



Ballachulish Primary School

School Handbook

2025-2026



Work Together, Learn Together, Grow Together



Dear Parents & Guardians,

We are delighted to welcome you and your child to Ballachulish Primary School.

At Ballachulish, our aim is to ensure that every child has the opportunity to fulfil their potential to become successful learners, responsible citizens, effective contributors and confident individuals. We are committed to providing a supportive and nurturing environment, where each student is encouraged to explore their interests, develop new skills and a love of learning, and build lasting friendships.

Situated in the beautiful area of South Lochaber, our surroundings are an integral part of our learning environment. We believe that nature and our local community greatly enhance your child's educational experience, and we incorporate these elements into our curriculum whenever possible.

This handbook has been written in consultation with pupils, staff and parents to provide you with some details that should be helpful as your child joins Ballachulish Primary. Your involvement in your child's education is invaluable, and we look forward to working with you during your child's time with us. We have an open-door policy and parents are always very welcome to get in touch to discuss any queries or issues you have.

We look forward to a wonderful year ahead, filled with learning, growth, and special memories.

Kind regards,

Mary Evans

Acting Head Teacher

mary.evans@highland.gov.uk



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BALLACHULISH PRIMARY SCHOOL and ELC

School Address, Staffing and General Information

Address: Ballachulish Village
Ballachulish
Lochaber
PH49 4JQ
Telephone: 01855 811 373
Email: ballachulish.primary@highland.gov.uk

School Website:

<https://sites.google.com/kinlochlevenhigh.org.uk/stbridesandglencoeprimary/home>

Staff:	Acting Head Teacher	Miss Mary Evans
	Class Teacher P4-7	Miss Amy Feighan
	Class Teacher P1-3	Miss Christina Wilkie
	Clerical Assistant	Mrs Maria Boyle
	Strings Tutor	Ms Claire Hamilton
	Pupil Support Assistants	Mrs Corina MacInnes
		Mrs Mhairi Houghton
		Ms Fiona Fox
	Early Years Practitioners	Mrs Sheena Denholm
		Mrs Tamara McColm
	Catering	Mrs Jenna Grant
		Ms Megan Scobie
	Nursery Management Teacher	Mrs Caroline Brennan
	Cleaner	Mrs Carol MacKenzie

Present Roll: Primary School 35 ELC 14

School Day:	<u>Class</u>	<u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>
	ELC	9am start	3pm finish
	P1- P3	9am - 12.30pm	1.15pm - 2.30pm
	P4-P7	9am - 12.30pm	1.15pm - 3.15pm
	Morning Interval	10.30 - 10.45am.	
	Afternoon Interval	2-2.15pm	

Background Information - Ballachulish Primary School

This school has been in existence since the late 1800s and was previously known as Ballachulish Public School and part of Argyll. Ballachulish has a well recorded industrial heritage with the local slate mine. The main industry and employment is tourism, crofting and aquaculture.

The current school has three main classrooms and an external classroom. The capacity school roll is 60 pupils. The ELC (nursery) has a separate playroom, garden and entrance. The children across the ELC and school have access to a large gym hall which doubles as our dining hall and assembly hall.

A Curriculum for Excellence is delivered in the school from Early Level through to Level 3. The children attending the school are mainly from Ballachulish Village and surrounding areas of Kentallen and Glenahulish.

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School Improvement and Quality Assurance

Our School Improvement Plan was developed through consultation with staff, learners and parents.

Please view and read our plan by following the link below.

[Highland Council SIP 24-25 South Lochaber Quad](#)

Please click the link below to read about our school improvements in session 2023-2024 in our Standards and Quality Report

[Ballachulish Primary SQR 23-24](#)

Our Vision

****Our Vision, Values and Aims are currently being updated****

We want to ensure that all our children develop the attributes, knowledge and skills they need to thrive in life, learning and work. They will be able to demonstrate the four capacities (*successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens*) through the four contexts for learning (*curriculum areas and subjects, interdisciplinary learning, ethos and life of the school and opportunities for personal achievement*) and in a curriculum which reflects the seven principles of design (*breadth, progression, depth, personalisation and choice, challenge and enjoyment, coherence and relevance*).

This curriculum will:

- Allow pupils to contribute to the ethos and life of the school community.
- Provide opportunities for personal achievement and supports all learners in developing skills for learning, life and work.
- Have a continuous focus on literacy, numeracy and health and well-being with all staff having a responsibility to develop, reinforce and extend learning in these areas.
- Provide opportunities for mixed-stage learning, interest-based, coherent, and relevant.
- Place the emphasis of our curriculum on breadth, challenge and depth and on the entitlements of learners rather than subject-based content.
- Provide a broad general education (BGE) including all the experiences and outcomes.
- Provide progression through the experiences and outcomes that is consistent with their learning needs and prior achievement.
- Raise standards by developing an interest and enthusiasm for learning.
- Develop an interdisciplinary approach to learning through topic and thematic work.
- Provide multiple experiences through a range of learning opportunities, outside, through play, in small groups, through art, music and sport, by watching, listening and doing.
- Recognise both local and global dimensions of citizenship. We make links with local and global communities to facilitate and develop the four capacities of a Curriculum for Excellence, ensuring the children are given opportunities to develop informed and diverse attitudes.
- Provide opportunities for personal achievement and support all learners in developing skills for learning, life and work.

Our Values

Ready Safe Respectful

We are **POLITE** – We don't use bad language or say cruel/offensive words

We are **GENTLE** – We don't hurt others

We are **HELPFUL and KIND** – We don't hurt anybody's feelings

We **WORK HARD** – We don't waste time

We are **HONEST** – We don't cover up the truth

We **LOOK AFTER PROPERTY** – We don't waste or damage things

We **LISTEN** – We don't interrupt. We don't take sides

We **RESPECT OTHERS** – We do not invade other people's property and don't enter their personal space

Our Aim

Work Together

Learn Together

Grow Together

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Parent Council

Ballachulish Parent Council Chair: Ms Rebecca Weeks

Email: ballachulish.primary@highlandpc.co.uk

We have a supportive and strong Parent Council. Their fundraising goes towards the school transport costs for swimming, skiing, school trips and resources for our school and ELC.

We really value and welcome parents' involvement in our school and are keen to work with you to help us give your child the best education and learning experience. The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 is seen as a key step in improving parents' involvement in their own child's education and in the wider work of the school. All evidence shows that when parents, carers and other family members are actively involved in supporting their child's education, children's achievement and general experience of school are better.

As a parent of a child in attendance at school, you will be automatically a member of the Parent Forum.

As a member of the Parent Forum:

- You can ask the school for advice and information on your child's education and how you can support this.
- You will have the opportunity to come along to meetings and to feed in your ideas in other ways.
- You can also help choose the Parent Council for your child's school – this is a group of parents who represent the views of parents in the school.

The type of things a Parent Council could get involved in includes:

- Supporting the work of the school
- Gathering and representing parents' views to the Head teacher, education authority and HMIE
- Promoting contact between the school, parents, pupils, providers of nursery education and the local community
- Fundraising
- Organising events
- Being involved in the appointment of senior staff

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Curriculum

In Scotland, the Curriculum for Excellence is arranged in a progression of levels from nursery to age 18. There are six curricular levels:

Early - The pre-school years & P1

First - To the end of P4

Second - To the end of P7

Third & Fourth - S1 to S3

Senior Phase - S4 to S6

Curriculum for Excellence based on four fundamental capacities. These capacities reflect and recognise the lifelong nature of education and learning. The four capacities are aimed at helping children and young people to become:

- Successful Learners
- Responsible Citizens
- Confident Individuals
- Effective Contributors

Our curriculum provides the opportunities for our pupils to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to fulfill their potential.



There are 8 curricular areas with Curriculum for Excellence:

Sciences, Languages (including English & Gaelic, mathematics, Expressive Arts, Social Studies, Technologies, Health & Wellbeing and Religious & Moral Education.

Relationships, Sexual Health, Parenting and Drug Awareness education is delivered as part of our Health & Wellbeing curriculum. Parents will be kept informed about when these lessons will be delivered and will be given information about the resources that class teachers will use.

Parents are encouraged to get in touch with school staff if there is any aspect of the curriculum they would like to discuss.

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Outdoor Learning and Play

Opportunities for outdoor learning exist through our large school gardens and estates. We have access to two poly-tunnels for growing and harvesting, multi-use games area at Ballachulish and some of the world's best outdoor scenery and facilities for skiing, biking, open water sports and hill-walking. Parent and community volunteers, the National Trust for Scotland, Lochaber Rangers and the volunteers from the Lochaber Geopark help out with school visits and exploration of the wonderful natural resources in Lochaber.

The children regularly visit the Loch Leven shoreline, Cuil Bay, Bishop's Bay, Glencoe Lochan, National Trust for Scotland site in Glencoe, as well as exploring the hills and mountains that surround the schools.

We firmly encourage all our children to play and see play as integral to learning and wellbeing. Each school plans and delivers play as part of the curriculum.

Assessment & Reporting

Class teachers are continuously assessing our pupils' learning to ensure that they are making progress and are being suitably challenged. Assessment enables teachers to plan next steps effectively and support learning where required. It allows schools to track pupil progress and to recognise and celebrate achievement. Our pupils are also involved in assessing their own work and setting targets for their next steps.

Some online testing is also carried out at certain points in the year to give teachers additional information about the progress our pupils are making.

Parents have an opportunity to see and discuss their child's work at the Parents' Meetings, which are held throughout the session. Work is shared regularly on Pupils' Seesaw Profiles. Pupil Reports are shared in June each year. Parents can make an appointment to discuss their child's progress at any time by contacting the school.

More information about assessment can be found by clicking on the link below:

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

Community Involvement

The children take part in entertaining the community at social events, carol singing around the village at Christmas time. The community is welcomed to events, presentations and shows in each school. We love inviting our community to prize-giving, fayres and open days.

Many fundraising events are organised by the Parent Forum and are exceptionally well supported by parents and community members.

We have volunteers from the community who come in to work on expressive arts, skills and health and wellbeing activities with the pupils. Our local Police Officer, PC McNicol, regularly visits and engages with the children and parents

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Assembly & Religious Observance

We have weekly assemblies hosted by local ministers, and volunteers on a rota. We enhance and celebrate our common social and school values, look at faith and spirituality, through song, craft and story-telling. We really enjoy celebrating the achievements of the children at assembly.

We attended church services for Christmas, Easter and at the end of session to which parents, family, friends and members of the wider community are invited. At the Summer Service we mark the Primary 7 pupils moving on to High School with a small gift.

Arrangements will be made for pupils whose parents do not wish them to take part in religious observance - please contact Miss Evans, the Head Teacher, to discuss this if necessary.

School Meals

School lunches are prepared on site in Ballachulish Primary kitchen. There is a termly menu distributed to parents and displayed in school. If a child has special dietary needs, please contact the authority via email:

special.diets@highland.gov.uk.

Lunches provide excellent value and if parents have financial difficulty they may find their children are eligible to receive free meals. They should not hesitate to ask the Head Teacher. Primary 1-5 receive a free school meal. Current lunch price is £2.40. Pupils are encouraged to pay lunch money for the week on Mondays. Please ensure that your child does not have a breakable thermos flask, glass bottle/jars, and hot liquids that could scald.

Health Promoting School

As a health promoting family of schools we encourage pupils, staff and parents to think about healthier lifestyles. Healthy living is a regular topic in classes. We have a School Travel Plan for promoting safe and healthy routes to school. Staff take part in health promotion activities. We value all the activities that make up a healthy and happy community. Children are encouraged to drink water – water bottles are allowed in class. Pupils have access to a fresh water taps to fill and re-fill drinking bottles.

We do not provide snack or tuck to purchase at interval/breaktime.

School Uniforms

All pupils are encouraged to wear a school uniform. It consists of sweatshirt with smart navy/black trousers or navy/black skirts. Hats, sweatshirts, fleeces and T-shirts, bearing the school logo, are available from our uniform provider **Andrew Hyde**. Pupils are encouraged to wear their reflective waistcoats when in the community. Children should wear suitable clothing for Physical Education, i.e. T-shirts, shorts, gym shoes. A coverall apron is useful for art and craftwork. It is advisable to have your child's name on his/her belongings.

Uniform Supplier:

[Ballachulish Primary School – Andrew Hyde](#)

We encourage all children to bring indoor shoes/plimsole, waterproof shoes and clothing for play outdoors and some spare clothing for when the weather catches us out!

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School Plan & Fire Exits

Each school has an evacuation plan and a lockdown plan. We practice how to keep ourselves safe every term.

The Head Teacher, Miss Evans, is the Fire Marshall for the school.

Enrolling and Transferring into Primary 1

Each year in June, children who will be enrolling into Primary 1 the following August, are invited to spend three afternoons in school. This gives them the opportunity to meet the older children and to get to know the school, the teachers and some routines. Transitions from our local nurseries support continuity and progression in the Early Years. Mrs Fraser visits the feeder Nurseries and regular Nursery/P1 activities occur across the session. We encourage parents to visit the infant class to familiarise with the infant classroom, school, resources and activities.

School 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 is made to the Area Education Manager, **Mhairi MacDonald**, by accessing the link below:

[Enrol your child for school | The Highland Council](#)

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

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

Associated Secondary School

Pupils from Ballachulish, Glencoe, Ballachulish and Duror transfer to Kinlochleven High School at the end of Primary 7. In February transfer forms are sent for parents to sign and also a prospectus for Kinlochleven High School. Regular Associated School Group meetings are held during each session to ensure a smooth P7/S1 transition. Several P7 transition activities are planned prior to the High School transfer week in June.

The Head Teacher, Lauren Morrison, can be contacted on: 01855 832 042.

Transport

If your child is aged 5-7 years and lives two miles or more from school, he / she is entitled to transport to school. At 8 years, three miles is the distance to qualify for transport. Information and application forms available on the Highland Council website.

[Apply for school transport | School transport | The Highland Council](#)

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Adverse Weather

TRAVELLING TO SCHOOL DURING ADVERSE WEATHER

It is the responsibility of parents or carers to decide if a pupil should attempt to travel to school, by transport or on foot, in adverse weather conditions. The Council encourages full attendance at school, but in severe weather conditions the safety of pupils is much more important. Parents and pupils are often concerned that important examinations may be missed, but this should not over-ride good judgement. Schools normally make alternative arrangements for missed examinations.

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

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

The Highland Council website

The Council's webpage <https://www.highland.gov.uk/schoolclosures> will be updated with information for individual schools.

When weather conditions are poor:

Parents will be kept informed about adverse weather closures via Seesaw

Local radio stations issue news and weather bulletins on traffic conditions and school closures. Transmissions may not cover all households and may be subject to re-scheduling but should be helpful. Parents are advised to remain "tuned in" to ongoing road weather, or school information updates.

BBC Radio Highland | Nevis Radio | Lochbroom FM | Moray Firth Radio
(<https://hellorayo.co.uk/mfr/>) | Radio Wester Ross

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

For pupils using school transport

- Parents should note that the final decision on whether it is safe to operate rests with the driver of the school transport vehicle. Therefore there may be occasions on which a school is open but some routes, or parts of routes, are unable to operate.
- Parents should advise their children on how long they should wait at the pick-up point for their transport. This will depend on the prevailing weather conditions and the availability of shelter at the pick-up point. During adverse weather conditions no pupil is expected to wait longer than twenty minutes past the normal “pick-up” time.
- Morning journeys may be delayed by an hour if road conditions are unsafe at the normal journey time but have improved within the hour. Before pupils return to a pick-up point parents should check for updated messages from their school. Please note that for some routes the transport operator may contact the parent directly.
- Drivers are advised not to drop off children where there is a risk that they may not safely reach home or other place of shelter. This may involve children being taken to an alternative place of safety, agreed in consultation with the school.
- Where parents are concerned about weather conditions at “drop-off” points, they should contact the school as early as possible

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

After School Clubs

The Active Schools Coordinators organise various activities throughout the year. Information is shared across social media, Seesaw and school-bag drops. Teachers regularly lead events after school such as Football, Lego Club, Cooking and Gardening Clubs.

ICT

All children from Primary 1 upwards are encouraged to make use of ICT and digital technology. Highland Council are rolling out Chromebooks for every child, allowing ICT to permeate the curriculum. Classrooms are equipped with Interactive Smartboards. Computing science is taught through code.org, Scratch coding and Barefoot Computing. All users sign and agree our Acceptable Use document for chromebooks and internet activities.

Homework

A flexible homework programme is set, covering a range of topics. P1-3 are set reading, phonics/spelling tasks and P4-7 are given homework tasks and projects to encourage collaboration. As a general rule homework tasks for P1-3 should last no more than 20 minutes and older children up to 30-40 minutes. Homework should not be a cause for anxiety or used for catch-up. Homework is used to enhance classroom learning. Every term there is a Family Engagement project to support home-school learning.

Learning Support

All children need support. 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.

The Named Person for primary school is Head Teacher, Mary Evans

The Named Person for pre-school children is Health Visitor

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

If you wish to find out more you can access more information at: [Support for Learners Website](#)

There are also Information sheets available at: <https://thrivingfamilies.org.uk/>

Thriving families is funded by Highland Council to provide independent, rights-based information, advice and support services for anyone involved in the care of children and young people up to the age of 25.

Organisations specified by Scottish Ministers which provide advice, further information and support to parents of children and young people with ASN are identified under The Additional Support for Learning (Sources of Information) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2011 as:

- Children in Scotland: Working for Children and Their Families, trading as "Enquire – the Scottish advice and information service for additional support for learning", a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration;
- Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC033576; and
- Scottish Child Law Centre, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SCO12741."

Children have special educational needs when they face difficulties in learning. When we identify a child whom we think is having difficulties, parents can give for their permission to have the child assessed by the Educational Psychologist. His/her report specifies what he sees as the problem and suggests ways in which the child can be helped. The Educational Psychologist also discusses the report with the parents.

A Learning Support teacher may be allocated to the school. Sometimes they work with individual children who may be needing short term help in a specific area, or she advises teachers on suitable programmes of work for some children or works with the teacher in class. The Learning Support teacher has access to Learning Support Resource base. The children with whom the Learning Support teacher works do not necessarily have problems that require assessment by the Psychologist. Some pupils may require an Individual Education Programme (IEP) which details small steps to be achieved. The IEP is discussed with Parents at regular meetings. Our aim is that all children progress in all areas at a speed with which they can cope and be successful.

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Health Care / Illness at School

There is an annual visit by the school dentist who examines P1 and P7 pupils. Parents are advised by the Dentist if their child requires treatment. It is then the parent's decision as to whether the treatment will be carried out by the school dentist or if the child will visit his / her own dentist.

If a child becomes ill while at school, the parent will be contacted in the first instance. If the parent cannot be contacted, then the emergency contact will be informed.

If your child suffers from any illness, details should be given to the school. Information will remain confidential.

It is expected that parents or carers will inform the Head Teacher of any relevant information relating to the need to administer medication to their child(ren). If a child requires medication administered at school a medical protocol must be drawn up by a doctor and agreed with parents and school.

The Health Visitor and School Nurse regularly support the school and our children.

Head Lice

Head lice are a common problem, which can affect the whole community, adults and children alike. It is most common amongst children, and it is important to detect and treat as promptly as possible.

The only effective way to detect head lice is to carry out wet combing, and ideally this should be done weekly. You will have received a leaflet and detection comb when your child started nursery – if you need another comb, please ask your local pharmacist for advice on purchasing a suitable one.

A leaflet published by Health Scotland is available at:

<http://www.healthscotland.com/uploads/documents/19855-HeadLiceEnglish.pdf>

Drugs Misuse Incidents Policy into Practice

In line with Highland Council's recommendation, the school endorses the Scottish Executive Guidelines for the Management of Incidents of Drugs and Misuse in Schools.

This National document is further enhanced by the Highland Council Health Education Policy and Drugs Education Guidelines, which are also endorsed by the school.

All staff have a responsibility to ensure that they are familiar with these documents and that these guidelines are fully implemented. The following points ensure that the guidance contained in these documents is translated into practice in School.

- Staff should immediately report all incidents of Drug Misuse or of suspected Drugs Misuse to the Head Teacher. Such incidents include:
- Drug related litter on or near school premises;
- Suspicion and allegations about in-school and out of school activities;
- Pupils displaying symptoms of drug misuse;

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- Pupils/adults with drugs on school premises/trip/transport;
- Pupils/adults taking drugs on school premises/trip/transport;
- Pupils/adults, selling drugs on school premises/trip/transport.
- On receiving a report from a member of staff the Head Teacher will log this in the Drugs Incident File which is kept in the Head Teacher's office.
- The Head Teacher will ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the above guidelines and that staff concerned are kept informed as necessary of all actions taken.
- The Head Teacher will ensure that all necessary returns are completed and forwarded to the Area Education Manager as required.
- The Head Teacher will ensure that newly appointed staff are made aware of the arrangements for handling incidents of Drugs Misuse and that all staff are regularly updated on any changes to policy and guidelines.
- The Head Teacher will ensure that parents are made aware of the school's policy on handling incidents of Drugs Misuse.
- The Head Teacher will make arrangements for the policy and guidelines to be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis and ideally annually in time with review Of the Staff Development Handbook or when there are changes to either the National or Local Guidelines.
- The School Handbook informs parents that all incidents of Drugs Misuse will be reported and dealt with in line with Highland Council Policy.

Links with Secondary School

We have regular contact with Kinlochleven High School and Lochaber High School in Fort William. Members of staff regularly meet to discuss transition and support.

Pupils regularly attend events at both schools, such as badminton, rugby, cross-country and STEM activities at the Newton Room in Caol.

Highland Highlife staff regularly visit and support pupils with sport and wellbeing activities during lunchtime. They also support our P7s with leadership awards.

Pupil Absences

Good attendance is vital if pupils are to achieve their potential. But if a pupil is absent from school or ELC, a parent or guardian should phone the school before **9.30am** on the first day of absence, on the school number.

Tel: **01855 811 373 Ballachulish**

When returning to school after an absence, the parent or guardian should give written reason for the time absent. 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 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. When possible, medical and dental appointments should be made out-with school hours.

Schools are required to keep an attendance register by law. We have a responsibility for the care and welfare of all pupils during the school day, therefore, we 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. Please click on the link below for current school term dates.

[School term dates | The Highland Council](#)

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

THREE DAY RULE FOR UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE OF PUPILS

DAY 1: First day of unexplained absence of pupil

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

DAY 2: Second day of unexplained absence of pupil

The school will make vigorous attempts to contact a carer or family member by telephone, text, e-mail or social media. If no contact can be made on the second day of absence, this will be noted by the school.

DAY 3: Third day of unexplained absence of pupil

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

Where contact cannot be established in relation to an unexplained absence, schools may inform other relevant services, e.g. social work and/or police.

Child Protection

In terms of its child protection guidelines the document detailed in Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) for Highlands Children, the Authority imposes a duty on schools and all staff to report, by way of laid down referral procedures, any incidents which may give rise to a suspicion that a pupil has been subjected to abuse in any of its forms. This might involve information being passed to other agencies without immediate reference to a pupil's parents or guardians.

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

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

All agencies involved in Child Protection are obliged to make the welfare of children their paramount consideration and this will be the priority for Education Service staff.

**Mary Evans is the Designated Child Protection Officer for Ballachulish Primary.
Caroline Brennan (PT, Glencoe Primary) is the Deputy Designated Child Protection Officer.**

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Staff will support the emotional development and wellbeing of pupils through formal and informal curricular activities. Any concerns about a pupil's wellbeing can be discussed with the named person. There is a website managed by Highland Council that supports a variety of information relating to mental health and emotional wellbeing that can be found [here](#). Schools have access to Highland Council's Primary Mental Health Worker Service and consultation and advice may be sought if there are concerns that might require more targeted support. Counselling is also available for all pupils from age 10. There is a completely confidential, online counselling service called Kooth for children and young people from age 10 that can be accessed [here](#). Parents would generally be involved in discussions beforehand, however a young person over the age of 12 can ask for support themselves.

Equal Opportunities

We are an equal opportunities school. We are opposed to all forms of prejudice and discrimination and attempt to provide equality and opportunity through our ethos and working practices. Access to all subjects will, therefore, be provided to all pupils without reference to the sex or disability of the pupil. The school believes that each pupil, regardless of his/her sex, gender, or disability should have an equal opportunity to pursue his/her subject choices and subsequent career free from discrimination.

We support the Council's Zero Tolerance approach to any form of bullying and harassment including gender-based violence.

Developing Positive Relationships and Promoting Equality & Diversity

We use Restorative Strategies to support good behaviour and good decision-making. All staff are trained to use 1-2-3-Magic routines to restore relationships. We use the Ready, Safe Respectful message for all restorative incidents.

Repeated and persistent poor behaviour will result in the child's parent/carer being asked to attend a meeting to restore positive behaviour routines. When restorative measures prove unworkable further sanctions are available including exclusion.

We have a Zero Tolerance approach for physical and verbal violence, and threat from using racist, gender and sexist specific language. Any incidents will be recorded, and parents informed.

Please click the links below to see our Developing Positive Relationships and our Equality & Diversity Policy.

[Positive Relationship policy.pdf](#)

[Promoting Diversity and Equality Policy Nov 24](#)

Click below to see Highland Council's Promoting Positive Relationships Guidance for schools.

[support for learners | Promoting Positive Relationships - Framework and Guidance 2021](#)

Anti Bullying Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Children, staff and visitors should feel comfortable and accepted here and secure in the knowledge of their own self-worth. We aim to reinforce this through:

1. Establishing class rules
2. Direct discussion
3. Whole school assembly
4. Curricular activities

All incidents of bullying are recorded, monitored and actioned.

Please read our Building Positive Relationship Policy (above) for more information about restorative and anti-bullying strategies.

Click the link below to see Highland Council's Anti-Bullying Policy

https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19358/anti_bullying_-_guidance_for_schools

School Rules

Ready Safe Respectful

We are **POLITE** – We don't use bad language or say cruel/offensive words

We are **GENTLE** – We don't hurt others

We are **HELPFUL and KIND** – We don't hurt anybody's feelings

We **WORK HARD** – We don't waste time

We are **HONEST** – We don't cover up the truth

We **LOOK AFTER PROPERTY** – We don't waste or damage things

We **LISTEN** – We don't interrupt. We don't take sides

We **RESPECT OTHERS** – We do not invade other people's property and don't enter their personal space

Work Together, Learn Together, Grow Together

Parental Consent Safety /Data Protection

Data Protection Act 1998

Information on pupils, parent and guardians is stored on a computer system and may be used for teaching, registration, assessment and other administrative duties. The information is protected by the Data Protection Act 1998 and may only be disclosed with the codes of practice.

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.

Data is held securely and no information on individual pupils can or would be made publically available by Scottish Government.

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

All our data collection is GDPR compliant.

Mobile Phones and Connected Devices

Mobile phones are permitted into school after consultation with the Head Teacher. Permission will be granted if access to a phone supports well-being. All other mobile devices are not permitted within school.

Handheld computer consoles and online devices are discouraged from the school as children have access to Chromebooks.

Physical Intervention

The Highland Council has adopted the C.A.L.M (Crisis and Aggression Limitation and Management) principles of behaviour management. Two staff members have been trained in C.A.L.M. techniques.

C.A.L.M. practitioners should use physical intervention only under specific circumstances i.e.

- when a pupil is a danger to themselves
- when a pupil is a danger to others
- when the pupil is causing/about to cause significant damage to equipment

This system ensures that all physical management of children is in line with Child Protection and Health & Safety guidelines. Most physical management of pupils involves guiding them, or offering the reassurance of holding a pupil's hand as s/he/they moves to another part of the school.

Although it is very rare, a pupil may have a major outburst and when there is the risk of injury to him/her/they or others, trained staff members have a duty to intervene. They are aware that the

intervention should be at the lowest level possible and that an important factor in supporting the pupils throughout such a situation is a calm and reassuring attitude.

When such an incident occurs, the parents of the child involved will be informed by letter. A description of the intervention will be included. A member of the senior management team will be available if parents wish to discuss the incident further.

Parents are also encouraged to contact the school if they think that it is likely that an incident requiring significant intervention may arise in school in the future.

Should you wish any further information on the use of C.A.L.M techniques or if you wish to discuss their use, please contact the Head Teacher Mr McGregor or Principal Teacher Miss Evans.

Emergency Planning – Major Incident Plan

All pupils and staff are familiar with and practised in the Fire Drill procedure, which will be our main method of evacuation. We have a drill once every term.

Fire Drill

Once the alarm sounds, children will evacuate the building following the instructions, which are located next to each room door. All staff will be aware of persons with a disability or restricted movement and will ensure they exit the building via a clear route. Pupils and staff assemble in the field by the school gate where registration will take place and checked.

The Head Teacher will contact the Emergency Services first and then the Emergency Planning Officer in Inverness.

If the Head Teacher is absent on the day in question, phoning will be carried out by a senior member of the school team.

Parents can contact the Education Office for information about an incident. Tel: 01349 781410.

School Calendar

Please access the links below for current school calendar and key dates:

[School term dates](#) | [The Highland Council](#)

Complaints and Requests for Service

If a parent has any concerns they should contact their child's Named Person in the first instance - Head Teacher, Mary Evans.

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 Education and Learning Manager, Mhairi MacDonald.

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

List of Useful Email and Website Addresses:

School Transport

Transport Development Officer
Highland Council
Glenurquhart Road
INVERNESS
IV3 5NX

OR

public.transport@highland.gov.uk

Area Manager for Care & Learning

Mhairi MacDonald
The Fingal Centre
Portree
Skye
mhairi.macdonald3@highland.gov.uk

Parents/Guardians/Carers as Partners

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/>

Support for Learners Website

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

Education Scotland Information

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/supportinglearners/>

Curriculum

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/>

Highland Curriculum for Excellence Information

http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/17/school_curriculum

Support arrangements for pupils including pastoral support arrangements

<http://forhighlandschildren.org/>

Support for Pupils – The Authority’s Policy

http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools_additional_support_needs/1/support_for_learners/4

Children in Scotland

Working for Children and their Families, trading as “Enquire – the Scottish Advice and information service for additional support for learning”, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC003527; <http://enquire.org.uk/>

Work Together, Learn Together, Grow Together

Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance

This is a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC033576; and Scottish Child Law Centre, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SCO1274.

Additional Support Needs

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2009/7/contents>

http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/11/co-ordinated_support_plan

Form for applying Free School Meals & Clothing Grant

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/schools/schoolmeals/>

http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/899/schools_grants_and_benefits/10/free_school_meals_and_a_ssistance_with_clothing

Whilst the information in this handbook is considered to be accurate at the date of publication, changes in the circumstances after the time of publication may impact the accuracy of the information.