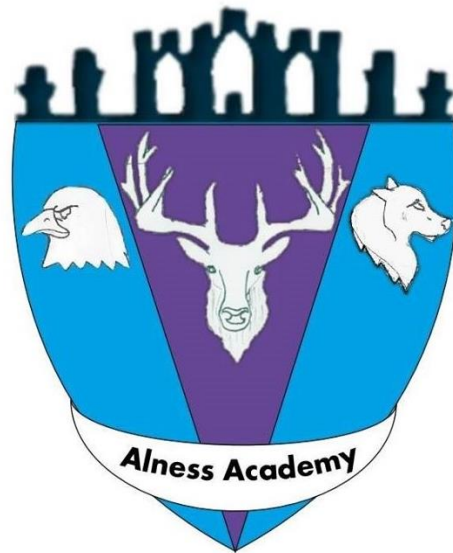




# ALNESS ACADEMY SCHOOL HANDBOOK 2025 - 2026



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## **WELCOME TO ALNESS ACADEMY!**

Dear Parent/Carer

A warm welcome to Alness Academy. I am pleased to have the opportunity to tell you about our school and look forward to having the pleasure of welcoming your son or daughter to the school.

Starting a new school is an exciting experience and we, along with our associated primary schools, have a programme to help students settle into their new school. We aim to build on each student's previous experience to progress their achievement and provide educational excellence.

In the handbook, we have tried to give a brief profile of Alness Academy. It is written for an adult audience and I hope you find it interesting and useful. New students are provided with information at appropriate times prior to and after joining the school.

I look forward to meeting you and your son/daughter and wish them much success as they progress their school career at Alness Academy. I am determined that our school continues to flourish at the heart of our community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Magowan', is positioned above the printed name and title.

**Tom Magowan**  
Head Teacher

November 2024

# CONTACT INFORMATION

School Address: Alness Academy Drive  
Alness  
Ross-Shire  
IV17 0WA

Telephone Number: 01349 883341

Email: [alness.academy@highland.gov.uk](mailto:alness.academy@highland.gov.uk)

Website: [www.alnessacademy.co.uk](http://www.alnessacademy.co.uk)

Social Media:



[www.facebook.com/AlnessAcademy](http://www.facebook.com/AlnessAcademy)



<https://x.com/alnessacad>



School App for Parents - from the App Store

The website, our social media accounts and the School App for Parents are the main source of information about the school. Visit these to stay updated with important parental information and other news about our school.

We would also email parents with important information. Please ensure we have an email address registered for you and ensure you notify us if you change your email address, so you don't miss out on any important updates.

## **TRANSFERRING TO ALNESS ACADEMY**

Alness Academy is a six-year comprehensive school serving the town of Alness, the villages of Ardross and Evanton and the area surrounding them. Our five primary schools are Ardross, Coulhill, Bridgend, Kiltarn and Obsdale. Alness Academy staff visit all our associated primary schools in preparation for the P7/S1 transition. An enhanced transition programme may begin in P6 for those learners who may need some further support. All P7 students spend three days at Alness Academy in June following their S1 timetable and meeting their new teachers. They will be accompanied by S2 "guides". S6 buddies will support them when they return in August.

There is an Open Afternoon for parents in June, when you will be able to meet key staff and get answers to any queries you may have.

If students live out with the school catchment area and their parents wish them to attend Alness Academy, they can contact Mr Donald MacRae to arrange a visit. Application must be made to the Care and Learning Manager (Mid), 84 High Street, Dingwall, IV15 9QN, online placing request forms can be obtained from the link below, under "Enrol your child for School" in the left-hand menu.

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/887/enrol\\_your\\_child\\_for\\_school\\_and\\_early\\_learning\\_and\\_childcare](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/887/enrol_your_child_for_school_and_early_learning_and_childcare)

You can find information regarding Enrolment in a School outside your catchment area in the link below, under "Enrolment in a school outside your catchment area" in the left-hand menu.

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

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

The roll of the school as of November 2024 was 498.

The Head Teacher is Mr Tom Magowan and the teaching staff numbers 40. The non-teaching staff - office, technicians, librarian, janitors, auxiliaries and children's services worker numbers 23. The current full staff list is shown in Appendix 1.

## **OUR LINKS WITH PARENTS**

At the Primary 7 stage, Pupil Support and Senior staff meet with parents at their Spring Term Primary 7 Parents' Evenings in their child's primary school. In June, a Parents' Open Afternoon and tour of Alness Academy is offered to all parents.

Parents' Meetings in Alness Academy are arranged using an on-line appointments system and are held in the school after the school day.

Details of date and time for Parents' Evenings for all years will be sent to you in a letter via email or School bag. You could also refer to our website or the School App for Parents for updates in our calendar.

# **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

## **PARENT COUNCIL**

All parents who have a pupil at the school are automatically part of the Parent Forum. The views of the Parent Forum are represented by a Parent Council which is made up of a group of parents who meet normally once a term with the Head Teacher.

All parents are welcome to attend Parent Council meetings. Alness Academy School's Parent Council links to other schools via the Highland Parent Council Partnership ([www.highlandpcp.org.uk](http://www.highlandpcp.org.uk)) and the National Parent Forum of Scotland ([www.npfs.org.uk](http://www.npfs.org.uk)). The Parent Council can be contacted directly at [alness.academy@highlandpc.co.uk](mailto:alness.academy@highlandpc.co.uk). Minutes of meetings and other information are stored on the Parent Council section of the school website.

## **DIRECT SCHOOL-PARENT LINKS**

Alness Academy staff believe that a good home-school partnership is essential to maximising the support given to all learners. We know this only works when as a school we give you the information to support your child's learning. This is done in various ways:

- i) An annual report for all pupils from S1 to S6 of each learner's progress, strengths and next steps in learning.
- ii) Three brief progress reports through the year for S4-6 and two for S1 to 3. See AA Calendar for Parents for details of when this report is issued for each year group.
- iii) Parents' Evenings. See AA Calendar for parents for details of when each year group Parents' Evening takes place.
- iv) Occasional information evenings. These cover a range of themes that we believe parents want more information on. These will include, for example, the curricular stage that your child is about to enter (i.e. for S3 this will involve looking at the Senior Phase and course options etc for their S4 year of studies).
- v) Head Teachers Information to Parents Communication. Letters with specific information relevant to parents are issued regularly via email.
- vi) Our website which contains news and key documents, and links to other websites relevant to your child's education.
- vii) Our Facebook page (there is a link on our website).
- viii) Our Pupil Support Team serve as a first point of contact for any parental concerns and will make contact with home if concerns arise.
- ix) Head Teacher's drop-in. Please feel free to make an appointment at any time with the Head Teacher to discuss any aspect of your child's learning or any other school matter.
- x) Winter weather arrangements are sent out yearly.

## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS**

As part of the Executive's New Community School initiative, Alness Academy has a Children's Service Worker, based in the school. Ms Ann Marie Dinneen helps to provide an inclusive approach to pupil welfare by linking with school, home and external agencies. This provides a very valuable link with parents, and they are able to meet with parents/carers and pupils in their home. The Depute Rector for Pupil Support coordinates all meetings of Academy staff and other agencies including Health, Educational Psychologist, Children's Services to consider how best to meet the needs of pupils experiencing significant difficulties. This group uses a Solution Focused approach involving both parents and pupils.

As a school we work in close conjunction with our ASG Primary Schools and a huge number of other local businesses, external agencies, organisations and bodies to ensure that our pupils have a diverse and relevant learning experience. There are simply too many to list, however some are listed below to give an indication of the breath of partnership working at Alness Academy:

North Highland College, High Life Highland: Music Tutors, Active Schools, Youth Development. My Future My Success, Developing Young Workforce, School Nurse, CAHMS, Youth Action Team, Mikeysline, School Counselling Service, Social Work, Police, Local employers, Skills Development Scotland, MCR Pathways, Rights Respecting Schools, Rotary Club, Community Councils etc.

If any parent/guardian believes that they, their business or their place of work could become involved in assisting the school by becoming one of our partners, please ring [01349 883341](tel:01349883341) and ask for an appointment with the Head Teacher to discuss it further.

## **COMPLAINTS / CONCERNS / COMMENTS**

The school has a strong commitment to self-evaluation and feedback is always welcome. Please feel free to either phone or email the school or contact the Head Teacher or the appropriate Deputy Head or Year Head. The school will always endeavour to resolve issues as soon as possible. Please see below our list of Year Heads and their contact details:

|                 |                                 |                                                                                      |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Year Head S1    | Mr Robert Dunsmuir (Acting DHT) | <a href="mailto:Robert.Dunsmuir@highland.gov.uk">Robert.Dunsmuir@highland.gov.uk</a> |
| Year Head S2    | Mr Donald MacRae (DHT)          | <a href="mailto:Donald.Macrae@highland.gov.uk">Donald.Macrae@highland.gov.uk</a>     |
| Year Head S3/S4 | Mrs Deirdre Murray (DHT)        | <a href="mailto:Deirdre.Murray2@highland.gov.uk">Deirdre.Murray2@highland.gov.uk</a> |
| Year Head S5/S6 | Mr Tom Magowan (HT)             | <a href="mailto:Tom.Magowan@highland.gov.uk">Tom.Magowan@highland.gov.uk</a>         |

You can also access the Children 1<sup>st</sup> Parentline on the link below:  
<https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/parentline-scotland/>

## **PLACING REQUESTS - PARENTAL CHOICE**

The catchment area for Alness Academy covers five Associated Primaries - Ardross, Bridgend, Coulhill, Kiltearn and Obsdale. Students who live in our catchment area will have priority in being allocated a place. Parents do have the right to specify the school in which they wish to place their child. Applications must be made to the Area Education Manager on 01349 868692. Placing request forms can be obtained from:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/75/school\\_placing\\_request\\_form\\_2020](https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/75/school_placing_request_form_2020)

Placing requests cannot be submitted until December. The exact date will be specified each year. If the school receives more placing requests than places, then allocation will be made according to siblings in the school and date of receipt of placing request. Transportation to and from school, for placing request students, is a parental responsibility. If students live out with the school catchment area and their parents wish them to attend Alness Academy, they can contact Mr Donald MacRae on 01349 883341 to arrange a visit.

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.

## **CHROMEBOOKS**

Alness Academy has now issued Chrome Book devices to all pupils. Pupils are responsible for their own devices. The Chrome Books should always have the protecting cases on and pupils will be expected to bring the Chrome Books charged to school each day and leave the charger at home to charge them each evening for the following day. No initial parental contribution has been required; however, should pupils lose or damage the devices, then parents may be required to make a contribution for the replacement or repair. Pupils are now able to use the Chrome Books both in the classroom and at home to support their learning.

## **DATA FORMS**

At the start of each session, parents will be asked to complete a data capture form. It is extremely important that the information provided is accurate. This will include a request for a home email address. The school uses email as an important method of communication with parents, so it's important that we have one registered for you.

## **ACCESS TO PUBLIC RECORDS**

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

## **DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION**

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 data protection legislation and may only be disclosed in accordance with the codes of practice.

## **TRANSFERRING EDUCATIONAL DATA ABOUT PUPILS**

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

Further information can be obtained from:

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

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:

<https://hi-hope.org/help-resources/16plus-planning>.

## **DATA POLICY**

Information about pupils' education is collected through our statistical surveys in partnership between the Scottish Government and Local Authorities through the ScotXed Programme, which aims to help schools and Local Authorities by supporting efficient collection, processing and dissemination of statistical information. The Scottish Government then provides analysis of

the data to support research, planning, management and monitoring of education services as well as to produce National Statistics publications.

Education data within Scottish Government is managed effectively by secure systems and is exploited as a valuable corporate resource, subject to confidentiality restraints. As part of its data policy, Scottish Government will not publish or make publicly available any information that allows individual pupils to be identified, nor will data be used by Scottish Government to take any actions in respect of individuals. Data is held securely and no information on individual pupils can or would be made publicly available by Scottish Government.

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

Information on why we collect data about pupils and who we share this data with can be found in Highland Council's Privacy Notice which is available here:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory\\_record/1095920/enrol\\_your\\_child\\_at\\_a\\_school](https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/1095920/enrol_your_child_at_a_school)

## **WHY DO WE NEED YOUR DATA?**

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

- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of all pupils or 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 or share good practice
- target resources better
- enhance the quality of research to improve the lives of young people in Scotland

## **YOUR DATA PROTECTION RIGHTS**

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

Fuller details of each individual ScotXed survey, including the purpose of each and the published data, can be found on the ScotXed website:

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

Scottish Government works with a range of partners including Education Scotland, Skills Development Scotland and the SQA. On occasion, in order to help meet our aim of improving the life of young people in Scotland, we may make individual data available to partners such as the National Registers of Scotland to carry out research relating to the national population census and also academic institutions and organisations to carry out additional research and statistical analysis to meet their own official responsibilities.

Any sharing of data will be done under the strict control of Scottish Government and will be consistent with our data policy. This will ensure that no individual level data will be made public as a result of the data sharing and that these data will not be used to take any actions in respect of an individual. Decisions on the sharing of data will be taken in consultation with relevant colleagues and individuals within and 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](mailto:ScotXed@scotland.gsi.gov.uk) or write to The ScotXed Support Office, Area 2D, Victoria Quay, Leith, EH6 6QQ.

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

## **ATTENDANCE/ABSENCE - ATTEND TO ACHIEVE**

Good attendance is vital if students are to achieve their full potential. However, if a pupil is absent from school due to sickness or other reason, a parent or guardian should contact the school on the first day of sickness/absence on the school number 01349 883341 (Option 1) and leave a voicemail with the details requested on the recording message. Alternatively, parents can also email the school with the same details. Reporting absence/sickness should be done before 8.30 a.m. If the sickness/absence will be for more than one day, please state that when you contact us. Otherwise, we would need the parent or guardian to phone/email us every day the pupil is off sick/absent.

## **PERMISSION TO LEAVE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

If a pupil needs to leave during the school day for an appointment etc., students need to bring with them a note from parent or guardian. Alternatively, parents can phone or email to let us know and the school Office would make a note of this. Students must report to the school reception and "sign out" when leaving and "sign in" if returning the same day. Where at all possible, medical and dental appointments should be made outwith school hours.

If students fall ill during the day, it is the school office that will contact parents to seek permission to let the student go home or to be picked up if required. Therefore, it is essential that we have up-to-date day time contact numbers and emergency contact numbers for all students.

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

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 students - student responsibility to catch up
- could result in students missing assessments with consequential impact on students and teachers
- will affect school attendance records and efforts to raise standards of attendance (Attend to Achieve)
- 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](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 via phone call or email to the school.

## **CAREERS ADVICE**

During their time at Alness Academy, all students 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 students 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.

The key Careers Adviser linked to Alness Academy is Ms Kay Hume, [kay.hume@sds.co.uk](mailto:kay.hume@sds.co.uk), and she is available to advise on matters relating to career and curricular choice. The Careers Team can also be contacted by parents or students through Mr Paul Honour, Mrs Eileen MacLeod and Mrs Mairi Kate Taylor, Principal Teachers Pupil Support (Guidance) Alness Academy.

Any parent can arrange an appointment with their child's subject teacher, Pupil Support teacher or senior staff by writing to the school or by telephoning. We encourage you to come into our school community.

The school regularly surveys parental opinion on learning, teaching and assessment and encourages parents to support learning at home and our home-school partnership.

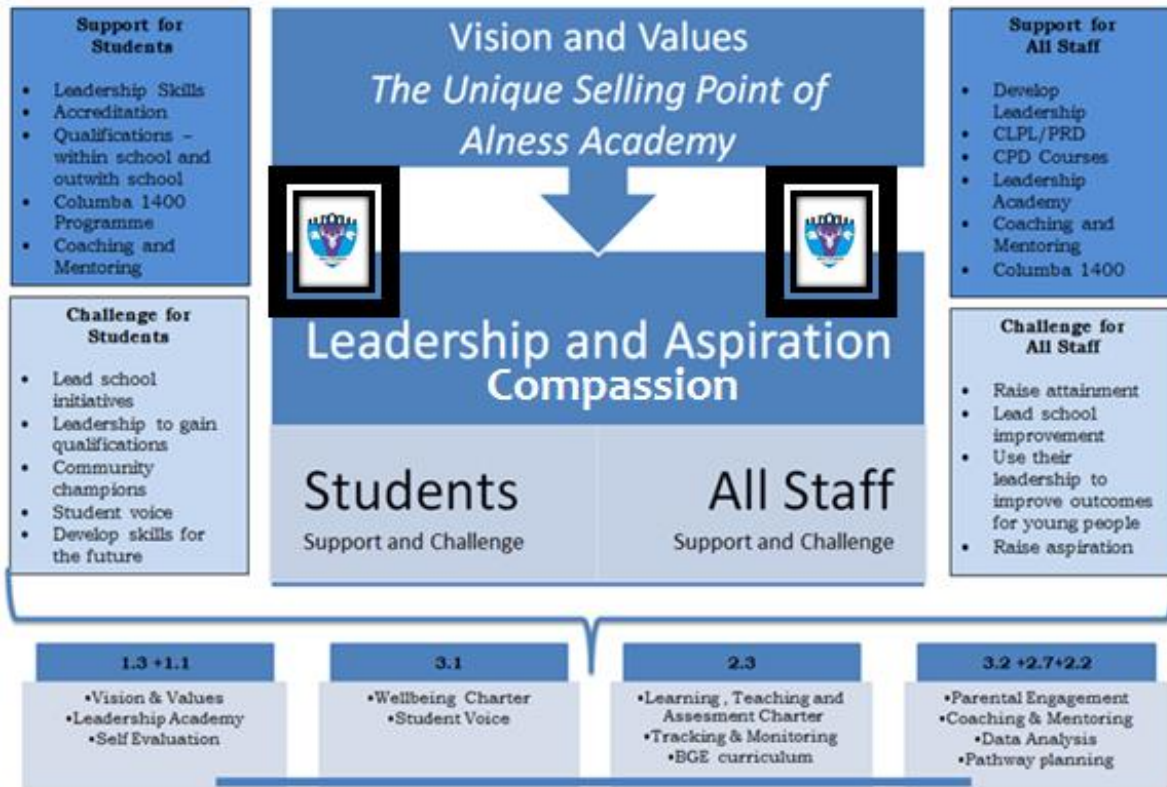
The school will ensure that all pupils leaving school has a positive destination. Parents should spend time with their child looking at the world of work website:  
<http://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/>

Information about local opportunities is listed on the hi-hope.org website to support 16+ planning: [www.hi-hope.org](http://www.hi-hope.org).

## **ALNESS ACADEMY VISION & VALUES**

***“Through hard work, compassion and aspiration, we are developing leaders of the future”***

Last session we reviewed our vision and values, working together as a team to identify our ‘Unique Selling Point’ along with the key aspects essential to our school’s success. We wish to prepare our students for achievement beyond Alness Academy and we see our school at the heart of our community. Our values which will ensure this have been identified as:



### **LEADERSHIP**

Developing strong skills in leadership is essential at all levels across our school and community. We aim to provide opportunities for students, staff, parents and partners to develop experience and skills which will enhance leadership. Developing leadership will empower individuals in our community, and a school community of leaders is one which has a core strength on which to build academic and personal success.

### **ASPIRATION**

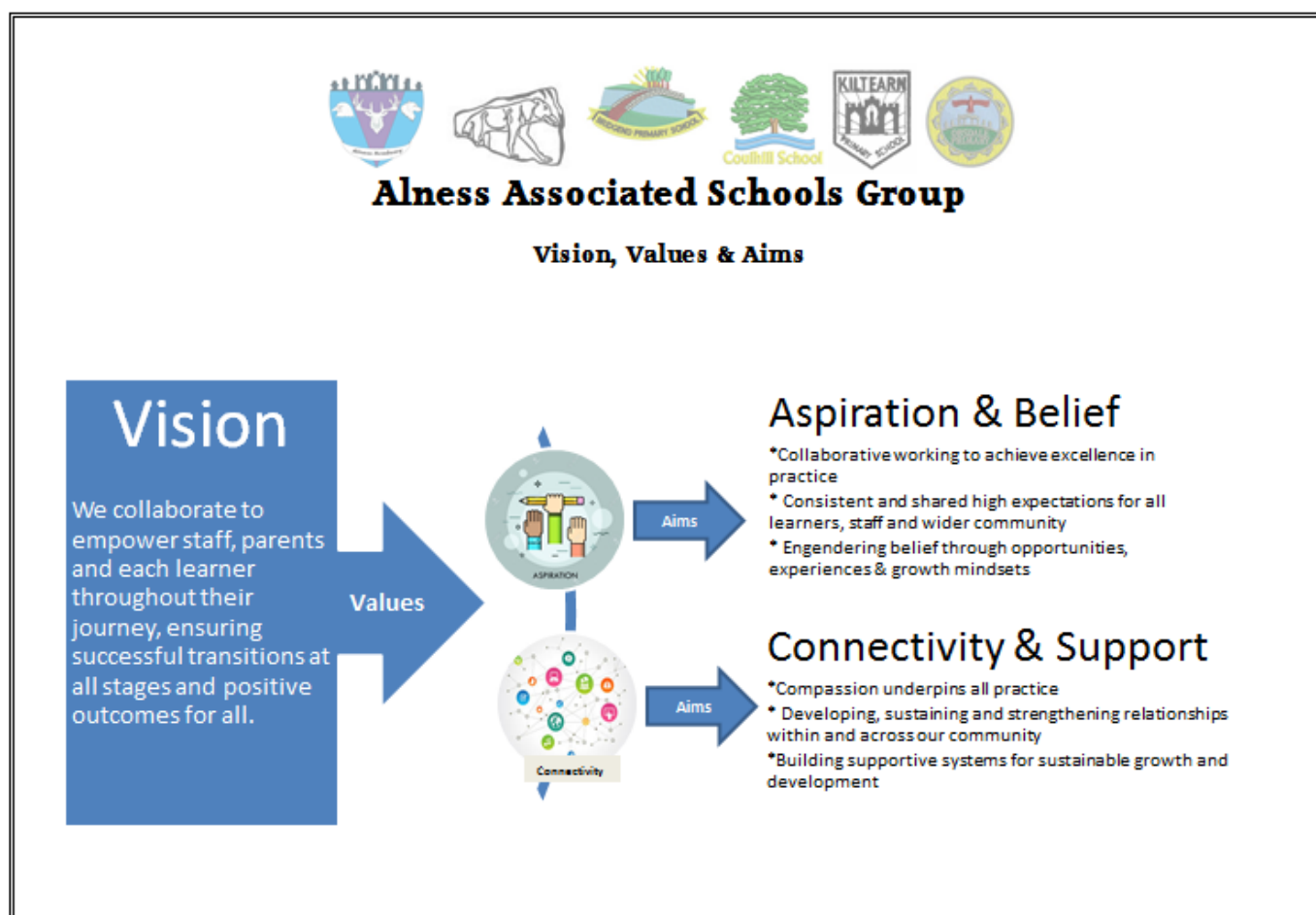
A motivated and aspirational community is key to driving forward a thriving culture of improvement and success. By providing opportunities for all; by engendering an ethos of belief in yourself and in those around you; by equipping all members of our community with skills, knowledge and establishing effective partnerships, we aim to raise the belief in the endless potential of our students, staff and wider community. To ‘be all you can be’ starts with believing in what is possible and setting our sights high.

## COMPASSION

A strong team has its foundation in compassion. Looking after each other, lending support and encouragement, and maintaining high expectations for all is how we build positive and lasting relationships. It is through these relationships that we ensure wellbeing across our community, and that the right support and challenge is there for all to achieve to their full potential. Connectivity is at the heart of our mission.

## VISION & VALUES OF OUR ASSOCIATED SCHOOL GROUP (ASG)

Our ASG comprises of Alness Academy and its 5 Primary Schools: Ardross, Bridgend, Coulhill, Kiltearn and Obsdale. Senior leaders of the school meet termly, and recently identified the vision and values of the ASG:



## **SCHOOL UNIFORM**

All students are expected to wear School Uniform as outlined.

Black Trousers (no leggings, no jeans - particularly not ripped jeans)

Black Skirt

White Shirt

Navy Blue/Black Jumper with school logo / Hoodie with school logo / Blazer with school logo

Junior School Tie (S1 to S3) / Senior Tie (S4 to S6)

Black Shoes / Black Trainers with no additional colours

The school jumper / hoodie / blazer can be ordered online from:

<https://www.stevensons.co.uk/>

<https://schoolwearmadeeasy.com/collections/alness-academy>

## **THE COURSES WE OFFER**

Curriculum for Excellence has the following principles which support the progressions of all our young people:

- Raising standards
- Improving knowledge
- Developing skills
- Making learning relevant
- Focusing on the learner
- Helping children to make connections
- Nurturing successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens

Coursework has been developed for the S1-S3 stage to reflect the key Curriculum for Excellence principles and to focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. We have also developed inter-disciplinary projects and elective courses for the S1-S3 stage to help students make connections across different subjects and curricular areas. The aim of the S1-S3 secondary stage is to deliver a broad general education providing skills for life, learning and work.

Students in S4, S5 and S6 follow courses leading to presentation at national levels.

The aims of the school are to provide pupils with the opportunities and experiences that will allow them to develop the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence.

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

All the information can be found on our [Pupil Pathways Site](#).

You can also find information at <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/> and Skills Development Scotland <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/>.

## **Gaelic**

At Alness Academy, we deliver Gaelic through our BGE and certificated. All Pupils study Gaelic in S1/2 and then have the option to study from N3 up to AH.

## **POLICY IN RELATION TO DEVELOPMENT OF PUPILS' SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL VALUES**

Alness Academy bases its policy for the above on Christian values and traditions, which have also much in common with many other religious faiths. Its Religious Education programmes are based on national curricular guidelines for Religious Education. The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural values also permeates the school's Personal and Social Education programmes, which are delivered by Pupil Support teachers.

## **SEXUAL HEALTH & RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION (SHARE)**

The Scottish Government Education Department has produced national advice and guidance on sex education. In Alness Academy, we ensure that our SHARE programme is in line with these guidelines.

Sex education is an important aspect of every child's personal and social development. It aims to help young people make informed, responsible and healthy choices about their lives, their relationships and their contribution to society.

In developing our programme, we will:

- Make sure that sex education takes account of each child's age, understanding and stage of development.
- Work in partnership with parents
- Have simple, direct procedures in place for parents to raise concerns
- Have a method of consulting with students
- Respect the different cultural, ethnic and religious environment of the home
- Respect the different home circumstances and needs of all young people
- Great care will be taken to emphasise the importance of relationships based on love and respect. All students will be encouraged to appreciate the value of stable family life including the responsibilities of parenthood and marriage.

Parents will be informed by letter prior to each unit of sex education within the personal and social education programme and will have the right to withdraw their child if they so wish. If you have any concerns regarding the sex education programme, please contact your child's Pupil Support teacher.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION**

Alness Academy is an Equal Opportunities School. We are opposed to all forms of prejudice and discrimination whether on grounds of sex, social class, culture, religion, race, disability or gender. We seek to provide not only equality of access to all courses but also equality of opportunity to all young people during their education so that they may realise their full potential as individuals.

Access to all subjects will be provided to all students. Advice about subject choice and career potential will be offered to all students and will be based on the aptitude and ability of the pupil. The school believes that all students should have an equal opportunity to pursue their subject choice and subsequent career free from any discrimination. This belief is constantly put into practice in advising students and their parents.

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

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 on link below:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/statutory-guidance-part-2-uncrc-incorporation-scotland-act-2024/pages/3>.

For up-to-date information please see: [LINK](#) In summary, our activities in school should ensure that we: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, promote good relations. Activities should not discriminate against any of the following 'protected characteristics' age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity.

## **OUR SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS**

### **PUPIL SUPPORT**

The Pupil Support Department consists of four Principal Teachers:

|                                                                 |   |                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Mrs M Taylor - Ardross House                                    | } | with responsibility for Pastoral Care |
| Mrs E MacLeod - Dalmore House                                   |   |                                       |
| Mr Paul Honour - Fyrish House                                   |   |                                       |
| Ms Caroline Moreno with responsibility for Support for Learning |   |                                       |

Our Pupil Support Teachers also monitor students' progress and attendance.

The Principal Teachers of Pupil Support have responsibility for the pastoral care of all students. The system is designed to give each pupil a teacher contact to whom they can turn as the need arises.

The Pupil Support system within the school is organised in a vertical system. This means that each pupil is linked with a particular Pupil Support teacher and that person will continue as far as possible to be the pupil's Pupil Support contact for all their time within the academy.

The Pupil Support team also supervise our successful Buddy system which involves many of our senior students assisting the new entrants to the academy at what can be an anxious time for our young people.

## **PERSONAL SUPPORT**

Personal support in Alness Academy takes the form of daily extended morning registration and weekly assemblies. These times are used to promote a positive ethos; encourage students to have high expectations; focus on their learning and next steps and recognise their wider achievements. It also provides the opportunity for students to have frequent and regular discussion about their learning and development, with an adult who knows them well and has an overview of their learning.

All S1-S6 students have a period of Personal and Social Education each week, usually delivered by a Pupil Support teacher. The main areas of focus are:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Curricular Issues
- Careers Education

## **ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS**

All children need support to help them learn. Some children require more help than others. We follow the Highland Practice Model staged approach to assessing, identifying and supporting additional support needs. In this model every child has a 'named person' who is responsible for making sure that the child or young person has the right help to support his/her development and well-being.

If you have a concern about your child in primary school, please contact your child's class teacher in the first instance or the 'named person', who will usually be the Head Teacher. In a secondary school, the named person will usually be the Principal Teacher Guidance/Pupil Support.

Sometimes a Child's Plan may be put in place to help organise, monitor and regularly review your child's progress. If you wish to find out more about the Highland Practice Model or the Child's Plan you can access more information at:

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/230/highland\\_practice\\_model\\_-\\_delivering\\_additional\\_support\\_for\\_learners](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](http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/11/co-ordinated_support_plan)

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

The Highland Council's Additional Support for Learning website can be accessed [Here](#).

Other organisations which provide advice, further information and support to parents of children with ASN are:

- (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; <http://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 SC012741."

The Children's Service Worker, Ms Ann Marie Dinneen, is based at the school and:

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

## **ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING**

All students in Alness Academy have access to the mainstream curriculum; Learning Support is available for students who have additional support needs at any time. Where possible the needs of the individual pupil are met in the classroom with the subject and Support for Learning teacher working together. However, sometimes it may be necessary to withdraw some students, individually or in a small group, for support. The period of time for which a pupil is withdrawn is determined by the needs of that pupil.

Support for Learning staff provide for, or contribute to, a range of special services for students experiencing difficulties. Included amongst these are arranging alternative means of access to the curriculum; assistance where necessary during/after absence; making arrangements for assessment arrangements and supporting students with social behavioural and emotional difficulties both within and outwith the classroom.

Support for Learning staff work closely with colleagues in the associated primary schools, senior management, support services and parents.

See Appendix 2: 2009 Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2009.

## **LEARNING TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT**

### **GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY LEARNER**

No learner can be fully effective if he or she feels unhappy or troubled or insecure. It is the responsibility of the school community - school staff, students, parents and carers, professionals from partner agencies and others in the local community - to work together to ensure that each learner feels safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and

included. Young people think that the teacher has a central role in this process, working with others in the school community to create the right conditions for effective learning.

At Alness Academy, successful teachers are:

- Aspirational - genuinely believe that all learners can succeed
- Assertive - decisive and confident, firm but fair
- Encouraging - positive, supportive, welcoming genuine error as an opportunity to learn
- Enthusiastic - believe in what they are teaching and enjoy the job
- Humorous - show humour naturally and put learners at ease
- Open - prepared to challenge their own thinking and admit they may be wrong
- Respectful - genuinely like young people, care about them, listen to them, enjoy their company and do not disrespect them individually or collectively.

Before we engage with the key principles and characteristics of our policy, we should consider fully the crucial importance of establishing and maintaining good working relationships if successful learning is to take place.

GIRFEC and Child Protection Guidance:

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

## **KEY PRINCIPLES**

What are the key principles which inform learning and teaching in our schools, learning centres and beyond in the community? Our starting point is inclusion. Learners should not be subject to discrimination, intentional or otherwise, on the grounds of their social circumstances, gender, race, religion, cultural beliefs, disability or sexual orientation. N.B. In the statements which follow, 'teachers' comprise all staff undertaking a teaching role.

Our key principles for all learners are:

### **ENGAGEMENT**

Learners need motivation. They should have a significant reason for engaging in the learning process and positive feelings about involvement.

### **PARTICIPATION**

Learners need to participate in the learning process. They should be active and take as much responsibility as possible for their own learning.

### **DIALOGUE**

Learners need to communicate through verbal and/or multi-sensory dialogue. Research and empirical evidence demonstrate that real understanding takes place when learners work through with someone else what is to be learned and how far they have been successful in their learning.

### **THINKING**

Learners need to think. This thinking should be critical and creative, robust and flexible in order that all may understand and achieve their potential whatever the context.

## **ASSESSMENT IS FOR LEARNING**

Effective assessment informs and supports the learning and teaching process, helping to raise attainment and achievement. All involved should understand and take appropriate account of the three main types of assessment:

Assessment *for* learning is essentially formative. It is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence so that learners, parents/carers and teachers can decide, through high quality dialogue, where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go next and how best to get there.

Assessment *as* learning is essentially evaluative. It is about using assessment to learn how to learn and thus encourage the development of autonomous learners. In effective assessment *as* learning, learners through self and peer assessment identify and reflect about their own evidence of learning. Personal learning planning provides a supportive framework for these processes.

Assessment *of* learning is essentially summative. It is about measuring, analysing and reporting performance. Effective assessment *of* learning provides information about individual skills and knowledge leading to awards which are passports to opportunities in life, work and education.

## **ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING**

At any time throughout the school session, staff may express concern regarding a pupil's progress and attitude/behaviour which may result in the parents of students who are considered to be unsatisfactory on either or both counts being written to and possibly invited for interview. Such students are also interviewed by their Pupil Support Teacher.

Learning conversations are regular and progress monitored and tracked through the school Monitoring and Tracking system. All S4-S6 students have a teacher mentor or supporter. The role of the mentor is to discuss targets and student progress with the students and help them achieve their potential.

Please see below two links for Education Scotland which are helpful understanding Assessment and Reporting:

Assessment and Achievement

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

Curriculum for Excellence

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

## **SKILLS FOR LEARNING, LIFE & WORK**

Experiences which give pupils the opportunity to develop skills for learning, life and work are one of the major components of the *Curriculum for Excellence* curriculum. It is an expectation that young learners, on their way to becoming successful learners, responsible citizens, confident individuals and effective contributors should develop the following skills:

### **LITERACY SKILLS**

All staff and subject areas have a responsibility for teaching literacy. Teaching includes the basics, such as spelling and grammar, and a wide variety of learner tasks which present opportunities for using language.

### **NUMERACY SKILLS**

All staff and subject areas have a responsibility for teaching numeracy. Learner tasks within subject areas support and develop the four capacities and present opportunities to explore relevant topics, such as financial literacy.

### **HEALTH & WELLBEING SKILLS**

All staff and subject areas have a responsibility for teaching health and wellbeing. Health and wellbeing is defined in the broadest sense and is not just seen as fitness.

Our annual sponsored walk and numerous charity events provide opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in relevant and stimulating contexts and develop the four capacities. The Broad General Education and senior curriculum have been redesigned to include a broader entitlement of health and wellbeing. House and Year Group assemblies provide opportunities for the celebration of achievement and promotion of values. The PSE course continues to be revamped in order to provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on their health and wellbeing and plan next steps in development.

## **PROGRESS**

Parents wishing to enquire about a pupil's progress are invited to get in touch with the pupil's Pupil Support Teacher.

## **OUR POLICY ON HOMEWORK**

All departments in the school are encouraged to give students regular homework, although this may be difficult in some subjects/courses due to the nature of the work in these subjects/courses, for example in a course based on classroom resources or a practical course.

Homework can be in the following format - write, make, say or do:

- A) Write, make, say or do to be ready by a certain date
- B) Write, make, say or do but having no exact deadline

All homework is of equal importance and students are expected to complete homework punctually and conscientiously unless there are special circumstances (explained by note from parent/guardian) which makes this impossible. The following is a rough guide to the amount of homework a pupil should do at different stages:

S1/S2 - Half-hour per night excluding weekend

S3/S4 - One hour per night including weekend

S5/S6 - One and a half hours per night excluding weekend

Weekends should see at least the daily amount repeated. Revision too should be done on a REGULAR basis with planning increasing with progress through the school since students must take a growing responsibility for their study.

## **PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR**

Alness Academy promotes positive behaviour through a wide variety of approaches and strategies that praise and reward positive behaviour, effort and achievement. Our Behaviour Policy aims to bring in consistency of approach across the school.

Students are expected to meet our school standards and there are a variety of staged interventions for use if students fall short of our school standards e.g. restorative conversations, "time out" from a class depending on individual circumstances. There is early communication with parents if your son or daughter is causing a behaviour concern.

## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

Alness Academy has established a variety of strategies to minimise incidents of bullying. Bullying takes a variety of forms and it escalates if students do not report incidents. Anti-Bullying work is covered through the P7/S1 Transition years and in PSE classes. All S1 students have a Pupil Support Teacher who is the first point of contact for students and parents if there are any concerns. Senior students who are prefects, buddies and bus monitors are asked to be alert for any signs of bullying and to report to staff if appropriate.

Please do not hesitate to contact Pupil Support staff or the Senior Management Team if you think that your child is the victim of bullying, either verbal or physical. If bullying is undetected or unreported, there can be real distress and upset for the victims of bullying.

You could find the Highland Council's Anti-Bullying Policy below:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19358/anti\\_bullying\\_-\\_guidance\\_for\\_schools](https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/19358/anti_bullying_-_guidance_for_schools)

Please see our Anti Bullying and Cyberbullying Policy on link below:

[Anti Bullying and Cyberbullying Policy](#).

## **BEHAVIOUR POLICY**

Alness Academy adheres to the standards and guidelines of Highland Council in all our practices. Therefore any parent wanting clarification on school procedures should check the appropriate section of the Highland Council website: [School Policies, Procedures and Guidelines](#) where links to all authority policies can be found.

Please use link to find our [Behaviour Policy](#).

At Alness we update our policies annually. See link to [Alness Academy's Policies](#) and also the [Authority Policies](#).

## **BUDDY SYSTEM**

All First Year students are assigned a Sixth Year pupil who acts as a “buddy” to them as they settle into first year at Alness Academy. Our S6 buddies are volunteers who undertake a training programme before taking up their duties. The buddies work closely with Pupil Support Staff, particularly in the first few months of the session.

## **PREFECT SYSTEM**

Over the past few sessions, the Alness Academy Prefect System has developed into one where prefects take on a variety of responsibilities in the school. Responsibilities include being on duty in our canteen and social areas, organising social events, organising charity fund raising, publicising pupil achievements and producing a yearbook. They also have a role at Parents' Meetings, at School Events and in meeting visitors to the school. All of these responsibilities provide opportunities for developing skills of communication and teamwork. Younger students benefit from this input from prefects and enjoy the activities and events which prefects organise.

**PUPIL VOICE** - This allows pupils to express concerns, contribute ideas and suggestions and share in the ownership and development of the School Community. Various pupil groups will be asked for their thoughts and opinions throughout the session. The school captains will deliver whole school assemblies.

**PUPIL COUNCIL** - Each year group will have 2 representatives that will form the pupils council. Meetings will be arranged and chaired by our Senior captains to then feedback to management. The group will meet once a term.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Throughout their time at Alness Academy we impress on the students that health and safety is a top priority for us all. The following issues are emphasised throughout the session.

### **Corridors Stairs**

Keep to the left and do not run

Keep to the left and do not push as a slip here could lead to a serious injury.

|                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Car parks/cycling</b> | Students cycling must not take short cuts through the car parks or use the school drive. Cyclists must dismount before they come over the footbridge and not cycle in the school grounds. Also, if a pupil is to bring a bike to school, it is their responsibility to get a lock for it. Any damage or loss is not the school's responsibility, as it is public property. If their property was stolen, it needs to be reported to the Police directly, the school is not responsible for reporting it, but can provide CCTV details to the Police if required. |
| <b>Buses</b>             | Students are expected to wear seat belts at all times and do nothing that will distract the driver. Students who misbehave may lose the right to travel on school transport for a time.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Snowballing</b>       | Grit and ice can cause serious injuries and for that reason snowballing is not allowed anywhere near the school footbridge, the car park, drive, building or doorways.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Out of School</b>     | Students who are out of school grounds at any time, including lunchtime, must not do anything which puts at risk the health and safety of fellow students or any members of the general public with whom they come in contact.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

## **CHILD PROTECTION**

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

In terms of Highland Child Protection Committee Inter-Agency Protection Guidelines, Education Service staff have to report such incidents to Social Work Services which can lead to a joint Social Work/Police investigation. All agencies involved in Child Protection regard the welfare of children as paramount and this will be their priority.

The Designated Person for Child Protection in the school is Mr Donald MacRae, Deputy Head Teacher for Pupil Support. You can also contact our Head Teacher, Mr Tom Magowan, or our Deputy Head Teachers Mrs Deirdre Murray or Les Mackay.

Copies of Child Protection Policy Guidelines are available online at:

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

## **MILITARY FAMILIES**

Our school welcomes and supports families, their children and young people from Military 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 for lots of helpful information and support:  
<https://armedforcesfamilieshighland.wordpress.com>

Please get in touch with your child's named person or the Head Teacher if you have any concerns.

Children and Young People from Armed Forces families in Highland have co-produced a 'Welcome' specifically for your Children and Young People moving into Highland. Click on:  
<https://armedforcesfamilieshighland.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/welcome-message-secondary-1.pdf>

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

All students from S1-S6 must participate in all activities provided in the PE curriculum unless a medical condition prevents them from doing so and this is supported by a note.

### **ACTIVITIES INCLUDE**

**OUTDOOR** Hockey, Football, Cross-country, Rugby, Athletics, Softball and Cricket.

#### **OUTDOOR KIT**

A **change** of: Training shoes  
Tracksuit bottoms and/or shorts  
T-shirt and/or tracksuit top and/or sweatshirt  
Towel - especially after rugby where a shower is a necessity

**INDOOR** Gymnastics, Volleyball, Basketball, Badminton and Social Dancing (which is very valuable culturally and socially).

#### **INDOOR KIT**

A **change** of: Training shoes  
T-shirt  
Tracksuit bottoms, leggings and/or shorts

**SWIMMING** is another compulsory activity in Alness Academy which is lucky to have its own pool.

#### **SWIMMING KIT**

Swimming costume/trunks  
Towel

Alness Academy has superb sporting facilities for outdoor and indoor activities. Our PE staff work hard to utilise these facilities to encourage and educate students and promote a healthy lifestyle. Cross country is one such activity where students and staff, well kitted out, experience the elements. Icy conditions, however, do stop classes venturing out.

## **MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

When a pupil is unwell and cannot participate in PE, then an explanatory note from the parent/carers must accompany the child or alternatively you can phone or email the school to notify us. On receiving this note, the PE teacher will either:

- give the pupil appropriate PE written work to complete
- use the pupil to assist/accompany other class members and/or the teacher
- find another activity in which that pupil can participate

## **ASTHMA**

This is an extremely common condition. Research states clearly and categorically that exercise helps asthma sufferers. The PE department, in association with the school doctor and nurse, are currently attempting to educate students towards the benefits of exercise to asthma sufferers and how best to deal with asthma.

## **VALUABLES AND SECURITY**

Students are responsible for their own valuables. Absolutely no valuables of any description should be left unattended in the changing rooms. Students can get a locker from the school office and store their valuables there. The cost is a one-off payment of £5.00 and this amount is refundable once they decide they don't need it any longer or leave school, as long as they don't lose the key.

## **JEWELLERY**

Due to the dangers to self and to others **no jewellery should be worn in PE at any time.**

## **THE BENEFITS**

The PE staff are very experienced and enthusiastic teachers who dedicate their time and efforts, during and after school, to educating all students towards having a positive attitude towards sport and themselves. The benefits are many and varied for all students regardless of ability or skill level.

## **HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOL**

As a Health Promoting school, we also encourage students, staff and parents to think about healthier lifestyles. S1 students 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.

## **SCHOOL MEALS**

School meals cost £2.65 for a meal deal for students, 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 please see:

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

The Highland Council operates a 'Cashless catering' system which utilises students' NEC cards. For further details, please see:

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

## **LUNCHTIME CHOICES**

Parents are responsible for students who decide to go outwith school grounds at lunch time. However, S1 students are not allowed to go out of school at lunchtime until after the Christmas holidays.

## **BREAKFAST CLUB**

Students can have a breakfast from a wide-ranging menu completely cost-free. Breakfast Club runs each day from 8.15 a.m. - 8.45 am. This is available to S1 pupils only at the moment, but the school is looking into opening this for more years in the near future.

## **PERSONAL POSSESSIONS**

**For your protection** - since students' personal possessions are not insured by the Education Authority, parents may wish to consider taking out a suitable policy privately. **The school cannot accept responsibility for the loss of unattended articles.** A number of lockers, however, are available for pupil use. There is a deposit payment of £5 and they can keep it for as long as they attend school. Once they leave School and as long as they haven't lost their key, they will get their deposit back. Please contact the school office for further information.

## **WHAT IF?**

### **ABSENT (also refer to page 11 of this document)**

It is the legal duty of every parent/carer to ensure his/her child's regular and punctual attendance. Parents/Carers should alert the school office by telephone or email to explain the reason for their child's absence. Requests for absence should be made in writing, via phone call or email as far in advance as possible.

### **LATE**

If students are late, they must sign in at Reception. The school expects Parents/Carers to write a note, phone or email the school explaining a known lateness. The school will contact parents/carers if late coming is an issue for a pupil.

### **APPOINTMENTS**

If a pupil has an appointment, he/she must hand in a card/letter from parent/carer to the school office. Alternatively, parents/carers can contact the school via phone call or email to advise of their child's appointment. It is emphasised to students that they must not leave school without signing out at Reception and this is counter-signed by a member of the Senior Management Team.

### **ILL IN SCHOOL**

If students take ill in school, the school office will contact parents/carers or emergency contact. Where at all possible, it is expected that students will be taken home at the earliest opportunity. In the case of a medical emergency a school staff first aider will attend prior to transfer to medical services.

### **ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINES**

Staff will only administer medication where there is a chronic condition that requires this on a regular basis and as long as there is clear written guidance from the parents on the name of the medicine, the quantity of the medicine to be given and the time it has to be given.

Prescriptive medication should be given at home by parents.

Occasional medication (e.g. Paracetamol, Ibuprofen, etc.) should be arranged by parents, by giving a small quantity to their child to keep in the School Bag to use as and when required. Alternatively, the School Office can phone a parent/carer to bring medicine for their child, if required. However, staff wouldn't be involved in the administration of this medication.

### **NEED A MOBILE PHONE**

Mobile phones must be switched off when the bell rings at the start of the school day as at the end of interval/lunchtime. If a phone is used or goes off in class time, the phone will be confiscated. Students will be asked to collect it from the member of Senior Management who deals with the particular year group at the end of the school day. Headphones must only be used at social times.

## **ADVERSE WEATHER**

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

Additionally, you can check the School's Facebook page for updates on this matter and a text will be sent to the pupil's main contact to advice regarding school closures.

## **TRANSPORT TO SCHOOL**

Free transport to Alness Academy is provided by Highland Council for students living within the school's catchment area, but at least THREE MILES from the school. Evanton and Ardross students travel by coach and some others, who have Additional Support Needs, by mini-bus or by taxi. The parents of a pupil living outwith the catchment area are responsible for the arrangement and cost of his/her transport between home and school.

A pupil who fails to behave acceptably in school buses or taxis may in extreme cases (but always with pupil safety in mind) be removed from the vehicle by the driver or may be suspended for a period from travelling by school transport. In such cases the parent/carer is responsible for his/her child's transport to school during the period of suspension.

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: [public.transport@highland.gov.uk](mailto:public.transport@highland.gov.uk).

The Application Form to request transport can be obtained from:

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

## **EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE (EMA)**

An EMA is a weekly payment worth up to £30 for students 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. The school contact for EMA is Mr Donald MacRae, Deputy Head Teacher (Pupil Support).

In session 2025/2026 students born between 1<sup>st</sup> March 2006 and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009 can receive payments from August 2025. Students born between 1<sup>st</sup> October 2009 and 28<sup>th</sup> February 2010 can receive payments from January 2026. Further information on full eligibility criteria and application forms can be obtained from the school:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/899/schools -  
grants\\_and\\_benefits/14/education\\_maintenance\\_allowance/](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/899/schools_-_grants_and_benefits/14/education_maintenance_allowance/)

## **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:

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/19/employment\\_of\\_children](http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/19/employment_of_children)

## **EXTRAS**

The range and quality of extra-curricular provision at Alness Academy is a real strength of the school. We are particularly fortunate in having a very wide range of sporting opportunities on offer at lunchtime and after school. This includes Supported Study classes particularly for Senior Phase students.

The Music Department have Drumming and Pipe Band. If your child is interested in learning an instrument, please see Mrs Urquhart for more details, or visit [www.highlifehighland.com/music](http://www.highlifehighland.com/music).

Lunchtime and after school clubs provide students with the chance to meet informally while pursuing an interest. Extra-curricular clubs and activities currently on offer are:

|                 |                            |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Indoor Football | Football                   |
| Cardio Fitness  | Geo Science Club           |
| Basketball      | Inter-House Competitions   |
| Rock Challenge  | DVD/Jigsaw/Board Game Club |
| Craft Club      | Christian Union            |
| Badminton       | Circuits                   |
| History Club    | Chill-out Club             |
| Lego Club       | Cross Country Running Club |
| Netball         | Dance                      |
| Rugby           | Singing Club               |

School trips are organised every year. We normally run an excursion for students in the UK or abroad at the end of the summer term each year. As part of the curriculum subject fieldwork trips and visits, day long and residential, provide another important dimension giving practical experience in subjects.

The school has two people carriers which serves curricular and extra-curricular activity. Driven only by experienced, tested staff they are very well used.

## **AND FINALLY .....**

### **FACILITIES**

Alness Academy offers public use of school facilities e.g. Games Hall, Gym, Hall, Meeting Room, Swimming. Information on lets is available from the school office and information on the swimming pool opening times is available from the Swimming Pool Office.

### **SCHOOL FUNDS**

The range of extra-curricular activities adds significantly to the quality of students' educational experience, but it is expensive. It is also expensive to improve facilities for students. The school has developed a programme of fund-raising events such as sponsored walks and summer term events to raise funds for the school. Support from parents and community for school fund raising is greatly appreciated.

### **ALNESS ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL**

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 the Parent Council Chairperson, Mrs Anna Salgado, by email: [alness.academy@highlandpc.co.uk](mailto:alness.academy@highlandpc.co.uk). You could join the Parent Council Group on Facebook on [Alness Academy Parent Council | Facebook](#).

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/>.

### **STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORTS (S&Q)**

Each year the school produces a Standards and Quality Report for parents. This report reflects back on the previous session and is an evaluation of how we are performing in key areas of our operation and is available on our website under the "Our School" tab.

### **HMIE REPORT**

The latest HMIE Report is available on our website under the "Our School" tab.

### **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SIP)**

You can find our School Improvement Plan (SIP) on our website under the "Our School" tab.

Latest Inspections for the school can be found at the links below:

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

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

## ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINES

Please find the Highland Council's Policy on Administration of Medicines in Schools in this link - [https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/175/administration\\_of\\_medicines\\_in\\_schools](https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/175/administration_of_medicines_in_schools)

## MINOR INJURIES

School will only deal with minor cuts and bruises; these will be cleaned and a plaster applied. We also have First Aiders in place for minor injuries and accidents. If your child is injured 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.

## MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Please check this website for advice on Mental Health and Wellbeing for Children & Young People - [Supporting the wellbeing of our C&YP](#).

You can also check the Highland Council Psychological Service website here - [Mental Health and Wellbeing – Highland Council Psychological Service](#)

## KEEPING IN TOUCH

Regular information is sent home via text message, email or schoolbag mail. We encourage you to contact the relevant Principal Teacher of Support (Pastoral Care) or a member of the Senior Management Team if there are any issues you wish to discuss with us. Please do not hesitate to contact us.

Please follow us on:



Facebook: [www.facebook.com/AlnessAcademy](https://www.facebook.com/AlnessAcademy)



<https://x.com/alnessacad>



School App for Parents: Can be downloaded from the App Store

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## **APPENDIX 1**

# **ALNESS ACADEMY STAFF LIST & PARTNERSHIPS 2025 - 2026**

**Mr Tom Magowan, Head Teacher**  
**Mr Donald MacRae, Deputy Head Teacher**  
**Mrs Deirdre Murray, Deputy Head Teacher**  
**Mr Robert Dunsmuir, Acting Deputy Head Teacher**

### **ART, CRAFTS & DESIGN / TECHNOLOGY**

Mrs Tracy Robertson (CDT) - PT  
 Miss Jacqueline McDonald (Art & Design)  
 Miss Mirren Rosie (Art & Design / CDT)  
 Miss Jessica Lucking (CDT)  
 Miss Joanna Matthews (CDT)  
 Mr Jimmy Muir (Technician)

### **MATHEMATICS / BUSINESS, ADMIN & IT**

Miss Stephanie Disbury (Maths) - PT  
 Mrs Rebecca Sharpus-Jones (Maths)  
 Mr Sandy Campbell (Maths)  
 Vacancy (Maths) / Barry Anderson (Supply Cover)  
 Miss Sheeba Manivelan (Maths)  
 Miss Caitlin Bogan (Business/Admin/IT)  
 Miss Emma MacLennan (Business/Admin/IT)

### **ENGLISH, GAELIC & MODERN LANGUAGES**

Miss Lesley MacCallum (English) - PT  
 Ms Corinne Robson (English)  
 Miss Sophie Hughes (English)  
 Ms Caroline Harper (English)  
 Mrs Asha Rennie-Eaglesfield (Gaelic)  
 Ms Ruth MacDonald (Modern Languages)

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION / MUSIC / HOME ECONOMICS**

Mr Les MacKay (PE) - PT  
 Mr Ian MacIver (PE)  
 Ms Morven MacDonald (PE)  
 Mrs Fiona Urquhart (Music)  
 Miss Leigh Jarvie (Home Economics)

### **HISTORY / MODERN STUDIES / GEOGRAPHY**

Mr Alan Auld (History) - PT  
 Miss Kathryn Cooper (History)  
 Miss Mairead Grant (History/Modern Studies Teacher)  
 Miss Janet McDonald (Geography)  
 Miss Beth MacDonald (Geography Teacher)

### **SCIENCE (BIOLOGY / CHEMISTRY / PHYSICS)**

Miss Debbie McGowan (Biology) - PT  
 Mr David Eadie (Biology)  
 Miss Frederique Lacraz (Physics)  
 Miss Hayley Smyth (Chemistry)  
 Miss Karen Ely (Chemistry)  
 Miss Jevgenija Beresneva (Technician) - Part Time

### **CHILDREN'S SERVICES WORKERS**

Ms Annmarie Dinneen  
 Mrs Megan Murphy (FLEO)

### **DYW / CAREERS / 16+**

Pamela Comery (DYW Co-Ordinator)  
 Kay Hume (Careers Advisor)  
 Cheryl Niven (PSA for 16+ and DYW)

### **ADMINISTRATION OFFICE**

Mrs Sandra Begg  
 Mrs Maureen Fraser  
 Mrs Fiona Fraser  
 Miss Elaina Leitch

### **JANITORS**

Mr Brian Ross  
 Ms Hazel Clark  
 Mr Tommy Reagan

### **LIBRARIAN**

Ms Lynsey Patience

### **GUIDANCE**

Mrs Mairi Kate Taylor (Ardross House)  
 Mrs Eileen MacLeod (Dalmore House)  
 Mr Paul Honour (Fyrish House)

### **SUPPORT FOR LEARNING**

Ms Caroline Moreno - PT  
 Miss Karen Hughes - Teacher  
 Mrs Lindsay McGarry - Teacher  
 Mr Meirion Tanner -Teacher  
 Mrs Isabel Ross - PSA  
 Mrs Carol Sinclair - PSA  
 Mrs Alice Sutherland - PSA  
 Mrs Patty Vass - PSA  
 Mrs Sharlene Henderson - PSA  
 Mrs Nicky Logan - PSA  
 Mrs Rosemary Cook - PSA  
 Mrs Pamela Tawse - PSA  
 Mrs Elaine Urquhart - PSA  
 Mrs Anne Shearer - PSA  
 Mrs Charlene O'Hara - PSA

### **HIGHLIFE HIGHLAND**

Active Schools Co-ordinator:  
 Mrs Karla Angus

Youth Development Officer:  
 Mr Rhys Campbell

### **COUNSELLORS**

Maggie Mercer - HC (Tuesdays)  
 Jenny Stirling - Mikey's Line (Wednesdays)

### **MCR PATHWAYS CO-ORDINATOR**

Emma Skinner (Wed / Thurs / fortnightly Fri)

### **MY FUTURE MY SUCCESS**

Mr Josh Hutchison - Development Officer

### **THE PLACE**

Janet Douglas

## **APPENDIX 2**

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

### **LEGAL INFORMATION**

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

### **WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS?**

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

Here are some of the main changes:

- Under the 2004 Act 'additional support' means support that is provided in a classroom or a school. The 2009 Act changes this to include support that is given out of school but that helps a child get the most out of their school education. This could include a social worker helping a child who refuses to go to school or a mental health nurse supporting a child to cope with issues affecting their school life.
- Children who are looked after by a local authority will automatically be assumed to have additional support needs. For looked after children who don't need extra help this will have little impact. For those who do need help it will make sure their needs are considered as they move through school or if they change school. Local authorities will also be expected to check whether these children require a Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP) or not.
- The 2009 Act allows parents to ask their local authority for a specific type of assessment at any time. Under the 2004 Act parents had this right only when asking the education authority to identify whether their child had additional support needs or when asking the education authority whether their child required a CSP.
- The duties that local authorities have towards young disabled children have been strengthened. Under the new Act local authorities have a duty to assess disabled children aged between 0 and 3 and provide them with additional support, if required, in agreement with their parents.

- Local authorities will have to publish information on where parents and carers can find help, information and advice, including contact details for Enquire. Local authorities will have to make sure that a summary of this information (including details of dispute resolution and mediation services) is available from all schools (and other sites that provide education). They also need to make sure this information is included in school handbooks and on their website.
- There is a section about placing requests that states that parents of children with additional support needs, (including those that have CSPs) can make placing requests to any school in Scotland including schools outside of the local authority area they live in.
- All appeals about placing requests to special schools (whether the child has a CSP or not) will be referred to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal. Some of the changes made in the 2009 Act deal specifically with children who have, or may require a CSP, and in particular to disagreements between local authorities and parents about the CSP.
- The Act extends the reasons that a parent or young person can make a referral (called a reference) to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal. Parents can make a referral when a local authority decides that a child does not need a CSP but also when local authorities have: failed to provide the additional support set out in the CSP; not responded to a parent's request to find out whether their child needs a CSP within a given time; or, after having said they will consider whether a CSP is required have not made a decision (within a given time) on whether the child needs a CSP or not.
- The Act also gives the Additional Support Needs Tribunal extra powers to force local authorities to provide or make arrangements providing additional support that is set out in a CSP if they have not done so.
- The new Act includes a duty for the Scottish Government to fund a national independent advocacy service (on request and free of charge) to support parents and young people in Additional Support Needs Tribunal proceedings.

The above points do not include all the changes resulting from the 2009 Act but simply cover the main points. Throughout the summer Enquire will be changing all their guides and fact sheets to take account of the 2009 Act.

#### **IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE 2009 ACT**

Please contact the Enquire Helpline on 0845 123 2303 or by email on: [info@enquire.org.uk](mailto:info@enquire.org.uk)

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **THE SCHOOL DAY**

|               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| 08.50 - 09.40 | First Period     |
| 09.40 - 10.30 | Second Period    |
| 10.30 - 11.20 | Third Period     |
| 11.20 - 11.35 | Morning Interval |
| 11.35 - 12.25 | Fourth Period    |
| 12.25 - 13.15 | Fifth Period     |
| 13.15 - 14.05 | Lunchtime        |
| 14.05 - 14.55 | Sixth Period     |
| 14.55 - 15.45 | Seventh Period   |

The school day on Friday is from 08.50 am until 13.15 pm and is organised as follows:

|               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| 08.50 - 09.40 | First Period     |
| 09.40 - 10.30 | Second Period    |
| 10.30 - 11.20 | Third Period     |
| 11.20 - 11.35 | Morning Interval |
| 11.35 - 12.25 | Fourth Period    |
| 12.25 - 13.15 | Fifth Period     |

### **TERM DATES 2025/26**

#### **Open**

Monday, 18 August 2025 (Staff Only)  
Tuesday, 19 August 2025 (Students)  
Monday, 27 October 2025  
Wednesday, 7 January 2026  
Monday, 20 April 2026

#### **Close**

Monday, 13 October 2025  
Wednesday, 24 December 2025  
Friday, 3 April 2026  
Friday, 3 July 2026

#### **Casual Holidays**

Monday, 17 February 2025  
Tuesday, 18 February 2025  
Monday, 5 May 2025

#### **In Service Closures**

Monday, 18 August 2025  
Monday, 15 September 2025  
Tuesday, 16 September 2025  
Wednesday, 18 February 2026  
Thursday, 7 May 2026

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***‘Our School at the heart of our community’***