehensive an understanding as possible.

 *“The teacher engages her children entirely; it is so much fun but she challenges them continually within their individual abilities”*

## EXPRESSIVE ARTS

Expressive Arts involves Music, Art and Design, Drama and Physical Movement through Dance. Visiting music tutors make a valuable contribution to this area of the curriculum, delivering music tuition in a variety of instruments. Class teachers provide an interesting and appropriate programme based on the Curriculum for Excellence Guidelines.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGIES

Our Science and Technologies programmes are based around Highland Science Framework, incorporating aspects of Curriculum for Excellence so that children experience progression and structure but also have some elements of enjoyment, choice and personalisation. They help our pupils to develop inquiry and investigative skills alongside scientific analysis skills.

We also take part in our local Science Festival, an annual event which hosts a wide variety of activities for pupils throughout the school and participate in various initiatives such as CREST Award making good use of our local STEM Ambassadors.

All pupils have access to Chromebooks or Chromepads to enhance different areas of their learning. The P6 and P7 pupils are allocated a device each to use during the school day and at home.

## SOCIAL SUBJECTS

The school has developed a programme of topics that follow the Curriculum for Excellence Guidelines in Social Studies. These topics provide children with an opportunity to develop their understanding of Scottish and world history as well as developing their understanding of values, beliefs and cultures. They also consider the principles of democracy and citizenship and how to locate and link features and places locally and further afield.

## HEALTH & WELLBEING

Health Education deals with physical, emotional and social aspects of healthy development. Physical education, physical activity and sport is also promoted as part of a healthy lifestyle, with pupils generally receiving at least 2 hours of PE each week. We encourage a healthy active start to the school day with most classes taking advantage of a morning walk/run on our all-weather path around the school fields.

A full programme, covering all aspects at every stage, is used throughout the school. Visits from various Health professionals and activities provided by our Active Schools co-ordinator also help us to provide a very comprehensive programme for all our pupils.

Primary 4 and 5 pupils take part in a 10 week block of swimming lessons at Thurso Swimming Pool.

As part of our topic on Health we watch the Channel 4 series of Living and Growing throughout Primaries 4-7. This covers the following topics:

- Physical and emotional changes at puberty
- Body image and self-worth
- Understanding of own developing sexuality
- Developing an awareness of gender identity
- Changing nature of friendships
- Dealing with sexual feelings
- Menstruation, pregnancy and birth

We appreciate that this is a delicate subject so at the start of your child's time in Primary 4 we will write to parents requesting participation permissions for their child. Parents who have some concerns are encouraged to chat over the contents with teaching staff or view the DVD to allow them to make the best decision for their child.

 "Mount Pleasant is best because of its PE"

## RELIGIOUS & MORAL EDUCATION

Mount Pleasant Primary School is a non-denominational school. The Religious Education programme is based on the Curriculum for Excellence Guidelines and develops Personal Search, Christianity and Knowledge of Other World Religions.

Moral Education focuses on Citizenship and developing positive attitudes towards others, respecting and valuing differences. Every child is encouraged to develop a high level of self-esteem, recognising their individual value in society.

 "We are very happy with all aspects of the school"

 "I love that we are given the opportunity to participate in school activities"

## ASSESSMENT & REPORTING TO PARENTS

The four capacities of 'A Curriculum for Excellence' are linked to Assessment is for Learning and through this, children are encouraged to be active participants in their learning and apply collaborative strategies to reflect on their progress.

Teachers are constantly monitoring the children's progress as they work in their classes. Assessment is carried out on a daily basis to inform the next days teaching. Each pupil has a profile which follows them through the school to allow them, and their parents/carers to see their child's progression. These profiles may be in a folder, on Class Dojo or on a Google Site. Parents and Carers are encouraged to share this profile with their children. From time to time more formal testing is carried out to give confirmation of the teacher's formative assessment. Each term the Head Teacher holds tracking meetings with teachers to discuss each pupil's progress and their future learning.

Further information can be found at

[Assessment and achievement | Curriculum in Scotland | Parentzone Scotland | Education Scotland](#)

We have introduced High Quality Assessments which are used in class and at home to discuss learning with the children. It gives everyone involved an opportunity to see where a pupil has reached in their learning and the next steps they have to take to improve. These will be included in their profiles.

Pupils' progress is also shared with parents in June in a written report which informs parents of progress in relation to Curriculum for Excellence Experiences and Outcomes. The report will give an overall assessment of attainment in Languages and Mathematics and a more general report on attainment in Health and Wellbeing, Social Studies, RME, Expressive Arts, Sciences and Technologies. There will be a comment on the pupil's strengths and development needs. Pupils are also given the chance to reflect and provide a written comment on the progress of their learning over the year.

There are several programmed opportunities for parents to come into school to learn more about their child's progress over the school year, however a formal Parents' Evening is held in November when verbal reports are given and progress can be discussed in detail. Parents who are concerned about their child's progress at other times may contact the school to discuss the matter with staff. Where children have additional support needs there will be regular meetings and reviews.

Pupils in Primaries 1, 4 and 7 will participate in the Scottish National Standardised Assessments. Pupils in Primaries 2, 3, 5 and 6 will participate in the Scottish Online Formative Assessments.

 "The school has a wonderful atmosphere and is a very welcoming place."

 "I really love school"

## 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.

If you have a concern about your child in primary school please contact your child's class teacher in the first instance or the 'named person'. Mrs Suzanne Urquhart is the "Key Adult or Named Person" for children attending our school.

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

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

[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)

Most difficulties will be identified, initially by the class teacher, who will implement short term strategies to support the child. If the difficulties continue the class teacher will discuss these with the Additional Support teacher and a programme of work will be decided upon as well as a timescale for review. As part of this programme, the child or group may receive additional input from a member of the Additional Support team. Parents will be informed and advised as to how they may be able to support their child.

If it is found that considerable differentiation of the class work is required, a Support Plan may be drawn up for a child. All those involved will take part in the consultation process.

Additional Support is for all pupils, and children who excel in some way are just as likely to receive input from the Additional Support team.

The type and level of support will vary according to the individual but will normally be carried out within the classroom or in a small group, unless there is a specific reason why this would be inappropriate.

Transition meetings for children with additional support needs are held approximately 12 months prior to moving on. Parents, pupils, school staff and appropriate agencies are all invited to these meetings.

Further help, advice, support and information can be sought at:

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

<https://www.siaa.org.uk/>

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

<http://www.sclc.org.uk/>

<https://www.thrivingfamilies.org.uk/>



*"My child absolutely loves school and I could not have hoped for a better introduction to his education"*

## SPECIALIST ASN PROVISION IN CAITHNESS

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.

## TRANSITION TO HIGH SCHOOL

At the end of Primary 7, pupils transfer to Thurso High School. The High School is supplied with relevant information about each pupil's progress, along with any other information, which may help to ease the transition from primary to secondary education. A guidance teacher from Thurso High meets the Primary 7 pupils in their own primary school environment. He/she will talk to the pupils informally, answering any questions they may have. The High School guide is then issued with details of the pupils' preliminary visit days and their registration classes for the coming session. Parents of the Primary 7 pupils are invited to Thurso High School to meet teachers, see the school and receive additional information.

On the preliminary visits pupils experience two simulated days timetable at Thurso High School. Pupil Profile Record Files and electronic data are then transferred to the High School. P7's will need to complete transport request for secondary school if required.

## ENGLISH & GAELIC TRANSITION (ELC to Primary 1)

During their time in ELC children frequently visit different areas in the school and meet the Staff. The Primary 1 and Gaelic Medium teachers also visits the ELC on a regular basis so that they become a familiar and trusted person.

A "Resilient Kids to School" circle time programme is carried out in the final term of ELC to aid transition and introduce the school's Golden Rules.

Towards the end of the ELC year the children will attend school break times, sports day and other special events. As their final ELC month approaches the Primary 1 teacher will invite the children to attend several sessions in the Primary 1 and Gaelic Medium classrooms to ease their transition. The Support for Learning teacher will also liaise with the teachers and ELC staff at this time.

 "I like doing the Christmas Show because I like acting"

# PUPIL CARE, WELFARE & SAFETY

## ILLNESS

If a pupil takes ill at school he or she should, in the first instance, tell the class teacher who will inform the school office. The parent or emergency contact will be notified and a responsible adult, known to the pupil, should collect the pupil from the school office.

In cases of emergency medical services will be contacted and, if necessary, the child will be transported to the nearest Health Centre or Hospital. Parents will be contacted at the earliest opportunity.

## MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Any medical condition likely to affect your child's learning or well being must be notified to the school.

## MEDICATION/INHALERS

Staff are not obliged to administer medication to children and it is preferred that parents make arrangements to ensure they are able to administer medication to their own children. Where this is not possible some members of staff may be willing to carry out this duty and only where they have been trained and approved to do so. Non-prescribed medicines will not be administered by staff under any circumstances. **PRESCRIBED MEDICATION ONLY** should be delivered to and collected from the school office by an adult. **Children should not transport medication to and from school.** A pro forma for written instructions is available from the school office. This must be completed and signed by a parent/carer. Any medication must be in its original container. All medication, other than inhalers for P1-3 pupils, is stored in the school office area.

It is essential that children who require inhalers have them in school every day. Children should be aware of maximum dosages. Arrangements are in place for inhalers to be stored in classrooms for P1-3 pupils for easy access during the school day. To encourage independence P4-7 pupils carry their own inhalers. An additional inhaler may also be kept in school in case of emergencies if parents request this. Parents are responsible for ensuring their child has an inhaler for out of school activities such as school trips, swimming etc. Parents should take note of the expiry date of any medication to be kept in school to ensure it does not go out of date.

 *Mount Pleasant is a really good school because everyone is friendly.*

## ADVERSE WEATHER/SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCEDURES

From time to time it may be necessary to close the School and/or ELC. This would usually only happen if the heating should fail or in severe weather conditions when it may be unsafe for pupils or staff to attend.

In the case of severe weather, the decision as to whether to close the school or not will be made by 7.30am by the Management Team. If the school is closed a message will be left on Class Dojo by 7.45am. This is our primary method of advising you of any closure - if there is no message by 7.45am it means that the school is open as normal.

Other ways of informing parents of school closures, these are:

- By visiting the Highland Council winter weather website:

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

The decision as to whether a pupil should attempt to travel to school in adverse weather conditions, whether by transport or by foot, lies with the parent. Please be assured that if you decide that it is unsafe for your child to come to school the absence will be classed as an authorised one - all you have to do is leave us a short message on our Absence Line **01847 896030**. You are encouraged to read the Education Authority policy guidelines on travelling to school in adverse weather conditions. This policy can be found by visiting

[School policies and guidance - child wellbeing and safety | Adverse weather guidance - English version](#)

Should it be necessary to close the school during the school day it is essential we have emergency contact information for every child. It is the parents/carers responsibility to ensure such information held by the school is kept up to date and that we are informed in writing of any changes at the earliest opportunity.

We would be very grateful if you do not telephone the school at these times as the staff and phone lines will be tied up arranging collection and transport for children.

## HEALTH AND WELFARE

Parental permission is sought in advance to allow the school nurse to examine pupils in P1 and P7. Parents may be present at the examination if they wish.



*"I like that everyone cares about each other"*

## MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Staff will support the emotional development and wellbeing of pupils through formal and informal curricular activities. Any concerns about a pupil's wellbeing can be discussed with the named person. Highland Council's website supports a variety of information relating to mental health and emotional wellbeing. Please visit:

[wellbeinghighland.co.uk](http://wellbeinghighland.co.uk)

Schools have access to Highland Council's Primary Mental Health Worker Service and consultation and advice may be sought if there are concerns that might require more targeted support. Counselling is also available for all pupils from age 10. Information on your school's service can be accessed from your child's Head Teacher. Alternately, there is a completely confidential, online counselling service called Kooth for children and young people from age 10 that can be accessed by visiting:

<https://www.kooth.com/>

Parents would generally be involved in discussions beforehand, however a young person over the age of 12 can ask for support themselves.

## ACCESS TO PERSONAL RECORDS

The Pupils' Educational Records (Scotland) Regulations 2003 extend to parents the right of access (with certain specific exceptions) to any record held by the Authority in relation to their child. Parents may make application to the Head Teacher.

## PHOTOGRAPHY IN SCHOOL

Mount Pleasant School recognises the issues of child protection and personal privacy and that a policy aimed at safeguarding pupils exists. We strictly adhere to The Highland Council Photography Procedures for Schools.

## HIGHLAND COUNCIL CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

From time to time incidents can occur within the school setting, which cause concern and could indicate that a pupil is suffering some form of abuse. In terms of Highland Child Protection Committee Inter-agency Protection Guidelines, Education Service staff must report such incidents to Social Work Services which can lead to a joint Social Work/Police investigation. All agencies involved in Child Protection are obliged to make the welfare of children their paramount consideration and this will be a priority for Education Service staff.

More information about Child Protection Procedures within Highland can be obtained from the *Child Protection Development Officer, Highland Child Protection Committee, Kinmylies Building, Leachkin Road, Inverness, IV3 8NN - Telephone (01463) 703483, Fax - (01463) 713237*

## DATA PROTECTION

Any information you have supplied/any information gathered from or about pupils will be used only for the purpose for which it was provided and any relevant procedures following from this. The information is protected by data protection legislation and may only be disclosed in accordance with the codes of practice.

## FIRE SAFETY

Regular Fire Drills are held in school to ensure all pupils and staff are familiar with the school's evacuation procedures.

## POLICIES AND PRODECURES

Mount Pleasant Primary adheres to relevant Highland Council Schools Policies and Procedures. Please follow visit the following URL if you would like to read more about these policies.

[Search policies and guidance | School policies, procedures and guidelines | The Highland Council](#)

## EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

In all school activities, we aim to ensure that we:

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, promote good relations. Our 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.

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

[Ministerial Foreword - Presumption to provide education in a mainstream setting: guidance - gov.scot](#)

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

[Background and introduction to the UNCRC Act - UNCRC \(Incorporation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2024 - part 2: statutory guidance - gov.scot](#)



*"Mount Pleasant is a really great school because everyone is helpful and teachers are kind."*

# SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

## HOUSE CAPTAINS

All children are members of House Teams. House Captains are elected from P7 and are given responsibility for organising a range of events during the year. Interested candidates are ranked by interviews hosted by the Head Teacher and P7 Teacher - from there the children participate in a whole school election.

## PUPIL COUNCIL

A Pupil Council is established in the school. The Council members are voted for by their classmates. The Council meets regularly throughout the school year under the guidance of a class teacher and these meetings are minuted. The purpose of the Council is to encourage the children to be involved in the running of their school, putting forward their ideas for improvements and solutions to problems.

## ECO COMMITTEE

The Eco Committee comprises representatives from P4-7. The members are voted for by their classmates. The Committee meet regularly throughout the year under the guidance of a teacher. There are also staff and parent members on the Committee. The Committee who have been awarded a "Silver Flag" from Eco Schools Scotland aim to achieve a green flag over the next year or two.

## FLAG

The FLAG group is the Food for Life Action Group. They work to improve not only the nutrition that children have but to improve the quality of food experiences. Food is not just what you eat and when you eat it; it brings families and communities together. Food can help children learn about sustainability for the future. FLAG looks at helping children see food from farm or garden to plate. The group will promote ways of making the dining experience a positive one, where social interaction and good communication are paramount. For centuries in Scotland food has brought people together to share moments of happiness, sadness and to celebrate special events. This cultural sharing of food and stories is important for children to learn and develop their cultural awareness and strengthen their knowledge of the world around them. The FLAG group aims to encourage interaction between staff, pupils, parents and the community to make Food habits in Scotland a priority. Through food children can learn so much and FLAG are there to support this learning.

 *"In Primary 7 I liked doing the House Captain Elections"*

## CAITHNESS MUSIC FESTIVAL

Mount Pleasant Primary participates in the Caithness Music Festival in June every year. This can range from school choirs to individual solos, poetry reading and differing music categories.

## PRIMARY 7 RESIDENTIAL TRIP

The Primary 7's have an opportunity to go on a weeklong residential trip. This year they are going to Glenmore Activity Centre near Aviemore where they will experience a variety of outdoor activities.

## EDUCATIONAL VISITS

Opportunities are provided for pupils to take part in educational visits and excursions. These vary in type according to the age of the pupils, with our youngest pupils participating in short local visits while senior pupils are given the opportunity to take part in residential visits of up to a week in length. Occasionally, parents will be asked to contribute towards the cost of transport etc but, wherever possible, these costs are met from school funds.

## SPORTS

Sports Day is organised annually by the staff and all children are encouraged to participate in a variety of events. Parents are invited to attend. The school takes part in many sporting events over the year. There are non-competitive inter-school festivals for football and netball, which the P6-7 pupils are encouraged to take part in.

The local Active Schools Co-ordinator organises various sporting activities throughout the year, in recent years these are activities such as:

- Surfing
- Rugby for all age groups
- Yoga
- Dance Workshops
- Circus Skills
- Dance
- Athletics
- Football
- Aerobics
- Shinty
- Badminton
- Cricket



*"Sports Day is really fun"*

*"The PE classes are fun"*

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

We are lucky enough to run After School Clubs. During terms 3 & 4 we aim to provide coaching for our netball and football teams.

Other visitors who have helped out with class lessons include:

Thurso Police

Riding for the Disabled

STEM Ambassadors

Thurso Library

Episcopal Church

Thurso Town Improvements

We encourage the children to become Responsible Citizens by thinking of others and what they can do help. The school supports the Blythswood Shoe Box appeal and, within the last year, have taken part in local and national events raising funds for Children in Need, MacMillan Coffee Morning, Red Nose Day, Thurso Festive Lights to name a few.



*"We do fun days like Children in Need, Red Nose Day and more"*  
*"We have great fun making money for charity"*

# WORKING WITH PARENTS

We are very keen to promote a strong home-school relationship. Parental opinions matter a great deal; these allow us to recognise our strengths and address any weaknesses. Currently we do this by working closely with our Parent Council, regular parental contact and consultation. We also conduct our Annual Survey so we can gauge improvements being made or recognise potential problem areas. In the meantime we actively encourage parents to contact us if they have any comments, suggestions or issues they would like addressed.

## VISITS TO SCHOOL

Parents are always welcome to visit the school to discuss any aspects of their child's educational experience. Appointments can be arranged with the office if parents wish to meet with teachers or the Head Teacher. However, we are more than happy for you to pop in at any time and whenever possible we will attend to your query there and then.

Throughout your child's career at Mount Pleasant there will be many opportunities to come into your child's class to participate in a range of activities. You may even have skills or knowledge that could be shared with the children, eg, baking, crafting, etc. Information about topics the children are covering will be shared through Class Dojo.

**Parental Engagement opportunities** are offered four times a year and give parents the opportunity to find out more about their child's learning and how they can support them at home. A formal Parents' Evening is held in November which gives parents the opportunity to have a ten minute appointment with their child's class teacher.

A security system is in operation and all visitors can access the school by ringing the visitors' bell at the main entrance. While children are in school there is no other access to the building.

## 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.

## EMERGENCY CONTACT

Minor emergencies may arise such as a fall in the playground or gym. Parents are all too aware that children can become ill quite quickly. For these reasons it is essential the school is able to contact a parent, or an appointed emergency contact, at any time during the school day. The school will issue Emergency Contact Forms annually to keep records up to date and we ask that parents inform us as soon as possible of any change in circumstances.

No child will be sent home without either a parent or emergency contact being informed and asked to come to the school to collect the child. In the case of an emergency, medical services will be contacted and if necessary the child will be transported to the nearest Health Centre or Hospital as appropriate. Parents will be contacted at the earliest opportunity.

## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

The main avenue for information for parents is via the **CLASS DOJO** app which is easily downloaded and updated. All parents will be invited to join Dojo by the class teacher. Information and updates are added regularly on the class pages and on the whole school page. These are intended to keep parents up to date with holiday dates, pupil achievements, school events etc. It is therefore extremely important that parents make a habit of checking their Main School and Class Dojo pages and occasionally the children's school-bags for information.

Facebook - you can find us by looking us up under **Mount Pleasant Parent Information Service** All you have to do is "Like" our page and our updates will then appear on your

Facebook Newsfeed. This page is purely to distribute information for parents of pupils of youth opportunities in the local area. At no time will we post personal information or photographs of children on this page. Only administrators may post to this page and the messenger facility is disabled. Please do not post questions or personal information on any of the post as this page is not checked by admin on a regular basis - if you have any questions or issues then please just phone or call into the school.

## PARENT COUNCIL

Parent Councils play an active role in supporting parental involvement in the work and life of the school, while also providing opportunities for parents to express their views on children's education and learning. At Mount Pleasant Primary we are extremely fortunate to have an active and supportive Parent Council.

The Parent Council is a group of parents selected by members of the Parent Forum to represent all the parents of children at a school. Teachers and other Highland Council staff may also attend these meetings. The Parent Council also has Office Bearers who are elected at the AGM, which is held in October.

The Parent Council is there to represent the parents/carers of children at the school. Mount Pleasant Primary School Parent Council welcomes all parents from ELC upwards to get actively involved in helping with fundraising, school events and meetings; these are usually held once per month.

Activities which the Parent Council may be involved in include:

- supporting the work of the school
- gathering and representing parents'/carers' views to the Head Teacher, Education Authority and HMIE
- promoting contact between the school, parents/carers, children and young people and the local community
- fundraising
- involvement in the appointment of Senior School Staff

You can contact our Parent Council by emailing:

[mountpleasant.primary@highlandpc.co.uk](mailto:mountpleasant.primary@highlandpc.co.uk)



*"Mount Pleasant is great because we have all sorts of fun things like Summer Fayres, Christmas Shows, football and netball"*

## COMMENTS/COMPLAINTS

We hope you will enjoy your child's time at school and welcome comments or suggestions, which could help us to improve our service and there are a variety of opportunities to do this over the course of the school year. Although we strive to resolve issues quickly and efficiently there may be times where parents wish to complain about certain aspects of our school, staff or pupil welfare. The current procedure, in the first instance is to contact the Head Teacher. The school will always endeavour to resolve issues by listening to parents and seeking solutions in partnership. Should a situation not be resolved, parents can contact the Area Quality Improvement Manager, Katherine Van Voornveld by emailing [Katherine.wood@highland.gov.uk](mailto:Katherine.wood@highland.gov.uk).

All complaints will be dealt with in a confidential and sympathetic manner and response will be made within 5 days or within an agreed timescale should further investigation be required.

 *"I like Mount Pleasant because they make learning fun"*

## USEFUL LINKS, ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Highland Council

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/827/education\\_and\\_learning](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/827/education_and_learning)

Highland Council Policies and Procedures

[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)

Guidance on the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/guidance-scottish-schools-parental-involvement-act-2006/>

Parentzone provide information and resource for parents and Parent Councils

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

Children in Scotland: Working for Children and their Families (Enquire)

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

Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance

<http://www.siaa.org.uk/>

Thriving Families

<https://www.thrivingfamilies.org.uk/>

Scottish Child Law Centre

<http://www.sclc.org.uk/>

Parentline - help for parents if they have any concerns regarding their children

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

Highland Child Protection & GIRFEC

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

### A.Q.I.M.

Katherine Van Voornveld

Telephone: 07345 750430

Katherine.Wood@highland.gov.uk

### THURSO HIGH SCHOOL

Mrs Hannah Flavell

Head Teacher

Ormlie Road, Thurso

Telephone: 01847 893822

### SCHOOL NURSES

Caithness House

Market Place, Wick

Schoolnurses.caithness@highland.gov.uk

### EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST

Laurie Morrison

Culcabock Education,

Inverness.



"Mount Pleasant is the best school ever"

# TRANSFERRING EDUCATIONAL DATA

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.

## **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)

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

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

- Plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of all pupils.
- Plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of specific groups of pupils.
- Better understand some of the factors which influence pupil attainment and achievement.

- Share good practice.
- Target resources better.
- Enhance the quality of research to improve the lives of young people in Scotland.

### **Your data protection rights**

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

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/ScotXed/SchoolEducation>

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

 *"I like the school trips and can't wait for Fairburn!!!"*

 *"My children are very happy going to school."*

# NURSERY INFORMATION

## INTRODUCTION

Our ELC was established in 1975 and is situated in the main school building. The two large classrooms have carpeted areas for games, toys, role play and quiet corner and wet areas for painting, sand, water, baking, messy play etc. There is a large outdoor play area with a variety of outdoor equipment. ELC is open from 8.30am to 3.30pm.

Our ELC makes full use of the facilities within the main school (eg: school library, gym, main hall etc). To develop a sense of community in the school, ELC children are involved in a variety of whole school activities.

 *like the noise in the gym when I run around."*

 *"The staff are great with the kids both my youngest kids have attended this ELC and have a great relationship with them and they get to know each child as individuals as well."*

 *"I like when we bake, at home I like to lick the spoon."*

## **ENROLMENT AND FUNDING**

Mount Pleasant ELC is commissioned by the Highland Council to provide pre-school education, therefore funded places are available. The funding is paid directly to the pre-school centre for your child's registered number of sessions so there is no required payment from parents. The ELC is licensed by the Care Inspectorate to accommodate 40 children in mainstream at any one given time.

Enrolment normally takes place in February of each year for entry in August, January and April and is in response to an advertisement placed in the local press by the Area Education, Culture and Sports Manager. **Children for entry in August, January and April should enrol at this time to secure a place.** Children entitled to a fully funded place during the session 2026/2027 must be born within the eligible birth dates:

### The Pre-school Year ("Four Year Olds")

- Those born on or between 1 March 2022 - 28 February 2023 are eligible for a funded place from August 2026

### The Ante Pre-school year ("Three Year Olds")

- Those born on or between 1 March 23 - 31 August 2023 will be eligible for a funded place from August 2026.
- Those born on or between 1 September 2023 - 31 December 2023 will be eligible for a funded place from January 2027.
- Those born between 1 January 2024 - 28 February 2024 will be eligible for a funded place from April 2027.

Priority will be given to children living within the school catchment area, first of all to pre-school children. However, where a parent/carer has domestic or work arrangements which give reasonable grounds for granting a place in another centre, enrolment can be accepted if places are available.

Entitlement to pre-school education as contained in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill (2013) at present is 1140 hours of pre-education per annum (30 hours per week). Parents are able to request a flexible option within the hours of 8.30am to 3.00pm. Extra hours over the funded 30 hours are available to purchase. Please note that the flexible option and extra hours will be dependent on numbers already attending the ELC at the requested time. All sessions will be mixed for 3 and 4 year olds.

**It must be stressed that being offered a place in Mount Pleasant ELC does not ensure a place within the primary school for children out with the school catchment. This is dealt with by placement request and available places can vary annually.**

 "It is fun to play with my friends."

## SNACK

Mount Pleasant ELC operates a Healthy Eating policy in line with Highland Council Guidelines. A healthy snack is provided mid-morning and mid-afternoon each day. We aim to offer a wide range of tastes and textures to sample - fruit, vegetables, dairy products and other healthy options.

If your child has any special dietary requirements, e.g. lactose intolerant, allergies, dislikes, it is important that you inform us as soon as possible.

The ELC also operates a tooth-brushing programme and staff receive regular updated training to ensure the programme is carried out according to national guidelines.

 *My favourite is when we eat yoghurts."*

## LUNCH

Children who attend our ELC over the lunch time hour (12 - 1 pm) will have a lunch break. A hot school meal is available free of charge or your child is welcome to take a packed lunch from home. If your child has any special dietary requirements it is vital that you complete the following online Special Diet Form:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/9/school\\_meals/4](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/9/school_meals/4)

## CLOTHING

Children should all bring gym shoes or indoor trainers for wearing in the ELC and a gym kit, e.g. t-shirt and shorts. School sweatshirts, polo shirts or house team t-shirts are available for purchase online.

Mainstream ELC at:

<https://www.schoolwearmadeeasy.com/badged-school-uniform/m-p/m/mount-pleasant-primary-school/>

In our ELC we provide aprons for messy work, however there are sometimes accidents and so a change of clothes in your child's bag would be very useful. As we aim to participate in outdoor play on a daily basis children are also required to have appropriate outdoor clothing and footwear.

**All clothes and possessions should be clearly labelled with your child's name.**

 *"I went up the stairs I think I should move up the rocket!"*

 *I like getting outside to play."*

## COMING TO ELC

Children should always be brought to and collected from the ELC by an adult. If parents arrange for someone to collect their child, he/she must be a responsible adult who is known to the child and the ELC staff should be informed of the change. In an emergency, parents should always telephone the school office to advise of any change in arrangements. We are not authorised to release children into the care of taxi drivers.

If bringing or collecting children by car, parents are requested to use the car parking facilities in Castle Terrace and cross Castletown Road at the crossing patrol area, which may not always be manned due to the ELC starting and finishing times. Parents are requested **not** to use the staff and visitors' car park at the front of the school.

## CONTACT WITH PARENTS

An open afternoon is held before enrolment so prospective parents can view the ELC and resources available, have a chance to talk to the staff and ask any questions you may have. There are also visit days in June where you and your child can come along and play prior to your child starting ELC.

Every term we will invite parents in to meet with their child's Key Worker. This will be an opportunity to talk about the children's learning and also to review their Care Plans

We operate an "Open Door" policy and parents/carers are, of course, welcome to talk to the staff at any time, and to discuss their child's progress or any problem that may arise. If anyone wishes to make an appointment to have a further discussion, a suitable time may be arranged with the ELC staff or through the school office.

Our main platform for communication with parents regarding what is happening in our school is via the "Class Dojo" app. This links parents into their children's individual class pages and the main school story. This means that parents will immediately be able to see information about what has been happening or upcoming events and arrangement in class and school via PC or mobile devices.

 "I am really pleased with \*\*\*'s report. It can be really difficult to find out what she has been doing in ELC - typical 3 year old! The report provides me with lots of information and she always talks fondly about the staff so I know she has a good relationship with them."

## CURRICULUM

A Curriculum for Excellence is the new Scottish 3-18 Curriculum. It promotes 'seamless' transitions from pre-school to primary and primary to secondary. It is an integrated ongoing system of progression to build knowledge from a strong foundation. Progression through the curriculum will be described using the levels below:

Early Level:	ELC to P1
First Level:	P2-P4
Second Level:	P5-P7
Third Level:	S1

Within the ELC we will be focussing on the Early level. The children will take part in active learning which engages and challenges their thinking using real-life or imaginary situations. This includes:

- Spontaneous play
- Planned, purposeful play
- Investigation and exploration
- Events and life experiences
- Focused learning and teaching

Quality active learning builds on children's previous experiences. It allows for different learning styles and children's independence but is supported by adults who structure the environment and intervene sensitively to extend the children's learning.

All activities are structured and targeted specifically for this age group within the eight curricular areas to ensure they have a broad range of experiences whilst embedding the key strategies of Realising the Ambition.

For more information, please visit:

<https://education.gov.scot/Documents/All-experiencesoutcomes18.pdf>

[Realising the Ambition | Resources | Education Scotland](#)

## **ASSESSMENT**

Mount Pleasant ELC follows the Highland Council guidelines to observe the children at play, note their successes and create opportunities to consolidate learning where necessary.

Children's learning is recorded in their Pupil Profile folder to show each child's progression throughout the year. Children are actively involved in setting their own learning targets and staff will provide all the resources and support required to make this achievable. Parents/carers are encouraged to add comments to these folders so that learning is shared.

 "Can I put it in my folder?"

## **BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT**

All adults try to offer themselves as positive role models to the children with regard to friendliness, care and courtesy. All adults will praise and reward positive behaviour displayed by any child. Any negative behaviour will be managed in such a way as to demonstrate the unacceptability of the behaviour, not the child.

Our Behaviour Management Policy is available to read in the policies folder. Please ask a member of staff if you would like to see this.

Children are encouraged to promote good behaviour through group activities and will help to formulate "rules" that all agree on.

## **TRANSITION TO P1**

We are very fortunate in that our ELC is located within the school campus and during their time in ELC children frequently visit different areas in the school and meet with other children and staff. The Primary 1 teachers also visit the ELC on a regular basis so that they become a familiar and trusted person.

Towards the end of the ELC year these opportunities are increased and the children will attend school break times, Sports Day and other special events. The Primary 1 teachers will invite the children to attend several sessions in the Primary 1 classrooms to ease their transition.

Enrolment for Primary 1 generally takes place in January and this is always advertised in the local press. Information regarding enrolment will be provided to all ELC parents by the school.



## **ELC POLICIES**

We have a range of policies covering all aspects of the ELC environment. We encourage parents/carers to be familiar with these. Please ask a member of the ELC staff if you would like to see them. Policies are displayed on a monthly basis and parents/carers are welcome to write comments/queries on the notepad provided.

## **INFORMATION FOR WHOLE SCHOOL ELC**

The following ELC information is exactly the same as for the whole school. Please see guidance set out in the school section of this handbook for the following topics:

- VISION, VALUES & AIMS
- SCHOOL OPENINGS & INSERVICE
- ABSENCES & APPOINTMENTS
- PUPIL CARE AND WELFARE
- EMERGENCY CONTACTS
- PARENT COUNCIL
- ADVERSE WEATHER/SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCEDURES

## **COMMENTS/COMPLAINTS**

We hope you will enjoy your child's time at our ELC and welcome comments or suggestions which could help us to improve our service. Although we strive to resolve issues quickly and efficiently there may be times where parents wish to complain about certain aspects of our ELC, staff or pupil welfare. The current procedure, in the first instance is to contact the Head Teacher.

If you're worried about how care and support is being provided in a service, you can contact the Care Inspectorate's complaints team.



Telephone: 0345 600 9527  
Monday to Friday, between 09:00 - 16:00

Email : [concerns@careinspectorate.gov.scot](mailto:concerns@careinspectorate.gov.scot)

 "I am very happy and feel my child is safe and being looked after, it is excellent"