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Ambition
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GAIRLOCH HIGH SCHOOL

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School Handbook

Leabhar Fiosrachaidh

2025 – 2026

Achtercairn

Gairloch

Ross-shire

IV21 2BP

Telephone: +44(0)1445 712275

Email: Gairloch.High@highland.gov.uk

Web: www.gairlochhigh.org.uk

School Roll: 96 | **Stages:** S1 to S6 | **Gaelic:** Learners & Medium

Parent Council: gairlochhigh.school@highlandpc.co.uk

Head Teacher (Acting): Stuart Caddell

Depute Head Teachers (Acting): Donna Hildrey, Helen Leonard, Karen McAllister, Lynne Whall

Please use the links on the [Contents](#) page to navigate this document. Click on the school banner on any page to return to the [Contents](#).

Policies that relate to this handbook can be found on our website at:

<https://www.gairlochhigh.org.uk/policies-handbook>

[Click here to access our latest inspection report](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/GairlochHighSchool>

<https://x.com/gairlochhigh>

Our Vision

"Our school nurtures a caring, inclusive community where every pupil can achieve their potential. We foster resilience, respect, and open-mindedness, encouraging growth and creativity. We strive for excellence, instilling confidence and a love of learning for future success and positive contributions to society."



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

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Head Teachers Welcome

Welcome to Gairloch High School | Ceud mìle fàilte gu Àrd-sgoil Gheàrrloch.

This handbook is designed to give you and your child as much information as possible about our School, whether your child is currently in Primary 7, enrolling from another school or is already in school.

We believe in strong partnerships between pupils, parents, staff, with our associated schools and with the local community; by building on these partnerships, we strive to offer your child the best learning and teaching possible to help them exceed their expectations. We have a great sense of pride in our school, and we work hard to maintain a very positive ethos.

Communication therefore is very important to us. Our website contains a wide range of information for pupils and parents, and our daily bulletin is available for all pupils on the Pupil Portal. We also have active social media pages, to share relevant information/events and celebrate the achievements of our pupils. Our parent council are very active and would welcome any new members.

We want you to feel part of the Gairloch High community and look forward to having a very long and happy relationship with you and your child here in Gairloch High School.

Mr Stuart Caddell

Acting Head Teacher | Ceannard Eadar-amail





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S6 Leadership Team Welcome

In Gairloch High School we are a close-knit community consisting of ambitious, kind, and brilliantly bright 96 (and counting!) pupils and staff. Despite our slight challenges of being a small school, we remain resilient and determined to build each other up and overcome the difficulties we may face, with help from our inspirational teachers that go above and beyond for us all. They adapt to each, and every pupil's learning needs as they have the time here to do so, being such a small school. Staff create an atmosphere that promotes curiosity and comfort to students but also motivates them to be independent learners with offered help when need be.

Though our year may be the smallest within the school, we still have great impact within our local community and school. For example, planning fundraising for our famous school dance, and taking part in the Remembrance Day memorial services in Gairloch, Poolewe and Aultbea, and much more. We also provide countless extra-curricular activities via Slattadale and other volunteering schemes that kindly give us many opportunities to have a go at unique and fun experiences.

Our school celebrates everyone's talents and differences throughout the year by the credits system that we have, each credit that is earned by a student gets put towards their house. These are Kerry, Maree and Tollaidh. At the end of the year, these house points are counted, and the winning house is rewarded the right to brag with a sense of pride!

Being leadership captains, we carry the responsibility to serve the school whilst also doing our utmost in improving it for the future students, we work closely with leadership staff. Seniors also are allocated to be mentors for the junior phase, and this ensures the younger years are guided and supported throughout the years. We aim to voice opinions that represent all students throughout our school and we hope to help everyone feel included and welcome to our GHS family.

We consistently reiterate our school vision : Our school nurtures a caring, inclusive community where every pupil can achieve their potential. We foster resilience, respect, and open-mindedness, encouraging growth and creativity. We strive for excellence, instilling confidence and a love of learning for future success and positive contributions to society.'

We look forward to further guiding our school's bright future!

The S6 Leaders 24/25





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Introduction to Our School

Within a catchment area of over 400 square miles, the school currently draws approximately 90 pupils from five Associated Primary Schools:

- Bualnaluib
- Gairloch (English and Gàidhlig Medium),
- Poolewe
- Shildaig

Gairloch High School provides a full and comprehensive curriculum for pupils aged 11–18 (S1- S6). Gairloch High School teaches the language of Gaelic (Learners) and Gàidhlig (Medium).

Our School Day

GHS Day	1	2	BREAK	3	4	5	LUNCH	6	7
	0850 – 0940	0940 – 1030	1030 – 1045	1045 – 1135	1135 – 1225	1225 – 1315	1315 – 1400	1400 – 1450	1450 – 1540
Monday									
Tuesday									
Wednesday									
Thursday									
Friday									

Gairloch High School takes great pride in the positive relationships between staff and pupils. Many visitors over the years, both official and unofficial, have remarked in an objective way about the positive ethos that exists within the school. The recent HMle report (October 2017) highlights a key strength as ‘young people feeling cared for, safe, happy and respected. Their sense of responsibility is contributing to strong and courteous relationships which enhance school life’

Gairloch High school strives to raise achievement for all pupils. The school works closely with pupils, parents and the wider community to ensure that pupils could gain the qualifications they needed to progress beyond school.



Increasingly, the school provides stimulating opportunities for pupils to develop personal skills and attributes, such as confidence and enterprise.

Key features of the school's provision include:

- A residential week for pupils in S1, which provides an opportunity to promote a range of important skills, such as personal confidence and working in teams.



- A curriculum in S3/Senior Phase (S4, S5 and S6) that is sufficiently flexible in a small school to enable personalisation, choice and progression and supports learning pathways.
- Effective curricular and career guidance. Staff providing knowledgeable advice to assist pupils with applications for work, higher and further education.
- We continually strive to raise attainment and achievement in its broadest sense and to give each pupil every opportunity to realise their full potential and prepare them for the world beyond school.
- A combination of small mixed ability classes, a pupil centred approach with much direct teaching, careful setting of groups as appropriate and efficient use of resources ensures a learning environment where a wide range of ability levels can be catered for.
- The size of the school, the environment both natural and created, the support of the community and the dedication of the staff has enabled the school to develop and operate a fully comprehensive system of education.

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Vision, Values, Aims

<https://www.gairlochhigh.org.uk/vision-values-aims>

Our Vision

“Our school nurtures a caring, inclusive community where every pupil can achieve their potential. We foster resilience, respect, and open-mindedness, encouraging growth and creativity. We strive for excellence, instilling confidence and a love of learning for future success and positive contributions to society.”

Our Values:

- Listening / Èisteachd
- Support / Taic
- Lifeskills / Sgilean-beatha
- Ambition / Miann

Our Aims:

Cultivate a Supportive and Inclusive Environment: We aim to create a nurturing school community that embraces diversity, promotes acceptance, and provides a safe space for every pupil to thrive and feel valued.

Encourage Personal Growth and Self-Discovery: We empower pupils to explore their interests, talents, and passions, fostering resilience, self-confidence, and a mindset of continuous learning and self-improvement.

Promote Creativity and Critical Thinking: We engage pupils in educational experiences that stimulate creative expression, problem-solving skills, and open-mindedness, encouraging them to think critically and embrace intellectual curiosity.

Emphasise Academic and Vocational Excellence and Lifelong Learning: We strive for academic and vocational excellence by providing a challenging and engaging curriculum that instils a love for learning, enabling pupils to develop the knowledge, skills, and mindset necessary for future success.

Develop Responsible and Ethical Citizens: We nurture a sense of social responsibility and ethical values in pupils, empowering them to become actively engaged in their communities and contribute positively to society.





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Accidents in School

When a pupil has an accident, it is school policy to call in the Doctor, contact the parents, and report the incident to the Education Authority. There are occasions when pupils must go to the hospital in Inverness, and every effort is made to enable the parent/carer(s) to accompany their child.



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Adverse Weather

<https://www.gairlochhigh.org.uk/parents-carers>

We have an established arrangement in place for severe weather conditions. As we know in the west of Scotland, the weather we experience can be very variable and we will endeavour to operate the school day with minimum disruption, but the safety of our pupils and staff is paramount. Adverse weather arrangements are shared through the newsletter in the Autumn term each year.

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 Education Authority 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 or classwork may be missed, but this should not over-ride good judgement. We normally make alternative arrangements for missed examinations.

Adverse weather closures are announced on the Highland Council website:

www.highland.gov.uk/schoolclosures

We will also try to put up to date information on our Facebook page as soon as possible.





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Assessment, Tracking, Monitoring and Reporting

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/curriculum-in-scotland/assessment-and-achievement/>

As a school, we seek to provide information to pupils, parents and staff to assist in the effectiveness of 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 and TMR 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 child's progress through pupil reports, progress checks, and target setting information and be able to meet with teachers at least once per academic session. Pupils will reflect on their progress, achievement and best work with their teachers. Parents wishing to enquire about a pupil's progress are invited to get in touch with Mrs Leonard – PT guidance.

More information on TMR can be found at: <https://www.gairlochhigh.org.uk/policies-handbook>



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Attendance in School | Absence Management

https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/395890/absence_in_schools

Good attendance is vital if pupils are to achieve their full potential. If a pupil is absent from school, a parent or guardian should phone the school on the first day of absence, on 01445 712275 to speak to a colleague or leave a message. When returning to school after an absence, the parent or guardian must give a 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, parents/carers are requested to email Gairloch.High@highland.gov.uk from the email account we hold on file. 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 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 school email address: Gairloch.High@highland.gov.uk.





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Careers Advice | Support for Leavers

During their time at Gairloch High School all pupils will participate in a planned programme of careers education delivered by a range of people including PSE teachers, school librarian and representatives from Skills Development Scotland.

At key stages such as option choice decision-making, most staff will be involved in making recommendations or giving general advice. We rely on the good links between home and school to ensure that through open dialogue, the most appropriate decisions for individual pupils are arrived at.

There have recently been significant changes in the operation of Skills Development Scotland in terms of working in schools and the overall emphasis is now on career planning. The strategic aim of Skills Development Scotland is to equip individuals with the skills to make well-informed, realistic career decisions throughout their working lives. Specialist careers staff can offer services in various ways that will allow the pupil flexibility while helping Careers to differentiate levels of service according to need:

High priority pupils are those identified as not likely to make a smooth transition from school to further/higher education, training or employment;

Medium priority are those not at risk but nevertheless requiring career planning support;

Low priority are pupils able to self-help.

The key Careers Adviser linked to Gairloch High School is **Stuart Bauld** and he is available to advise on matters relating to career and curricular choice and is in school on a regular basis. His contact number is: **01463 383373**.

The school will ensure that all pupils leaving school has a positive destination. Parents should spend time with their child looking at the world of work website: <http://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/> . Information about local opportunities is listed on the hi-hope.org website to support 16+ planning.

More information can be found on the [Council Website](#) which includes information on the Opportunities for All initiative. This is a commitment by Scottish Government to offer a place in learning or training to every 16-19 year old who is currently not in education, employment or training. Highland Council has a lead role in respect of Opportunities for All whilst young people are still in school. The long-term aim is to enable all young people to access and progress in learning and to equip them with the skills to participate and progress, where possible into eventual employment.





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Communication

<https://www.gairlochhigh.org.uk/policies-handbook>

The following are extracts from our whole school communications strategy.

Communicating with Parents/Carers

EMAIL	<p>Email continues to be the most efficient way of sharing information with parents/carers.</p> <p>Parents/carers are asked to ensure that their up-to-date email accounts are always listed with the school to ensure that information reaches them in a timely manner.</p> <p>Parents/carers are advised to check the Contact page on the school website to find a list of the members of staff who are best to contact with queries in the first instance.</p>
TEXT	<p>In addition to emails, text messages are also used for quick updates, for example on days where the school will be closed due to adverse weather. These are sent to the MAIN CONTACT we hold on file, only.</p> <p>Text messages will also begin to be used further from session 24/25 to signpost parents/carers to information aimed at helping them support their children and young people in the home environment.</p> <p>As with emails, parents/carers are asked to ensure that mobile numbers held by the school are always up to date.</p>
WEBSITE	<p>The school website contains key information about the school including the school handbook, school improvement plan, annual reports and options to contact.</p> <p>The website aims to be a lean resource with all information stored on it or linked to, being up to date and accurate as far as possible.</p> <p>Visitors to the website are encouraged to share any errors found with the information to ensure that the site can be updated as quickly as possible.</p>
SOCIAL MEDIA	<p>We have a range of Social Media accounts that we use to share examples of our work here in Gairloch High School.</p> <p>Parents/carers are encouraged to support the school by following our site but are politely reminded to refrain from making any inappropriate or negative comments on these public forums.</p> <p>Any complaints/concerns should be addressed in writing via email to the Head Teacher at the earliest opportunity.</p>

There is also further information about our process for parents/carers requesting information outside of reporting and parent/carer engagement evening windows in this handbook on the [Parental Involvement](#) page. Serious concerns re: Child Protection or Complaints should be directed immediately to the Head Teacher as per the following: [Complaints | Request for Service](#).



Communicating with Pupils

PUPIL PORTAL	<p>The pupil portal aims to share important and regularly reviewed information aimed at reducing the need for excessive numbers of emails.</p> <p>Pupils are required to check the portal before lessons daily where they can read the bulletin, order lunch, review updates etc.</p>
EMAIL	<p>Pupils are provided with time every morning to check their emails.</p> <p>Pupils are expected to read and respond to emails, from staff, partners or external tutors during morning check-in. This is an important task in encouraging pupils to become more responsible for their learning and progress.</p>
GOOGLE CLASSROOM	<p>Pupils are notified whenever there is work and/or feedback posted via Google Classroom.</p> <p>Pupils are expected to read any notification and complete any tasks posted as homework where required.</p> <p>This is another important task in encouraging pupils to become more responsible for their learning and progress</p>
SOCIAL MEDIA	<p>Like all members of the public, our pupils can follow our Social Media account (subject to appropriate age restrictions as identified with partners).</p> <p>No personal data/data requiring responses will be posted on these platforms.</p> <p>Pupils are reminded regularly to report any concerns they encounter to a parent/carer or member of staff at the earliest opportunity</p>

In Gairloch High School we aim to:

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Complaints | Request for Service

If any parent has any serious concerns and/or complaints about anything to do with the education of their child/young person, please contact the Head Teacher (Named Person) 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 the Area Education Manager:

Mhairi MacDonald

Area Education and Learning Manager

Portress High School

Isle of Skye

IV51 9ES

Email: Mhairi.MacDonald3@highland.gov.uk

Tel: 01478 613697

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

Please note that transport is not a school responsibility, and any queries should be addressed to the following colleague:

Transport Development Officer

Highland Council

Glenurquhart Road

Inverness

IV3 5NX,

or public.transport@highland.gov.uk





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Curriculum

<https://www.gairlochhigh.org.uk/curriculum>

<https://education.gov.scot/curriculum-for-excellence/>

Gairloch High School provides a fully comprehensive six-year curriculum. With enthusiastic staff and flexible planning, the school continues to endeavour to provide as wide ranging a curriculum as possible.

Broad General Education (S1-3)

S1, S2 and S3 pupils follow a broad general education. Those entering S1 study two languages (French, Gàidhlig or Gaelic Learners). This gives all pupils access to an extensive linguistic experience and caters for those who wish to take advantage of Gaelic and local cultural opportunities.

The full range of subjects experienced in S1/2 includes English, Maths, French, Gaelic, Geography, Modern Studies with History, Science, Art, Computing, Craft, Design and Technology, Music, PE, RME, Personal Support and Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE). We also have a SMART/Learning for Sustainability course to provide a variety of skills to S1/2 pupils through a range of activities that include beach cleaning, mountain biking, outdoor learning at Inverewe Garden and Slattadale, gardening, cooking and climbing.



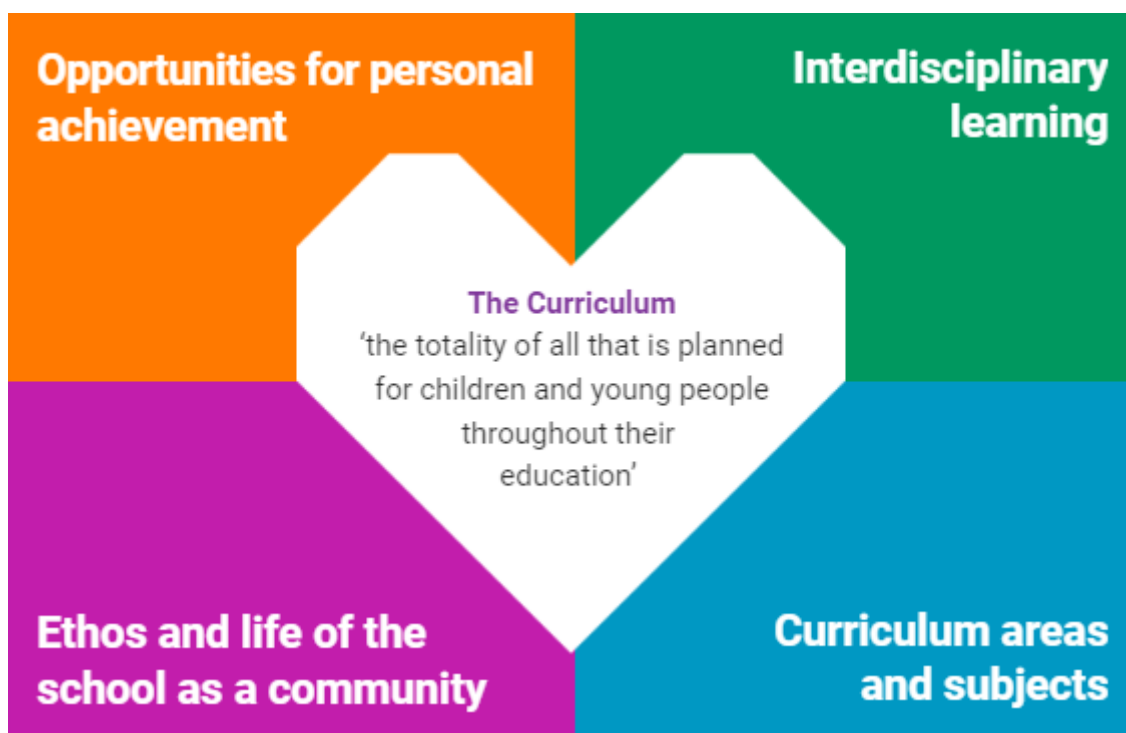
In S3 pupils we offer a personalisation of the curriculum and begin to make some personal choices across each of the CfE Curricular Areas, taking account of the interests and aspirations of each pupil. A special meeting with parents and pupils is convened where printed information is distributed on course selection and course options. Pupils are interviewed and advised on their choices by Pupil Support staff. Parents are then given the opportunity of consulting with teaching and Pupil Support staff before course selection is finalised.

All pupils entering S3 are expected to cover the eight curriculum areas: Expressive Arts, Health and Wellbeing, Languages, Mathematics, Religious and Moral Education, Sciences, Social Studies and Technologies. To meet the expectations of a broad general education this will include PE, Personal Support and PHSE. Current staffing resources and pupil demand will determine the quantity and variety. The current S3 Option Form can be found on the website.

Within the constraints of resources and a balanced curriculum, the school makes every effort to satisfy the wishes of individual pupils. Occasionally, however difficult decisions will have to be made. At the end of S3 choices will be made for the senior phase when pupils begin to study for National qualifications at level 3, 4 and 5 qualifications. Pupils will choose English, Maths and four other subjects.

Senior Phase (S4-6)

The school offers a range of Courses, available at level 4, 5, 6 (Higher) and 7 (Advanced Higher) levels including Mathematics, Applications of Maths, English, Geography, French, Gaelic, Gàidhlig, Biology, Physics, Computing Studies, Design & Manufacture, Engineering Science, Environmental Science, Drama, Chemistry, PE, Exercise and Fitness and Leadership, Art & Design, Music. Through our learning partners there are many more courses available at each level to ensure pupils have good progression for their learner pathway through senior phase and beyond. These are 1-year courses, with pupils sitting their final examinations in May of each year. Some qualifications do not have a final exam and are assessed throughout the year in class.



We encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning, and through a series of formal and informal meetings with Pupil Support and careers staff, senior pupils are expected to play a significant role in their course choices. It is currently Highland Council policy that pupils will reduce the number of S3 subjects as they enter the Senior Phase, which begins at the beginning of S4. This is as a result of the extra demands placed on subjects examined at level 4 and level 5. Pupils enter S4 studying courses. The current S4 Option Form can be found on the website

The S5/6 Option Form is aligned with the S4 one to allow progression and provide breadth of choice. Pupils aspiring to level 6 (Highers), particularly in S5, must achieve a level 5 pass in that subject. The current Option Form and information booklet is available on the website.

With access to ICT in the school and the support of learning partners, several subjects are also available via Distance Learning / Virtual courses.

Pupils entering S6 with intentions of applying for university are expected to attempt at least one level 7 (Advanced Higher) and preferably more. Advanced Higher courses are run in direct response to demand. Pupils studying Advanced Higher level have some teacher-led time, and individual study makes up the balance. Art, Chemistry, Computing Studies, English, French, Gàidhlig, Geography, German, Physics, Mathematics and Music have all recently been offered and others are possible. Entry to Advanced Higher depends on good performance in the associated Higher course. The significant personal study component is good preparation for Higher Education and pupils intending University are expected to attempt Advanced Higher level courses. S6 pupils can also study from a range of entry/degree level Open University courses at Advanced Higher level. In recent years this has included Photography, Astronomy and Scottish Law.

We also support, foundation apprenticeships, work placements, shadowing and training that will enhance the prospects of each individual pupil.

Exemption from classes

If parents wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child from Religious & Moral Education, Assembly and/or Sexual Education as part of PSHE program, a written application to this effect should be sent to the Head Teacher. An overview of our PSHE programme is available on our school website. If you like to discuss any concerns regarding the content of the programme, please contact Mrs Leonard (PT Guidance).

Learning Partners: Highland Virtual Academy, North West Highland College UHI, Inverness College UHI, Edinburgh College, SRUC

To add breadth and choice to our senior curriculum we encourage pupils to consider courses run by our learning partners. There is usually a mix of virtual and face to face opportunities available each year. S6 students are also given the opportunity to study degree modules through University Highlands and Islands and the Open University in a vast range of subjects through the Young Applicants in School Scheme (YASS).

At all stages senior pupils are given advice, in relation to course choice, by Pupil Support staff in consultation with parents and subject staff.

<https://home.scotlandscurriculum.scot/>





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Data Policy

Access to Pupil Records

The Pupil's 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.

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 in accordance with the codes of practice.

Transferring educational data about pupils

The Scottish Government and its partners collect and use information about pupils through the Pupil Census to help to improve education across Scotland. This note explains why we need this information, how we use it and what we do to protect the information supplied to us.

Data about pupil preferred routes, preferred occupations and anticipated school leaving date is also collected from S3/S4 to support planning for leaving school. This information is shared with Skills Development Scotland. Further information about 16+ Data can be found here – hi-hope.org/directory/listing/16plus-planning.

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



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

Scottish Government Surveys (ScotXed)

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.

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. 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 outwith Scottish Government. At all times pupils' rights under the Data Protection Act and other relevant legislation will be ensured.

Concerns

If you have any concerns about the ScotXed data collections, you can email the Head of Schools Analysis at ScotXed@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to The ScotXed Support Office: **Area 2D, Victoria Quay, Leith, EH6 6QQ.**

Alternative versions of this page are available, on request from the ScotXed Support Office, in other languages, audio tape, Braille and large print





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Dress Code | Uniform

Our philosophy actively encourages school uniform for social, economic, and academic reasons. Parental and pupil support has been such that all pupils wear school uniform which is listed as follows:

Tie*: Navy and Green stripes (S1-6), Navy and White stripes (S6 School Leaders)

Trousers/Bottoms/Skirts: Navy or Black (no sports leggings)

Shirt: White (S1-5), Black (optional for S6)

Jumper/Cardigan: Plain Black or Navy (no logos)

Optional: school fleece, school sweatshirt, school blazer

Footwear: all black (no colour), flat-heeled shoes, trainers

PE Kit

Tops:** School logo top, white, navy or house colours OR plain white, navy, or black T-shirt. No brands, logos etc. Sweatshirts are encouraged for outside activities.

Bottoms: Plain Black or Navy

Footwear: Trainers

All clothing should be worn smartly and appropriately supporting the positive ethos of the school.

Hoodies of any kind are not acceptable at any time. In Winter, only jackets and the dress code mentioned above is acceptable.

Tights should be black, navy or flesh coloured (no patterns)

* All new pupils will be provided with a tie. Replacements are available from the school Office for purchase in the event of loss.

** Navy/white/ house-colour polo shirts with the school logo are also available.



We are aware that some of the clothing marketed in some of the large retail stores is not suitable as school uniform in Gairloch High School. Badged school uniform can be ordered direct from our supplier <https://www.schoolwearmadeeasy.com>

Laundered second-hand items are often available from the school office at a reasonable price of £2.00 per item.

In addition, the school now run a swap shop where items of school clothing can be donated and also collected at no extra cost.



Our Vision

"Our school nurtures a caring, inclusive community where every pupil can achieve their potential. We foster resilience, respect, and open-mindedness, encouraging growth and creativity. We strive for excellence, instilling confidence and a love of learning for future success and positive contributions to society."

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Duke of Edinburgh

<https://www.dofe.org/>



**YOUTH
WITHOUT
LIMITS**

Pupils in S3 are given the opportunity to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, and most pupils take this up. The award work is split into 4 sections: Physical, Skills, Community Service and Expedition.

After completion of the Bronze award, pupils can then enrol for Silver. There is the opportunity for some pupils to undergo training to do their expedition by kayak, mountain bike or hillwalking.



There is also progression to Gold, which includes a residential project. This is a prestigious award presented at Holyrood by a representative of the Duke of Edinburgh.

Gairloch High School has repeatedly been recognised nationally for its contribution to the delivery of the Award Scheme to pupils.





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Education Maintenance Allowance

<https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/899/schools - grants and benefits/14/education maintenance allowance>

An EMA is a weekly payment worth up to £30 for pupils who are planning to stay on at school after their leaving age. They must complete a learning agreement at school for a minimum of 21 learning hours per week.

In session 2025/2026 pupils born between 1 March 2006 and 30 September 2009 can receive payments from August 2025. Pupils born between 1 October 2009 and 28 February 2010 can receive payments from January 2026.

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Encourage Personal Growth and Self-Discovery: We empower pupils to explore their interests, talents, and passions, fostering resilience, self-confidence, and a mindset of continuous learning and self-improvement.

Promote Creativity and Critical Thinking: We engage pupils in educational experiences that stimulate creative expression, problem-solving skills, and open-mindedness, encouraging them to think critically and embrace intellectual curiosity.

Emphasise Academic and Vocational Excellence and Lifelong Learning: We strive for academic and vocational excellence by providing a challenging and engaging curriculum that instils a love for learning, enabling pupils to develop the knowledge, skills, and mindset necessary for future success.

Develop Responsible and Ethical Citizens: We nurture a sense of social responsibility and ethical values in pupils, empowering them to become actively engaged in their communities and contribute positively to society.

Employment of Children

The employment of children byelaws regulates the types of occupation in which children under school leaving age may be employed and other conditions of employment. For further information, please see:

https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/19/employment_of_children

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Emergency Planning

The school has procedures in place for dealing with emergencies. These are used from time to time when a power failure or weather conditions mean that the school has to close early. In such instances information can be obtained by calling the Council's Schools Helpline. More information on this telephone service can be found in the Telephone Information Service – Guidance for parents on the website. Please read this information in conjunction with Adverse Weather Procedures. Each winter, paper copies of these documents are sent home to every parent.

In the event of a major crisis affecting the school and requiring the evacuation of the building, the school has a plan for occasions when it is not possible for the building to be re-entered. Pupils and staff will be moved to the Community Hall or, if this is not possible, to the Myrtle Bank Hotel. Decisions on the dispersal of pupils from the assembly point will be made in conjunction with the police once everyone has been accounted for.

This section links with the section on [Adverse Weather](#).

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Employability | Skills for Learning for Learning, Life and Work

Gairloch High School's curriculum is designed to develop, in a continuing way, self-esteem, character, ambition, focus and the ability to work with others. At the same time as developing the necessary skills and qualities required to succeed in the world of work, it provides our young people with specific experiences that further prepare them for the adult world.

As part of the national Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) agenda, The Highland Council, Schools, Colleges and DYW Regional Groups are working in partnership to develop and increase work-related learning opportunities for young people through employer engagement. Pupils complete an application form using the Hi-Hope database.



NB: Parents should not make work experience arrangements for pupils. We need to ensure duty of care and due diligence for our young people. The organisations who carry out the Health & Safety Workplace Assessment are qualified to NEBOSH Level (an industry recognised H&S qualification) and if there were an issue or incident, they would have liability insurance if the placement were investigated. Parents, although they could deem a workplace environment safe, would not have the qualifications to support this.

The Interview Skills Day for S5 and S6 is a useful event for pupils providing experience they will soon need when applying for jobs or places in further or higher education. We run this event in collaboration with the local community and are supported by Developing the Workforce West Highland. Individual pupils can also attend relevant work experience throughout S5 and S6 where appropriate and by arrangement.

All these activities are in addition to topics regarding employability, work and life skills within the PSHE programme in which pupils are involved throughout their years at school.





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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

<https://www.gairlochhigh.org.uk/policies-handbook>

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

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

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](#).

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>



The following are links to our own school Promoting Positive Relationships policy and Council guidance:

<https://www.gairlochhigh.org.uk/policies-handbook>: updated policy coming December 2024 and will be accessible here.

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

https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/20086/promoting_positive_relationships_-_framework_and_guidance_2021





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Extra-curricular activities

Extracurricular activities play a vital role in a child's holistic development, going far beyond academics. These activities provide a structured yet flexible environment where children can explore their interests, develop new skills, and build self-confidence. From sports and music to clubs and community projects, extracurriculars allow children to express creativity, develop teamwork, and experience a sense of accomplishment that fosters personal growth. By stepping out of their comfort zones, students often discover hidden talents and passions that shape their identities.

Engaging in extracurricular activities equips children with essential life skills that extend into adulthood. Activities like sports teach discipline, leadership, and resilience, while arts and clubs enhance problem-solving, critical thinking, and collaboration. These experiences not only enrich their academic pursuits but also prepare them for future challenges, building character and a strong work ethic. In a competitive world, the ability to balance responsibilities and pursue interests is a key skill that extracurricular involvement cultivates naturally.



Children should be encouraged to take advantage of every opportunity available to them through extracurriculars. These activities broaden horizons, introduce diverse perspectives, and create lasting friendships. They provide a healthy outlet for stress, enabling children to find joy and balance in their lives. By participating actively, students become more adaptable and better prepared to handle the complexities of life. Encouraging children to embrace these opportunities helps them build a foundation for a fulfilling and well-rounded future.





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Family Holidays: term time

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 circumstances 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:

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





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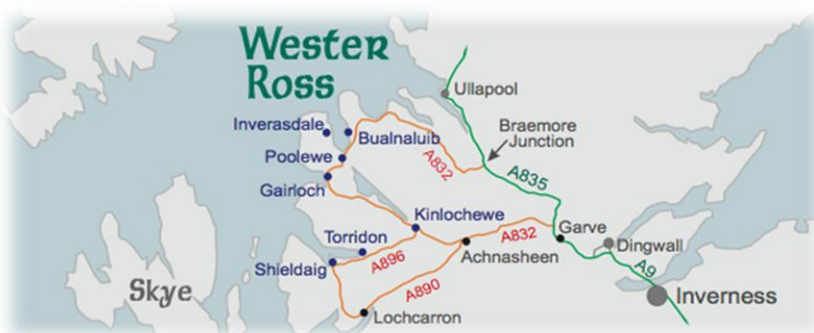
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Geographical Location

Gairloch High School is situated within the Parish of Gairloch on the western seaboard of Ross-shire, 57 miles from Dingwall and 72 miles from Council Headquarters in Inverness.



With the support of parents and the local Community, the High School was upgraded from two to four-year status in 1979. In 1983 we gained six-year status, and this removed the need for Gairloch pupils to transfer to Dingwall Academy and hostel accommodation in order to complete their secondary education. Six-year status was accompanied by a change of name from Achtercairn Secondary to Gairloch High School.



We operate as a fully comprehensive school offering a broad general education covering all curricular areas in S1-S3, as well as formal National Qualifications throughout S4-S6. Our curriculum is enriched by our learning partners to meet the needs of our pupils and includes offerings to support a vocational as well as academic pathway progressions in several subjects.

August 1994, work was completed on the £5 million new School complex adjacent to the old building. The whole community now benefits greatly from the much-enhanced educational, library, leisure and sporting facilities that are part and parcel of the investment. We have extensive ICT facilities throughout the school and each pupil has a Chromebook to support their learning. The nature of the catchment area, vast distances covered daily and the variety of modes of travel, allied to the 'remarkable' pupil attendance rate and high levels of achievement, add together to provide a stimulating learning environment.

Our Vision

"Our school nurtures a caring, inclusive community where every pupil can achieve their potential. We foster resilience, respect, and open-mindedness, encouraging growth and creativity. We strive for excellence, instilling confidence and a love of learning for future success and positive contributions to society."





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Home Learning

Home learning plays a vital role in a child's education, extending beyond the classroom to reinforce and deepen understanding. It fosters independence, curiosity, and a love for learning, providing opportunities to apply school-taught knowledge to real-life contexts. Importantly, home learning helps bridge the gap between school and home, encouraging children to take ownership of their education while building crucial time management and self-discipline skills.

Parents and carers are key to making home learning a success. By creating a positive and structured environment, they can help children develop good study habits and feel supported in their efforts. Simple actions like setting a consistent time for learning, providing a quiet space, and showing genuine interest in what the child is studying can make a significant difference. Encouraging curiosity and celebrating effort over results fosters confidence and resilience, laying the foundation for lifelong learning.

Active involvement in learning activities enhances the experience for both children and parents. Reading together, exploring hobbies like cooking or gardening, and discussing topics of interest are meaningful ways to connect and learn collaboratively. For younger children, turning everyday activities into learning moments, such as practicing math while shopping, can be highly effective. For older children, parents can guide by discussing goals, helping with research, or offering perspective on complex topics, ensuring their engagement is both meaningful and enriching.





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House System

A House System in schools fosters a sense of belonging, teamwork, and healthy competition among students and staff. By grouping individuals into smaller, cross-year communities, it encourages peer mentoring, collaboration, and support, helping to break down barriers between different year groups. Houses provide a platform for students to showcase talents and skills in various activities, from sports to academics and creative arts, promoting holistic development. The system also instils a strong sense of pride and responsibility, as students contribute to the collective success of their house. Additionally, it helps to reinforce positive behaviour and values, as students work towards shared goals, building a cohesive and inclusive school culture.



Kerry



Tollaidh



Maree

An important part of being a pupil in Gairloch High School is being part of a 'House'. Each pupil belongs to one of three houses. Staff also belong to a House (apart from the Head Teacher, Depute Head Teacher and Principal Teacher PE, so they can support all Houses). Activities are organised in Houses and during the year points build up in the activities you take part in. There will also be House Assemblies – where you get together to discuss things that happen in school





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Illness in School | Administration of Medicines

<https://www.gairlochhigh.org.uk/parents-carers>

In the case of illness, pupils are immediately withdrawn from class and parents are contacted. The school does not have the resources to transport sick pupils' home during the school day. Where this is deemed advisable, parents are informed with a view to them assuming this responsibility. Where appropriate, the local doctor is called in or the pupil is taken to the surgery, which is very close to the school. Again, however, parents, where possible, are immediately informed of the situation. Pupils who are unwell are accommodated in the school's First Aid Room until their return to class or while awaiting collection by their parents.

Pupils are also reminded that if they feel unwell and need to go home, that they contact the school office in the first instance and not contact home directly via their own smartphones or other means of communication.

National Guidance on the Administration of Medicines in Schools has been issued by the Scottish Government and can be found at:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/supportingchildren-young-people-healthcare-needs-schools/>

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

Under Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, all children have a right to the highest attainable standard of health and to health care services that help them attain this. Article 7 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states that children with disabilities have the right to express their views freely on all matters affecting them. The arrangements for each individual will therefore take account of the health professionals' advice, the pupil's views and, where appropriate, their parent's views.

NHS Highland, Highland Council and school staff will work collaboratively to ensure that pupils receive the service they need in the way most appropriate to their personal circumstances.

We will work with pupils and parents/carers to support the healthcare in our school, making reasonable adjustments that children and young people with healthcare needs might need and require.



Please note: for minor injuries, the school will only deal with minor cuts and bruises. These will be cleaned, and a plaster applied. If your child is injured, falls or becomes unwell during the school day you or the emergency contact you have provided, will always be contacted and you may be advised to collect your child from school.

Where appropriate, we will make arrangements for staff providing healthcare to pupils to receive appropriate training from a health professional, or other accredited source in the care they are providing.

Assistance with intimate care may be needed by children in any school and this will be provided if required to support these needs quickly and with respect for children's privacy, dignity and rights.

Under no circumstances can non-prescribed medications be administered in schools. This includes paracetamol, aspirin and ibuprofen.

As a parent/carer, **if you wish a prescribed medication to be administered by a member of staff**, you should request a copy of **FORM - Admin1a**, complete and sign it and return it to the school as soon as possible. Verbal permissions are not permitted.

As a parent/carer, **if you wish your child to carry and administer their own prescribed medication**, you should request a copy of **FORM - Admin 1b**, complete and sign it and return it to the school as soon as possible. Verbal permissions are not permitted.

Form requests can be made by emailing: Gairloch.High@highland.gov.uk

In addition to the above, if your child has any form of medical protocol or individualised health care plan that we are not aware of, please let the school know of this at your earliest convenience.

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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 accessed <http://www.wellbeinghighland.co.uk/wsa-to-wellbeing>.



Supporting the wellbeing of our Children & Young People

Gairloch School has access to Highland Council's Primary Mental Health Worker Service and consultation and advice may be sought if there are concerns that might require more targeted support. Counselling is also available for all pupils from age 10. Information on your school's service can be accessed from your child's guidance teacher.

Alternatively, there is a completely confidential, online counselling service called Kooth for children and young people from age 10 that can be accessed: <http://kooth.com/>



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





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Military Families

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools_-_additional_support_needs/833/armed_forces_-_support_for_families_and_schools

Our school welcomes and supports families, their children and young people from Forces families: serving, veteran and reservists.

We understand some of the challenges that mobility of service life can bring, and we look forward to working with you to ensure a smooth transition for your child/young person coming into or moving on from our school. Please get in touch with us as soon as you can so we can work with you to ensure the transition is as smooth as possible.



Highland Council have proudly committed to the Armed Forces Covenant and as such support our veteran and reservist families as well as those currently serving. There is a dedicated Highland Council Military Liaison Group (MLG) which has been formed to promote and ensure equality and equity for your children and young people in their education.



Visit the Highland Council Armed Forces Website (click above) for lots of helpful information and support:

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools_-_additional_support_needs/833/armed_forces_-_support_for_families_and_schools





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Outdoor Learning

We make full use of our magnificent natural surroundings to enhance the learning opportunities available to our pupils. A high proportion of school staff are qualified to lead one or more outdoor activities, and we are able to provide a wide range of outdoor experiences for our pupils.

With the assistance of partners such as Slattadale, Scottish Natural Heritage, John Muir Trust, Crofting Commission and National Trust for Scotland we encourage pupils to learn about their environment. We also expect pupils to contribute to the community and each year, early in the tourist season, staff organise a beach clean with pupils near the school.

Our S1 group visit Cairngorm Christian Centre, near Aviemore, for their first residential stay in May where, among other activities, they take part in hill walking, mountain biking, orienteering and water sports. The trip is an integral part of the personal and social development of the child, and we expect all pupils to attend. Our S1 pupils also work with rangers at Inverewe Garden to control invasive plant species and learn to build woodland shelters. S1 also participate in the John Muir Award.



As well as local trips, senior Geography pupils have visited the Cairngorm National Park and Edinburgh in recent years to explore and understand different urban and rural landscapes.

Learning outdoors is an integral part of the biology courses, at all levels. Pupils are taken on fieldwork excursions to the Beinn Eighe mountain trails and to the local seashore. They are regularly taken out, as time and weather permit, to reinforce and enhance classroom work. One of the aims of these trips is to extend pupils' knowledge of the flora and fauna of the local area.





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Parent Council

<https://www.gairlochhigh.org.uk/parents-carers>

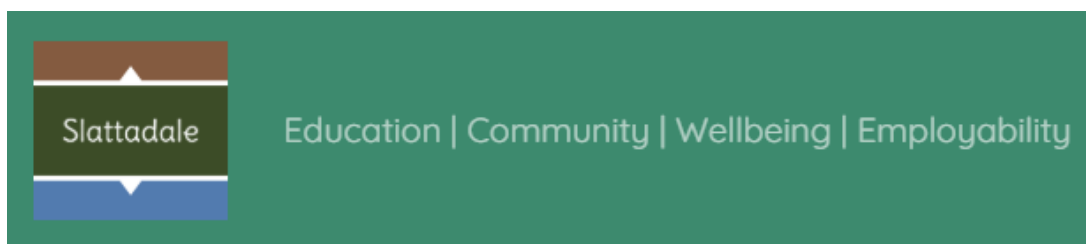
All parents make up the Parent Forum and regular meetings take place between a smaller representative group called the Parent Council and the Head Teacher. Any member of the parent forum can approach the Parent Council with issues they wish raised and all parents are encouraged to involve themselves with the school. The Parent Council works closely with staff for the benefit of our pupils. Details of all meetings and events are posted on the Parent Council pages of the school website.

The school website also contains links that will allow parents to read about ways in which they can support the learning of their children.

The Parent Council have been very active in supporting the school and some of the activities they have been involved with include:

- ✓ Continuing to work closely with school to support school improvement.
- ✓ Working with Highland Council on the Management of Schools agenda.
- ✓ Organising a range of fundraisers.
- ✓ Supporting school events such as the annual Christmas Dance.
- ✓ Supporting in maintaining the school garden and landscaping of outdoor learning spaces.
- ✓ Arranging agreed dates with the school to provide baking and refreshments for school events.
- ✓ Helping to transport pupils to planned events.
- ✓ Assisting with the delivery of Duke of Edinburgh Awards.

The parents/carers and staff in the school have also worked closely together to create 'Slattadale', an organisation that aims to enhance pupil learning and development, largely focused on the outdoors. More information about Slattadale can be found at: <https://slattadale.org.uk>:





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Parental Involvement

<https://www.gairlochhigh.org.uk/parents-carers>

Parents are welcome to contact the school at any time to make arrangements to discuss any aspect of their child's education. Emails should be sent to Gairloch.High@highland.gov.uk and calls to 01445 712275 where a member of our office team will take details and pass them on to the relevant member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and/or Pupil Support. From there, should information be required from teachers, this will be done by way of the appropriate Faculty Principal Teacher and shared as required by the member of SLT or Pupil Support to communicate back at the earliest opportunity. *Parents/carers are asked not to contact teachers directly.*

Letters and emails are sent home regularly with updates about the school. A termly Newsletter is produced and shared with Parents and Carers: <https://www.gairlochhigh.org.uk/newsletters>

Information about the school is on our website: <http://www.gairlochhigh.org.uk> and we share achievements and successes on our social media pages.

Parents/Carer Engagement evenings are held during the year to give you the opportunity to meet with staff and discuss your child's progress. We encourage pupils to attend these evenings as working together on next steps is a vital link in achieving success. The Head Teacher also endeavours to hold drop-in sessions, either in person or online where time permits.

Our annual Key Dates document holds the dates and times of parent/carers engagement events: <https://www.gairlochhigh.org.uk/parents-carers>. Any extra dates are shared as a when they are set, via email and or text message.

We hold Assemblies to celebrate pupils' successes and give an opportunity for 'Times for Reflection' on a regular basis and encourage parents and the community to attend. This is a very positive feature creating further links with the school. On occasion, our School Chaplains attend our assemblies and provide an opportunity for religious observance. Whilst we encourage all pupils to listen and learn about a range of beliefs, faiths and religions, special arrangements can be made for pupils whose parents/carers do not wish them to participate in religious observance. Parents/carers should email Gairloch.High@highland.gov.uk with any request.

More information about religious observance will be updated on our website during session 24/25 into session 25/26 which will focus on acceptance, tolerance and non-promotion to ensure that we are as inclusive a school as possible.





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Parents as Partners

<https://www.gairlochhigh.org.uk/parents-carers>

We believe that much of the strength of the school lies in the positive relationships between staff, pupils and their parents/carers. 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 very hard to keep parents/carers informed regarding their child's progress and any key decisions being made about their education. This includes:

- ✓ Parent/Carer engagement evenings
- ✓ Progress checks
- ✓ Target Setting
- ✓ Course choice/ Options evenings
- ✓ Information on the school website

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.

We have a comprehensive Personal Social and Health Education programme in the school which covers a range of sensitive topics. This can be viewed at <https://www.gairlochhigh.org.uk/curriculum>.

The school always seeks to involve parents in any key decisions about their child's education and keep parents informed about progress.

Parental information is obtained from questionnaires issued regularly at Parent/Carer engagement evenings and from Parent/Carer Forums.

A 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 gairlochhigh.school@highlandpc.co.uk

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

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





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Permission to leave the school

If a pupil needs to leave during the school day for an appointment etc., parents/carers are requested to email Gairloch.High@highland.gov.uk using the same email address held on the schools management information system.

Please refrain from contacting staff on direct emails as they may not be in the building on that day or have access to email so any direct message may not get through.

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.

Where a pupil is found to have left the school grounds without permission, we will contact parents/carers to advise them of this via text message and telephone. Parents/carers should contact the school at the earliest opportunity once they have located their child/young person.

If pupils fall ill during the day, pupils should contact the office directly where parent/carers will be contacted for them to collect their child. As such, it is essential that we have up to date daytime contact numbers and emergency contact numbers for all pupils.

We kindly ask that **parents/carers do not contact pupils via mobile devices during school lessons** as this disrupts learning and is unfair on other learners. Should you need to contact your pupil during lesson times, please get in touch with the school on **01445 712275** and we will ensure that any message is passed to pupils and required actions are taken.

Pupils are also reminded that if they feel unwell and need to go home, that they contact the school office in the first instance and not contact home directly.

Our Vision

"Our school nurtures a caring, inclusive community where every pupil can achieve their potential. We foster resilience, respect, and open-mindedness, encouraging growth and creativity. We strive for excellence, instilling confidence and a love of learning for future success and positive contributions to society."





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Placing Requests | Enrolment

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 Education and Learning Manager: Mhairi MacDonald, c/o Portree High School, Viewfield Road, Portree, IV15 9ES.**

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 Gairloch High School, they can contact the school office (**01445 712275**) to arrange a visit with a member of Senior Leadership.

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. See our section on [School Support for Pupils](#) for more information.





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Returners: Adult Learners in School

Our Vision

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The school continues to adopt the policy of encouraging adults to join the classroom situation during school time in order to gain further academic qualifications. Adults are welcome, subject to the following conditions:

1. The consent and availability of the appropriate subject teacher(s).
2. The current class size(s).
3. The availability of appropriate resources.
4. The positive attitude of the student towards work, punctuality and manner of dress in keeping with the ethos of the school and the high standards expected of its pupils.

For further details, please contact the School Office in the first instance. While there will be no charge for tuition, adults will, of course, be expected to pay any national examination fees required by the appropriate examining body.

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Safeguarding and Child Protection



<https://hcpc.scot/>

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. All staff are trained and have regular updates on Child Protection guidelines.

Copies of child are available online at:

http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/1361/childcare_and_family_care/438/child_protection

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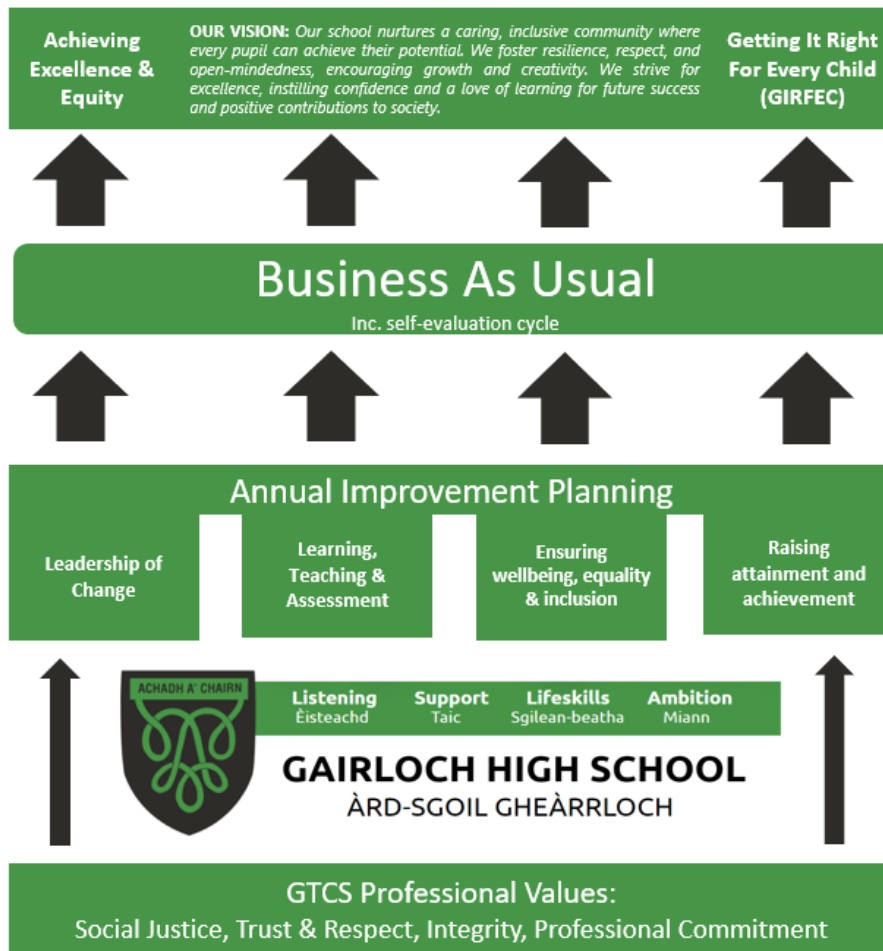
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School Improvement | Self-Evaluation

<https://www.gairlochhigh.org.uk/plans-reports>



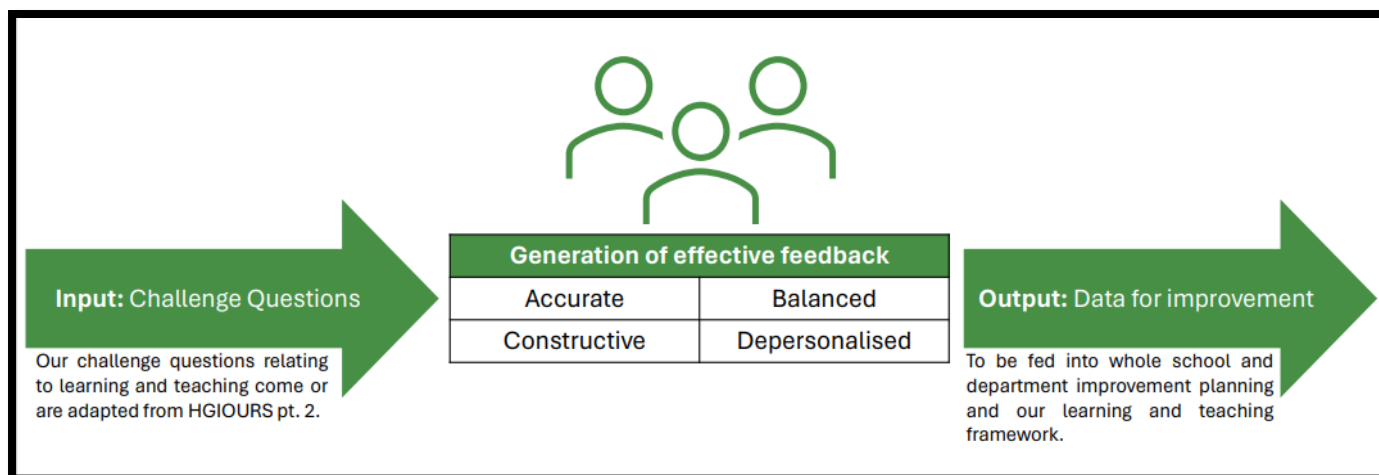
Our school improvement framework: 2024 → 2027



Both School and Department Improvement Plans are reviewed on an on-going basis and a Standards and Quality Report is published annually. A summary of this report is made available to parents on our school website.

Pupils are expected to review their own learning and contribute to their annual reports. Pupil results in prelims and final exams are monitored and checked at key points in the year to identify issues. Pupils use this information to set targets to improve their own performance in the same way that staff work to improve delivery and outcomes. The self-evaluation by pupils of their progress is used as a topic of discussion with Pupil Support staff at individual review meetings and also with parents.

Our Youth Empowerment Model

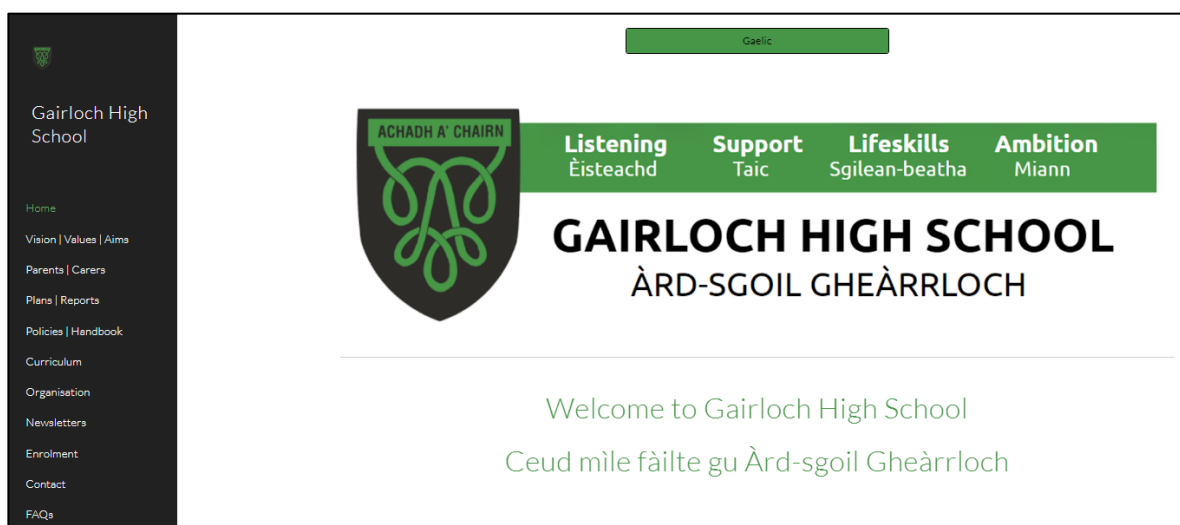


Information regarding school’s performance at local and national level can be obtained via Education Scotland and the Parentzone School information Dashboard:

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

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/my-school/school-information-dashboard/>

In addition, we are continuing to update our policies and share data. During the session will make these available on our school website: <https://www.gairlochhigh.org.uk> as they become available.





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School Meals | Healthy Promoting School

As a Health Promoting school, we also encourage pupils, staff and parents to think about healthier lifestyles. S1 pupils are encouraged to set Health Targets. Healthy living is a regular topic in classes. We have a School Travel Plan which promotes 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.

At the time of writing, school meals cost **£2.65** for pupils and just keep getting better, with better quality food, healthier meals, larger portion sizes and more and better choices. If a pupil has special dietary needs, please inform the school. Free meals can be claimed in certain circumstances, for information and application form:

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

Application forms are available from the school reception or can be completed online. Pupils receive credit on their account which they can use during break and lunchtime in the canteen.

The Highland Council operates a 'Cashless catering' system which utilises pupils' NEC cards. Parents can put money on student's cards through the website, using debit cards. For further details, please see:

http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/9/school_meals/2

Lunchtime Choices

Parents are responsible for pupils who decide to go out with school grounds at lunch time.

Breakfast Club

We offer a free breakfast club for all pupils from 0825 each day, Monday to Friday. Options include cereals, toast, fruit, cereal bars and a range of drinks.





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School Nurse

Our School Nurse, Mrs S. MacKenzie, visits on a regular basis to provide check-ups and to provide health advice. The nurse also contributes to the school's health education programme and provides an informal lunchtime drop-in service when pupils (and staff) can seek advice.

During your child's time at school, it may be necessary to have assistance from other partner staff. This might include for example – Primary Mental Health Staff, Children's Services Worker, Family Services Worker and/or Youth Development staff. This is based on meeting the needs of individual children and will be part of any ongoing discussions with parents and pupils.

Some pupils receive support as a result of temporary or longer-term need. This is done occasionally by extraction but mostly continues in class. The school has access to various support partners (e.g. Psychological Services) however children are referred only after full consultation with parents.



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School Transport

Transportation to and from school, for placing request pupils, is a parental responsibility. Information about applying for school transport can be found at:

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/12/school_transport

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 by email to:

public.transport@highland.gov.uk





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School Trips

As well as many 'local' trips around Scotland, foreign trips have taken place. A residential S1 trip to the Cairngorms takes place annually along with a range of other trips both locally and further afield.

Where costs are incurred, the school can support with these. Please contact the Head Teacher directly to find out more.





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School Support for Pupils

As part of our mission to ensure we are Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC), we have a range of measures in place to support our pupils. We are a solution-focused school and aim to nurture all our pupils whilst, at the same time offering opportunities for them to build their resilience to be effective contributors to society when they leave.

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

Our Support Leads

- PT Pupil Support (Guidance) - Mrs H Leonard
- PT Pupil Support (Support for Learning) - Mrs C Bulmer

Pupil Support work closely with all staff in the school to support our pupils. They meet regularly with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Support for Learning (SfL) to share information and plan over-arching support to individuals throughout their time in school.

Pupil Support Staff are responsible for three main areas affecting pupils' welfare:

- Pastoral Support
- Health and Wellbeing
- Additional Support Needs

Additional Support for Learning (ASfL)

Class/Subject teachers, in conjunction with Additional Support Needs Teachers monitor the progress of pupils with additional support. The needs of such pupils are generally catered for within the normal curriculum but with specialist advice and support as required. If necessary, a child's plan may be put in place to help plan, organise, monitor and regularly review a child's progress. Parents and pupils will be involved in these procedures and in reviews. More information can be found about the Highland Council model for support and child's plans at:



http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/230/highland_practice_model_-_delivering_additional_support_for_learners

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

This is a team of staff whose main responsibilities lie with pupils who have Additional Support Needs (ASN). A very wide range of factors may lead to pupils having a need for additional support. These factors fall broadly into four overlapping themes:

- Learning environment
- Family circumstances
- Disability or health need
- Social and emotional factors

We provide Additional Support for Learning in many ways, including:

In-class support: we work with subject teachers to ensure that any pupils requiring additional support receive the right kind of help.

Tutorial support: in discussion with the pupils themselves and their parents we may decide that it is appropriate for them to receive 1:1 or small group support. The support we provide includes: consolidation of and/or completion of class work; help with homework; preparation for assessments; specific programme to help improve reading, spelling, comprehension and/or handwriting; literacy skills; numeracy skills; life skills; time out and time to talk.

Transition support: some pupils require extra support to cope with the changes and choices during the move from primary to secondary school and from secondary school to a positive destination beyond, such as college or a workplace. At these times we liaise with the pupils and their parents, Pupil Support and other professionals from out with the school (e.g. primary school teachers and Skills Development Scotland) at transition meetings, to ensure that transition is a well-planned, positive experience for that pupil.

Pupil profiles: these confidential documents are written following P7 transition meetings and distributed to subject staff. Each profile outlines both the strengths and difficulties experienced by an individual pupil. It also lists strategies to ensure that appropriate support is provided to increase access to the curriculum for that pupil.

Child's Plans: to ensure that the support pupils receive is specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time bound we may decide in discussion with a pupil, their parents, other members of staff and other professionals that a Child's Plan is needed. A solution-focused meeting is held for all those involved, and an action plan is drawn up. This is then reviewed and updated at regular intervals for as long as is appropriate.

Alternative Assessment Arrangements (AAA): pupils can access support from SfL staff with assessments such as reading and scribing, once evidence indicates that they would be at a substantial disadvantage without this.



Paired Reading: is a scheme that involves pairing younger pupils (who need to develop their confidence in reading) with sixth year pupils and together they read every week.

Reading Programme: Some S1 pupils require support with reading to help them 'catch up'. The Reading Programme is a structured reading and comprehension programme delivered three or four times a week for six weeks and has proved very effective for a number of pupils.

Monitoring: pupils can require Additional Support for Learning at any time and there is a 'staged approach' in education, which is a pathway for assessing learning needs and accessing additional services to support pupils within school. It emphasizes early intervention to identify, record and assess pupils with Additional Support Needs and necessitates a co-operative approach between SfL staff, Pupil Support staff, outside agencies including Skills Development Scotland, and parents in line with the Highland Practice Model.

Sometimes a Children's Service Worker will be involved in supporting a child. A **Children's Service Worker (CSW)** is often based at the school and will generally focus on more social and emotional needs rather than issues about the curriculum or classroom learning. They:

- Work in collaboration with the support team in school.
- Work to support families in their own communities.
- Work with individual pupils and small groups - offering a further level of support.

Parents/Carers will always be involved in discussions about any additional support being suggested for their child and any need that may be identified within the school.

Further information is available on the Scottish Government website:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright>

Effective learning and teaching demands that a range of methods, materials and approaches are employed to successfully cater for the wide variety of needs amongst our pupils. The aim of SfL is to ensure that our pupils are given their best chance of achieving personal success.

If you consider that your child has additional support needs, you should contact the Head Teacher in the first instance.

The Additional Support for Learning (Sources of Information) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2011 as:

- (a) 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 www.enquire.org.uk
- (b) My Rights, My Say – an advocacy and advice service for young people over 12 with additional support needs <http://enquire.org.uk/myrightsmysay>
- (c) Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC033576; and



(d) [Scottish Child Law Centre](#), a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SCO12741.”

Information for families with children with additional support needs can be found at:

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

Highland Council would seek to work in partnership with parents at all times, but sometimes you will have a concern that you don't feel is being addressed or will want to talk to someone out with the school. Should you have any concerns that your child's additional needs are not being met, you should contact your child's named person in the first instance and/or the Head Teacher (Mrs C Bulmer, 01445 712275) If your concerns continue, there are several means of resolving difficulties and disputes and information on this can be found at:

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

In Gairloch High School we aim to:

Cultivate a Supportive and Inclusive Environment: We aim to create a nurturing school community that embraces diversity, promotes acceptance, and provides a safe space for every pupil to thrive and feel valued.

Encourage Personal Growth and Self-Discovery: We empower pupils to explore their interests, talents, and passions, fostering resilience, self-confidence, and a mindset of continuous learning and self-improvement.

Promote Creativity and Critical Thinking: We engage pupils in educational experiences that stimulate creative expression, problem-solving skills, and open-mindedness, encouraging them to think critically and embrace intellectual curiosity.

Emphasise Academic and Vocational Excellence and Lifelong Learning: We strive for academic and vocational excellence by providing a challenging and engaging curriculum that instils a love for learning, enabling pupils to develop the knowledge, skills, and mindset necessary for future success.

Develop Responsible and Ethical Citizens: We nurture a sense of social responsibility and ethical values in pupils, empowering them to become actively engaged in their communities and contribute positively to society.





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Staff List

Senior Leadership Team	Role
Stuart Caddell	Head Teacher (Acting)
Donna Hildrey	Depute Head Teacher 0.25FTE (Acting)
Helen Leonard	Depute Head Teacher 0.25FTE (Acting)
Karen MacAllister	Depute Head Teacher 0.25FTE (Acting)
Lynne Whall	Depute Head Teacher 0.25FTE (Acting)

Extended Leadership Team	Role
Donna Hildrey	FPT Creative Arts Health Wellbeing 0.75 FTE
Lynne Whall	FPT Maths, Technologies, Social Sciences 0.75 FTE
Karen MacAllister	FPT Languages 0.75 FTE
Elizabeth MacRae	FPT Sciences
Helen Leonard	PT Guidance 0.75 FTE
Carol Bulmer	PT Additional Support for Learning 0.8 FTE

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Teaching Staff	Curriculum area
Donna Hildrey	Physical Education
Lynne Whall	Mathematics and Numeracy
Karen MacAllister	Modern Languages
Elizabeth MacRae	Physics and BGE Science
Helen Leonard	Drama and PSHE lead
Carol Bulmer (0.8 FTE)	Additional Support Needs
Eilidh Caddell (0.8 FTE)	English and Literacy
Iain Cumming	Gaelic Learners and Gàidhlig Medium
Emma Wotherspoon	Geography and Geology
Amy Robertson (0.8 FTE)	Social Studies, History and Modern Studies
Allan Gorman	CDT and Engineering Science
Goedele Geens (0.5 FTE)	Biology and Human Biology
Rebecca Leitch (0.8 FTE)	Chemistry and BGE Science
Gemma McKenna (0.5 FTE)	Art and Design
Trish MacDonald (0.8 FTE)	Music and Music Technology

Pupil Support Assistants (PSAs)	Support Staff
Ann Fraser	Jen McKenzie (Admin)
Lucy Cairney	Flora MacKenzie (Clerical + Technician)
Jo Linley-Lapage	Chrissie MacIver (Clerical)
Avrill MacKenzie	Ken Lee (Facilities Manager)
Susan MacDonald	Andy Flowers (Facilities Manager)

Support Staff cont. & Partners

Libby McLean (Canteen)

Stuart Bauld (SDS Careers Advisor)

Katie Grant (DYW Coordinator)

Anna Black (Youth Development Officer)

Steven MacDonald (Active Schools Coordinator)





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Transitions

As noted in the section on School Support for Pupils, transition planning is an important part of what we do. In Gairloch High School we offer:

1. **Primary 7 transition:** activities and events planned in partnership with our Associated School Group primary school. This enables pupils to get a feel of what it will be like to come to Gairloch High School, meet their new classmates and aims to reduce anxiety and worry aiming to ensure that they are ready to hit the ground running when they arrive in the August.
2. **Enhanced transition:** where a pupil has additional support needs and/or high levels of anxiety or worry, an enhanced transition can be put in place. This involved staff from the school visiting the pupil in the primary and building a positive relationship with the pupil. Over a period of time, the pupil will also have the opportunity to come up to the High School for 1:1 visits and tours to slowly get them used to the new environment.
3. **Transition to adult services:** where a pupil is identified as needing support upon leaving Gairloch High School, a partnership approach is taken to support the pupil and their parents in looking ahead at sustainable positive destinations for the young person. This sometimes starts as early as S3, building links with organisations that can potentially offer options to young people as they move on from High School.
4. **Standard transition:** leaving school – [Careers Advice](#) | [Support for Leavers](#)

Our Vision

"Our school nurtures a caring, inclusive community where every pupil can achieve their potential. We foster resilience, respect, and open-mindedness, encouraging growth and creativity. We strive for excellence, instilling confidence and a love of learning for future success and positive contributions to society."





Listening
Èisteachd

Support
Taic

Lifeskills
Sgilean-beatha

Ambition
Miann

GAIRLOCH HIGH SCHOOL

ÀRD-SGOIL GHEÀRRLOCH

Term Dates

Future school term dates: These can be found on the highland council website:

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

2025 holidays

- February break - 17 February and 18 February
- In service day - 19 February
- Easter holidays - 7 April to 21 April
- May Day - 5 May
- In service day - 2 June
- Summer holidays - starts 4 July
- In service day - 18 August
- In service days - 15 September and 16 September
- October holidays - 13 October to 24 October
- Christmas and New Year break - 24 December to 7 January

2026 holidays

- February break - 16 February and 17 February
- In service day - 18 February
- Easter holidays - 3 April to 20 April
- May Day - 4 May
- In service day - 7 May
- Summer holidays - starts 3 July





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Wider Achievement

House Activities

An important part of being a pupil in Gairloch High School is being part of a 'House'. Each pupil belongs to one of three houses. Staff also belong to a House (apart from the Head Teacher, Depute Head Teacher and Principal Teacher PE, so they can support all Houses). Activities are organised in Houses and during the year points build up in the activities you take part in. There will also be House Assemblies – where you get together to discuss things that happen in school.

Young Leaders

In S6 we develop personal leadership qualities amongst our cohorts by offering them the opportunity to work towards the Standard for Captaincy. This aligns with our school vision, values and aims and encourages our teams to leave their legacy for the benefit of future generations.

Our S3 Sports Leaders take a very active part encouraging and arranging events for pupils through House activities and in conjunction with the PE Department and the Active Schools Co-ordinator. The school achieved 'Gold Status' through Sports Scotland (October 2017) a prestigious award which highlights the excellent sports work across the school.

Additional Activities

We have a wide and varied selection of additional activities provided by enthusiastic staff both inside and outside the normal school day. Owing to our geographical location this programme is only possible thanks to the high level of parental support and the commitment of staff and pupils to literally go the extra mile. The journeys involved are sometimes long and for those staff involved in transportation of pupils the minibus is a necessity.

