

SMITHTON PRIMARY SCHOOL



2026-2027

"Believe and you will achieve"

Smithton Primary School
Smithton
Inverness
IV2 7PD



Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to Smithton Primary School! We're thrilled to have you join our school community and hope this handbook gives you a clear picture of what makes Smithton such a special place.

At Smithton, our mission is to create a safe, happy, and caring environment where every child feels valued and inspired to learn. We believe in nurturing respect for themselves, for others, and for the world around them. Through a broad and balanced curriculum, we help pupils reach their full potential, developing independence, creativity, and a positive outlook on life.

What makes us unique? Our Smithton Superpowers:

Positive, Caring, Friendly, Honest, and Respectful.

These values guide everything we do, from learning in the classroom to playing in the playground and help our pupils grow into confident, responsible individuals.

Smithton is a vibrant and busy school, and we know that education works best when we work together. That's why we place great importance on partnership with parents and the wider community. Our active Parent Council plays a key role in organising social and fundraising events throughout the year, helping to make Smithton a truly connected and supportive place.

Parents contribute in many ways, from volunteering in classrooms to supporting learning at home, and we deeply value this involvement. If you'd like to find out more after reading this handbook, please visit our website at www.smithtonprimary.co.uk. You can also contact us by phone on **01463 791 606** or email us at smithton.primary@highland.gov.uk. Details for the Parent Council are available on our website or through the school office.

We look forward to working in partnership with you and hope your child will thrive and be happy here at Smithton Primary, where Superpowers shine every day!

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steven MacIver'.

Steven MacIver
Head Teacher
(E-mail: steven.maciver2@highland.gov.uk)

Our Values, Vision and Aims



Our Vision: Believe! You will achieve!

Values

Our school values are **Honesty, Respectful, Friendly, Caring, and Positive**. The understanding of our school values has grown to be known as 'Smithton Superpowers'.

Smithton Primary School and community is a place where;

- Everyone has a sense of belonging
- Experiences and opportunities develop skills for lifelong learning
- Everyone is inspired to be ambitious and to achieve their best
- Expectations are high
- Everyone is supported and listened to, confidence and resilience instilled

Our Aims

In partnership with the parents/carers and the wider community, we aim to;

- Value, respect and include everyone
- Nurture and support each individual
- Work together to help children reach their full potential
- Challenge and motivate children in their learning
- Provide wide and varied learning experiences

In fulfilling these aims we are doing so through the context of national and international priorities: Getting it Right for Every Child, Curriculum for Excellence and the UN Rights for the Child. Global Goals 2030 and OECD Learning Compass 2030 through Developing the Young Workforce will start to shape our curriculum and contexts for learning as we all 'reboot' after lockdown in 2020.

We continue to promote a sense of community through:

- Children's Services Worker (based at the school but employed by Social Work)
- Positive links with our local community, local churches and visitors to the school
- Extracurricular clubs run by volunteers – almost all run for no cost to pupils

STAFF

Management Team

Head Teacher: Mr Steven MacIver
Depute Head Teacher: Mrs Emma Watt

Class Teachers

P1AM: Ms A MacKay
P1KM: Miss K MacKay (*Principal Teacher*)
P1/2CG: Mrs C Goodall / Mrs S Houston
P2JB: Ms J Blair
P2/3KG: Miss J Keiro-Kirk (Probationer) / Mr Iain Grandison
P3: Mrs J Morrison
P3/4EM: Mrs Eilidh MacAulay
P4SH: Mr Scott Hardie (*Principal Teacher*)
P4/5DM: Ms E O' Donnell / Mrs R Munro
P5BG: Ms A Bochel / Mr Iain Grandison
P5/6AN: Miss C Noble
P6PG: Mrs Lynne Parke / Mr Iain Grandison
P6/7EK: Mrs E King
P7 Mr R Jamieson

CCR: Ms S Houston, Ms S Barclay (PE),

ASL Teacher: Mrs R Tough
PEF Teacher: Miss Sarah Sturrock

Current School Roll: 369 pupils.

Various other people are employed in the school to help in the education of our pupils. They work alongside class teachers, sometimes with the whole class, sometimes with groups and sometimes with individuals. They offer support to children of all abilities.

Support Staff

Pupil Support Assistants

Mrs C Fraser, Miss S Bills, Mrs C Brown, Mrs K Banks, Ms L Swinwood, Ms J MacLeod, Mrs J MacArthur, Mrs A Steel, Mrs K Pollock, Mrs L Bruce, Mr F Tyroney, Mrs T Thomson, Mrs B Thomson, Mrs S Hampton

Children's Service Worker

Mrs A Anderson (*Monday and Thursday*)

Clerical Assistants

Mrs N Cornish
Mrs M Matheson

Facilities Assistant Mr D Aitchison

Senior Early Years Practitioner Ms N Cunningham

Early Years Practitioners Mrs E Harvey, Mrs A McNeil, Miss P Cassie, Mrs M Cranstoun, Ms A MacIver, Ms Aimee Brown, Mrs A McDonald, Ms D Bannerman, Mrs C Horsburgh

Early Years Support Worker Mrs M Blanchard, Miss R Rees

Smithton Family Team

Family Link Worker Brenda Thomson

Active Schools Coordinator Mr D Shaw

The Scottish Government is addressing the attainment related poverty gap by using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) to identify children and families who require extra support. Each school is money to support families in this bracket. At Smithton we have a Family Link Worker, this officer in conjunction with the school staff and work directly with families in their homes, in the community and with the children in the school. If you require support with family budgeting, housing issues or some support to try different parenting and family techniques please contact the head teacher in the first instance. We have a range of support activities from wellbeing walks, family walks in the woods on Saturdays, breakfasts and workshops based on parental suggestions. Please contact the school if you would like to chat to the team.

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE(ELC)/NURSERY

The ELC has been a feature of our school for over a generation now and can provide up to 84 places throughout the day. As it is the foundation of learning in Smithton you will find information about the setting throughout this handbook.

At Smithton we aim to provide all children with the opportunity to access Early Learning in a caring, happy and safe environment. Children learn through play and activity and each child comes with a slightly different experience. We get to know them very well as individuals, learning about their strengths and building on them.

Places are available for both three and four year olds, children are eligible to receive 30 hours funded per week from the term after their third birthday. However, parents may choose to pay for nursery provision from the week after their child's 3rd birthday.

Our nursery is inspected regularly by the Care Inspectorate, a body set up under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001, to regulate care services throughout Scotland.

SCHOOL TIMES

P1-3 9:00am – 10:30am
Break: 10:30 – 10:45am
10:45am – 12:00pm
Lunch: 12:00pm – 1:00pm
1:00pm – 2:45pm

P4-7 9:00am – 10:45am
Break: 10:45 – 11:00am
11:00am – 12:35pm
Lunch: 12:35pm – 1:20pm
1:20pm – 3:00pm

ELC - Opening hours

We are open between 8.30am until 3pm and there is certain flexibility for 1140 within these times. Additional hours over the 30 funded hours can be booked and are charged at £5.05 per hour. Information packs on registration, bookings and payment can be obtained from the school office. **Please note we require 4 weeks' notice of any potential patterns changes.**

ABSENCES

If your child is absent, please call the school absence number on 01463 796722. If we do not hear from you, and your child does not attend school, we will contact you to ensure all is well.

If your child becomes ill or has an accident while attending nursery we will contact you immediately by phone. If we cannot contact you we will ring your emergency contact number. Please let us know if you change any contact numbers.

ATTENDANCE/ABSENCE

Good attendance is vital if pupils are to achieve their full potential.

Procedures: If your child is absent, you must inform the school immediately. When your child is absent from school without notice, a staff member will contact you to find out why your child is not in school. This is to ensure your child is safe. **If after the third day we cannot contact you, we will follow the authority's, Highland Attendance Policy and contact the Police.** Please make sure that you contact us to let us know of your child's absences as soon as you can. **You can record a school absence by calling** 01463 796722.

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

reception and sign in. Where at all possible, medical and dental appointments should be made out with school hours.

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

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

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

- Will result in a significant loss in classroom experience.
- Will result in a pressure to 'catch up' on missed work by pupils.
- Could result in pupils missing assessments with consequential impact on pupils and teachers.
- Could result in the loss of curricular activities.
- Will affect school attendance records and efforts to raise standards of attendance.
- Under the guidance issued at a national level, most family holidays will be coded as unauthorised absence, only in exceptional cases will the absence be recorded as authorised.

In conclusion, we would ask parents to be aware of these considerations when making decisions on planning holidays during term time. We have enclosed a link to the school term dates on the Highland Council website to aid parents in planning any holidays they may be considering

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

If parents decide to make holiday arrangements during school term, this should be confirmed in writing to the headteacher.

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.

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

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 Pupil Census is used for statistical and research purpose only.

Your Data Protection Rights

The collection, transfer, processing and sharing of ScotXed data is done in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). We also comply with the National Statistics code of Practice requirements and other legislation related to safeguarding the confidentiality of data. The Data Protection Act gives you the right to know how we will use your 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 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 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

Please <http://www.highland.gov.uk/livinghere/equalopportunities/> see for up to date information, in summary, our activities in school should ensure that we eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, to 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.

Policies

Please see both our school website and Highland Council websites for information on the policies that govern our school. These can be found by following these links:

[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)

IF YOUR CHILD CHANGES SCHOOL

There are regulations also if your child leaves a school to go to another. Parents must meet with the head teacher before removing the child from school and must provide their new address and the name and address of the receiving school.

COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

We hope you will enjoy your child’s time at Smithton and welcome comments or suggestions, which could help us to improve our service. However, we are aware that difficulties can occur from time to time and if you feel you have reason to complain, then please follow the procedure outlined below.

If a parent has any concerns they should contact the head teacher in the first instance.

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 Mark Jones, Area Quality and Improvement Manager, Head Quarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness IV3 5NX. Mark.jones@highland.gov.uk.

For further support, parents and guardians can visit Parentline: <https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/parentline-scotland/>.

PLACING REQUESTS – PARENTAL CHOICE

Each school serves its own particular catchment area. Pupils whose homes are located in that area will have priority in being allocated a place in the school. However, parents have the right to specify the school in which they wish to place their child. Application must be made to the Area Quality and Improvement Manager, Mark.jones@highland.gov.uk, placing request forms can be obtained from https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/887/enrol_your_child_for_school/2.

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

If pupils live out with the school catchment area and their parents wish them to attend Smithton Primary they can contact the head teacher to arrange a visit.

SCHOOL UNIFORM / CLOTHING ALLOWANCE

Nursery children should come in comfortable, old play clothes as they will be encouraged to learn outside as well as exploring sensory play inside (e.g. water, shaving foam, paint and salt dough). There is no expectation that they will wear the school uniform but some do as they have older siblings and want to be the same as them. We encourage independent skills as much as possible e.g. going to the toilet so jogging trousers are great, skinny jeans are more tricky!

All school pupils are encouraged to take pride in their appearance and their school, and to this end the following items of school uniform are recommended:

Blue Smithton School Sweatshirt, Blue/Yellow/White Smithton School Polo Shirt, Blue Smithton School (quarter zip), Fleece and Blue Smithton School (full zip fleece). Navy/grey trousers/skirt, blue/grey/white shirt/blouse.

The above are printed with the school badge – and can be purchased at National School Wear, The Longman, Inverness, Telephone 01463 717182. Myclothing.com for online orders via Tesco.

The following items may be kept at school:

- Gym/shoes / Shorts for PE
- Indoor shoes for changing into (gym shoes, slippers, etc).
- Cast off shirt for art / craft work to protect clothing.

All clothing should be clearly labelled with the child's name and class. As a large school you can imagine how difficult it is to find the correct owners of clothing that goes missing! Lost property is stored in our reception area.

We require our pupils to have at least one change of clothes in their bag.

CLOTHING ALLOWANCE AND FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Some families may be entitled to an annual clothing allowance. Application forms are available on the Highland Council Website, and we can help you with this from the school office.

LUNCHES AND 'SNACK SHACK'

School Meals

Meals are cooked on the premises and served in the dining hall where packed lunches may also be eaten. The school meals department provide a varied midday meal at a cost of £2.40/£2.65 daily. All children in Nursery – P5 are entitled to free school meals. Children who require special diets may be catered for by consulting with the school. Pupils are supervised by staff in the dining room and where eating problems exist, parents are informed. Menus are available online https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/9/school_menus

The school has a cashless payment system, for more information on this please visit the Highland Council website at https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/9/school_meals/2

Free School Meals

All children in Nursery until P5 are entitled to a free school meal. Parents who think they may be entitled to free school meals should contact the school office for detailed information about eligibility and to obtain an application form because this will give you a clothing allowance. for information and application form please see

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

Forms require to be resubmitted at the beginning of each school year. The school cannot issue free meals to children until the application has been approved by Highland Council and the Head Teacher has received confirmation of approval. **It is extremely important, therefore that parents ensure that forms are submitted in good time before the commencement of the new session so that their children may receive their free lunch at the start of term.**

Packed Lunches

All food must be carried in a semi rigid container with a secure lid and these should be clearly marked with the name of the pupil. Glass bottles and containers are not permitted under the Health and Safety Regulations. Similarly drinks in cans are not allowed. The Authority cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage to packed meals or their containers. Please refrain from including nuts in your child's packed lunch as we avoid this food in nursery and school due to allergies in some of our children and young people.

Snacks

ELC provide water, milk, fruit and other healthy snacks as there is a hot lunch on offer daily. They are also involved in baking, cooking, setting table, using good manners, etc. School children are able to access milk, toast and fruit at 10.30 daily at cost of 30p per item. If you are providing the snack for your school child we suggest a small item such as fruit or similar snack that does not contain sugar.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Emergency Closures

It is important that parents let us know of friends or relatives who can, if the parent is unavailable to take responsible care of your child if he or she is ill or injured at school. This must be a local contact and one we can reach by telephone. This information should be given at the time of enrolment or as soon as possible thereafter. Our emergency contact records are updated every year.

EMERGENCY CLOSURE - SNOW/POWER CUTS

During days of extreme weather, it may be necessary to send children home early or close the school. If this happens you will be contacted immediately.

The previous dial-in phone service to inform parents of school closures has been withdrawn by Vodaphone. Instead, parents can obtain information on the Highland Council school closures webpage <http://www.highland.gov.uk/schoolclosures>

This is in addition to schools' own arrangements in place for informing parents of school closures. – change to process for informing parents of school closures following the withdrawal of the school closure dial-in phone service.

Equality and Inclusion

For up-to-date on equality and inclusion information please see:

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

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

In summary, our activities in school should ensure that we:

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, promote good relations. Activities should not discriminate against any of the following 'protected characteristics' age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity.

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](#).

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Child Protection / Illness

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 have to report such incidents to social work services which can lead to a joint social work/police investigation. All agencies involved in child protection regard priority. For more information about Child Protection Procedures within Highland and the relevant contact details, please visit the Highland Child Protection Website, <https://hcpc.scot/> Parentline is also a useful website to consult for many issues: <https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/parentline-scotland/>

Illness

Pupils feeling unwell should not be sent to school. If a pupil becomes ill during the school day the parent is contacted and the child sent home. The school must be informed of any medical condition that may put the pupil at risk in any school activity eg if the child is asthmatic, epileptic, etc.

Medical

Minor Injury – Minor cuts and bruises, bleeding noses or upsets will be dealt with by a member of staff. We have one trained first aider whose qualifications are up to date.

Serious Injury – We endeavour to contact parents immediately. The child, if necessary is taken to hospital. Our policy is “better safe than sorry”. Please note however, that we are not medically trained and have to rely on our common sense.

Headlice

Unfortunately, nits and lice (which like clean heads) are still around in all schools throughout the UK and we, in Smithton, are no exception. It is important that parents check their children's heads regularly and if there is evidence of lice infection given the appropriate treatment to the person infected.

Please also let close family friends and all close contacts of the child know as they will also need their hair checked. The school would also appreciate notification. Confidentiality is assured in respect of individual children.

School Dentist

All children can be treated by the school dentist. The dentist is at Culloden Dental Surgery on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Culloden Dental Surgery 792554.

WET WEATHER CONDITIONS

As there is limited shelter provision at the school and staff are not available to supervise pupils out with school hours please, on wet weather days, do not send your children to school early. It is preferable that pupils are a little late than wet. On wet weather days during the morning playtime, all children are kept indoors. At lunch times only those having a meal in the school can be supervised. Home lunch pupils should return to school about five minutes before the bell. We do try to have the children outside so please make sure that they are suitably dressed for drizzle and rainy weather.

FIRE SAFETY AND LOCK DOWN PROCEDURES

There are regular fire practices throughout the session in order to familiarise staff and pupils with procedures in the event of fire. The fire safety policy is on the school website and is reviewed at least monthly at the moment with the current pandemic situation, etc.

BICYCLES

Bringing bicycles to school is encouraged as we have bike racks and want to promote a healthy lifestyle. Please make sure your child wears a helmet and has a secure locking system for the bike. The racks are located at the entrance and sides to the school.

MONEY

Large sums of money sent to school should be accompanied by a note saying how much and the reason for sending it. Money and valuables should not be left in the cloakroom areas but should be handed to the class teacher for safe keeping.

PARENT FORUM / PARENT COUNCIL SECONDARY EDUCATION, COMMUNITY INVOLVMENT

Mrs C. Horsburgh is the current Parent Council Chairperson and there are regular meetings. Many meetings are open to all the parent forum and all parents are invited to make contributions to the school.

All parents are invited to contribute to the life and work of the school and community. Ideas are taken on board and parents are consulted with the school improvement plan through the blog section of the website, questionnaires, open meetings, newsletter questions, etc. We use your information to

inform the improvement plan and after questionnaires the results are compiled and shared among the parent body.

While this is an 'open school' your family's confidentiality is important to us. Please make us aware of anything in writing regarding your family circumstances that you want us to know. While we endeavour to answer your calls or meet with you within 24 hours there are certain times in the year when it could be difficult. Please know that we communicate as effectively as we can.

Parent Council email: smithonpc@gmail.com / smithton.primary@highlandpc.co.uk

Facebook @smithtonprimarypc

PARENTS/GUARDIANS/CARERS AS PARTNERS

We firmly believe in creating a school which has an ethos based on creating positive relationships between staff, pupils and their parents. These relationships must be nurtured by a healthy exchange of information between teachers and pupils, between home and school. We always welcome parental interest in the welfare of our pupils. Whatever the nature of the issue, you can be assured of our help.

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

- Parents' Evenings
- SeeSaw Digital Profiles
- Target Setting
- Child Plan meetings
- Information on the school website and blogposts for what's happening in the minute

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

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

Parental information is obtained from questionnaires issued regularly at Parents evenings and from Parent Forums. We have focus group meetings usually twice a year and the Parent Council is trialling a focus group four times a year this year.

A member of the Senior Management Team is in school most evenings for parents to contact with any issues.

Parent Council is a group of parents selected to represent all parents of children at the school. Any parent who wishes to raise an issue for the Parent Council to consider can do so by contacting Claire Horsburgh, Chair Person, preferably through the Facebook account @smithtonprimarypc

Useful information for parents and how to get involved in your child's education, how to support the school, information on curriculum developments can be found at Parentzone: <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/>

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](#).

TRANSITIONS

HOME TO NURSERY

We acknowledge the learning and hard work you have put in as a parent before your child even comes to us. It is important that we listen to you and your child prior to coming into the setting. The time when a child starts is usually a very exciting time for them but can also be an anxious time for parents as they take their first independent steps! We want parents to feel as part of the Smithton family as your child does. To this end we ensure that there is a clear transition pathway for coming into nursery: you will receive a letter inviting you and your child to come for a short play. You will be invited to have a presentation with some of the staff around expectations in the nursery. You will then be contacted directly by an early years practitioner so that you have a point of contact. There will be regular 'stay and play' opportunities for you and there is always a friendly face at the door each morning should you require any information.

NURSERY TO PRIMARY ONE

The ELC is very much part of the whole school and during their time with us the children have many opportunities to be used to the school building, the playground and the wider school community. We have a comprehensive transition plan that is available for all children and enhanced for those who require extra support moving to primary one. We are also fully aware that parents may feel anxious about the transition. We're here to listen and support all parents and carers.

SECONDARY EDUCATION

Pupils transfer to Culloden Academy. If you wish to contact this school, the official address of the Head Teacher is:

Mrs Claire McGonigal, Head Teacher, Culloden Academy, Culloden, Inverness. Telephone 01463 790851

Liaison exists between Culloden Academy and its Associated Primary Schools (Smithton, Duncan Forbes, Balloch, Cradlehall, Ardersier, Croy) and meetings of the Culloden Are Group take place throughout the session. Throughout the year Academy staff and Primary staff work closely together to ensure continuity of education by providing adequate information about our pupils in Primary 7 at the transfer stage.

Parents of P7 children meet with Culloden Academy Staff in Smithton School during Term 3 and later in the Academy in the summer term. In June, P7 pupils spend a few days in the Academy, working in various departments, in order to familiarise themselves with the Academy prior to actual transfer. The children enjoy their visit and feel rather more confident about the next stage of their school career.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Our liaison police officer visits from time to time to talk to pupils on relevant matters such as bullying, say no to strangers, etc. Parents and community helpers volunteer their services from time to time to share their particular interests and talents. Here is a line to the Highland Council's anti-bullying guidance for school. https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19358/anti_bullying_-_guidance_for_schools

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

All Primary Schools in the Highlands have been appointed an Active Schools Coordinator to work within their cluster/community group. Jointly funded by Sport Scotland and Highland Council the vision of Active Schools is to encourage all children to become more physically active by participating in safe, enjoyable, physical activities and to promote healthy lifestyles. The specific aim is to get more children, more active, more often with a target of 80% of primary school children being physically active for one hour a day. Mr David Shaw is based at Culloden Academy.

We recognise the value and enjoyment of extra-curricular clubs and the school provides a wide range.

THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

There are many changes which have taken place in Scottish education through the 'Curriculum for Excellence' focus. What remains consistent is that all children need to know how to read, write and count! [Curriculum for Excellence | Education Scotland](#)

From day one in our nursery we actively encourage learning through play and curiosity. Nursery and P1 – P3 have a clear play based learning strategy and our main focus, through Curriculum for Excellence is to plan through interactions, experiences and spaces ([from Realising the Ambition](#))

P4-7 are encouraged to continue developing their curiosity for learning and also to really start taking ownership of their learning. Each class has a set of experiences and outcomes so the knowledge and skills to be achieved are understood and led by the teacher however the young people choose the context to encourage engagement, participation, thinking and dialogue. There is a clear pathway for literacy, numeracy and health & wellbeing which is the core of our curriculum, but application of knowledge and skills is evident through the other areas.

They need to be inquisitive, enthusiastic about learning and see its purpose. We try to engage the learners to think for themselves and to take ownership for their learning. We try to help the learners see the connections between different areas of the curriculum so that they can transfer their skills and knowledge with ease. This is no mean feat, especially when you consider that the children are in school for less than a fifth of their day! That's why we need to work together at home and school. Homework is encouraged to let you see what your child has been doing, encourage talk about school and learning in the home and consolidate learning for the child. Please put it in writing if you would not like your child to complete homework.

We encourage reading by taking each class to the local library regularly and the expectation is that you will read with your child at home. From nursery to P7 the environment provides simple access for reading – signs, shops, packaging, newspapers, internet ... and so the list goes on. Maths and number work can be practised at home through weighing, gardening, shopping, money ... again the list goes on. Writing can be encouraged through taking notes at home, thank you letters to family, shopping lists, emails ... you get the picture. All of these activities encourage consolidation of learning and connections are made between learning in school and the purposefulness of using this learning in the real world.

Through the curriculum we expect children to achieve in a variety of ways and attain standards expected of their ability. Progress is monitored by class teachers and the senior management team. Support and research-based interventions are available to children in a variety of ways and we stress importance on supporting children to achieve and attain. Inclusion and equality are expected and using the Getting It Right For Every Child helps to keep all agencies to an action plan for children and families. Just ask to see the staged approach to supporting children in their learning.

All children need support to help them learn. Some children require more help than others. We follow the Getting it Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) model to assess, identify and support additional support needs. <https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/> If you have a concern about your child in primary school, please contact your child's class teacher in the first instance or the head teacher.

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

There is tremendous support from The Pines website for neurodiversity: <https://www.thepineshighland.com/>

Underpinning the learning at school is the learning for life philosophy – it has a purpose, stimulates living, encourages good mental health and wellbeing and creates rounded, social, positive attitudes towards themselves and each other. We ensure all sensitive aspects of learning e.g. relationships and sexual health, parenthood and substance awareness are given notice to parents beforehand. Special arrangements will be made for pupils whose parents do not wish them to participate in religious observance. The school enjoys a close relationship with the local church and has regular visits from the church minister.

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

Nationally, we follow this guidance: [Assessment and achievement | Curriculum in Scotland | Parentzone Scotland | Education Scotland](#)

Every nursery child has a 'Wow Book' i.e. individual progress evidence with targets, photos of learning activities, termly summary report and an all about me section. All of these sections can be accessed and we encourage all parents and carers to be involved in keeping this file updated. There is also a development overview ([first year of nursery](#) and [second year of nursery](#)) and we link our practice to

[Highland Council's website](#). The website [Bumps to Bairns](#) is full of practical help for both parents and professionals. Do have a look.

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

Teachers will use the assessment process as an evaluative, diagnostic and formative tool to provide evidence of pupil attainment and progress and to inform learning and teaching approaches and pupil targets.

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

Parents will receive feedback on their son or daughter's progress through pupil reports, progress checks, and target setting information.

Pupils will reflect on their progress, achievement and best work in their Sharing Folder at least twice a term. This folder is shared between home and school and records progress in achievements both in school and wider achievements that you are asked to share with us. Please include any photos or certificates which can be copied and put into the folder.

Progress

Parents wishing to enquire about a pupil's progress are invited to get in touch with the class teacher in the first instance and then support for learning and the head teacher may get involved.

The Curriculum for Excellence teacher led annual assessments fall in line with the national NSA P1, P4 and P7 annual diagnostic tests and we are slightly above our comparator school. No room for complacency so we strive on to meet the needs of all young people. Staff have planned moderation tasks throughout the year and verify assessments across the school and Culloden area with colleagues to ensure valid judgements. At this level we assess to find next steps, develop learning attributes and to build foundations in skills for lifelong learning.

You will find the Standards and Quality Report and the School Improvement Plan on the Highland Council Website.

https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/29157/smithton_primary_school_sq_report_2023-24