

CROILEAGAN INBHIR THEORSA



GAELIC NURSERY HANDBOOK 2017



MOUNT PLEASANT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Castletown Road, THURSO, Caithness, KW14 8HL

Tel: 01847 893419 Direct dial: 01847 896559

E-mail: mountpleasant.primary@highland.gov.uk

Web: mount-pleasant-primary.co.uk





A NOTE FROM THE HEAD TEACHER

Welcome to Mount Pleasant School and Croileagan Inbhir Theorsa Nursery. We hope your child will have a happy and successful time here and will enjoy making new friends and facing new challenges. Our aim, at all times, is to ensure your child thrives and prospers in a caring and supportive environment. We hope he or she will come home at the end of each session ready to tell you all about what they have been doing that day.

Your child is at the beginning of a long learning adventure in which the nursery, the primary and, subsequently, the secondary school will play their part. This journey will be happier and more successful if we all work together to help him or her. Partnership between school and home makes a very important contribution to future success.

In this introduction, I merely want to assure you that we will do everything in our power to make this possible. Should you ever have any concerns, or should there be any issues you wish to discuss, please do not hesitate to call in at school. I am generally available immediately but, if I am unavailable for any reason, an appointment can always be made.

I look forward to meeting you and your child in the near future.

Mrs Suzanne Urquhart
Head Teacher

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

This handbook was last updated:

NOVEMBER 2016

ABOUT OUR NURSERY

Croileagan Inbhir Theorsa is an established Gaelic Nursery which is situated in its own building in the grounds of Mount Pleasant Primary School. Until recently this Nursery was an independent committee run establishment however in October 2015 parents decided it should become a Highland Council run nursery. Mount Pleasant School already provides Gaelic Medium education for primary aged children and with Croileagan being situated in the school grounds this was a natural progression to accommodate parental wishes.

Gaelic is spoken in the Croileagan at all times, however when the child starts Croileagan, English will be used to get them familiar with the staff and also the environment. Research suggests that becoming bilingual has positive effects on language development, including on the first language. Learning a language through play gives your child the best possible start.

It is our intention to make Croileagan Inbhir Theorsa accessible to all pre-school children within the local community.



CONTENTS

Mission Statement, Values and Aims	page 4
Nursery Aims	page 5
Equality & Diversity	page 5
Accommodation	page 6
Staffing	page 6
School year	page 7
Public Holidays & In-Service dates	page 7
Nursery times	page 7
Enrolment and funding	page 8
Snack	page 9
Clothing	page 9
Coming to Nursery	page 10
Curriculum	page 11
Behaviour Management	page 12
Emergency Contacts	page 12
Medical Conditions	page 12
Absences	page 13
First Aid	page 13
Illness	page 13
Health Visitor	page 13
Medication/Inhalers	page 14
Child Protection	page 14
Fire Safety	page 14
Adverse Weather/School Closure Procedures	page 15
Parent Council	page 15
Nursery Policies	page 16
Data Protection	page 16
Access to Personal Records	page 16
Transition to Primary 1	page 16
Comments and Complaints	page 17



EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Mission Statement

Mount Pleasant Primary School and Nursery strives to equip children with all the qualities necessary to thrive in a changing society and admits no obstacle as sufficient to prevent achievement.

Values

Every child, every family and every member of staff will be supported within our community of learners. Every classroom will demonstrate our values and beliefs in all aspects of its life.

Aims

1. Mount Pleasant Primary School and Nursery aims to be a happy and dynamic learning environment in which pupils are encouraged to achieve their full potential. Every member of our school community should be treated equally and with respect.
2. Learning and caring are at the heart of school and nursery activities, both formal and informal. We aim to promote a positive attitude to learning, to encourage pupils to be proud of their school, to celebrate their own efforts and achievements and those of others and to feel that all their contributions are valued.
3. Through effective learning and teaching we aim to raise attainment by providing a variety of challenging experiences that cater for all our pupils' needs and prepare them to take an active role in their life long learning.
4. We want our pupils to become active and caring citizens who respect the needs and feelings of members of their own community and understand the responsibility they have within the wider community. Our pupils are encouraged to be involved in the community and we welcome members of the community into school. We value the contributions they make and the example they set in providing positive role models.
5. We value the role parents play in encouraging pupils to become independent and enthusiastic learners. With open and honest dialogue we will work together to support our pupils and provide good quality resources to enhance their learning.
6. We aim to provide a professionally fulfilling environment for all staff, teaching or ancillary. All staff are encouraged to work together as an effective team within an atmosphere of mutual support. Opportunities for professional development are given a high priority.
7. We aim to work closely with other agencies in order to meet the needs of every child and, with them, help overcome obstacles to learning and successful development.



NURSERY AIMS

The nursery aims to:

- Work towards a provision which encourages every child to be safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and involved (SHANARI).
- Provide a safe, well resourced group play through the medium of Gaelic language.
- Provide a stimulating, happy environment which provides appropriate Early Learning and Childcare experiences both indoors and outdoors and fulfils the requirement of the Curriculum for Excellence.
- Provide a high level of child care using the National Care Standards (0 to 16) and the Child at the Centre 2 as guidelines for implementing procedures, policies and to further improve the standard of care provided.
- Identify and provide relevant training for staff, including that required to meet the SSSC registration requirements.
- Respect and involve parents/carers in the care and education of their child/ren.
- Use self evaluation to inform planning for improvement.
- Encourage all children to make their own choices and take responsibility for their own learning through their stepping stone targets and Learning Journey folders.
- Promote equality and inclusion by maintaining a positive ethos for all service users and staff by encouraging respect, kindness, positive self-esteem and self-belief. This enables all our children to become Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Effective Contributors and Responsible Citizens.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

Mount Pleasant Primary School and Croileagan Nursery recognises that all children and adults are equally valuable within society despite their differences. Croileagan aims to provide an environment where children can develop towards their full potential with the confidence irrespective of different strengths and weaknesses. We hope to achieve this by fostering an atmosphere of mutual respect for all, regardless of race, sex, creed or ability. We welcome children with additional support and work with parents to provide for the needs of their child. Where necessary we will actively seek advice from and work with appropriate health professionals and relevant agencies on resources, equipment, training and planning in order that each child gains the most from their time at Croileagan.



ACCOMMODATION

A ramp at the entrance and double doors allows access for those with wheelchairs and buggies. The welcome area contains two noticeboards with information for the parents including policies, registration documents, complaints procedure, fund-raising events, themes or projects and other relevant information. Information is continually updated so please check the boards regularly.

An office area is located on the left hand side, which is for Croileagan staff only. Kiddie seats and coat pegs allow parents to change children into indoor shoes before entering the main Croileagan area.

The Croileagan uses the two main rooms located on the left-hand side of the building. Snack is taken in the first room and the larger room to the rear is where most of the play activity takes place. The toilets are located between the two rooms beside the wet play area. We regularly have gym in the other room.

STAFFING

The staff below are involved with the day to day running of the nursery.

MORNING SESSION	
Name	Title
Mrs Catriona Smith	Early Years Practitioner
Miss Justine Mackay	Early Years Practitioner

The following staff members are also involved with the nursery, providing support and carrying out management duties:

Name	Title
Mrs Suzanne Urquhart	Head Teacher
Mrs Christine Firth	Depute Head Teacher (Acting) and Primary 4 teacher
Mrs Lorraine Geddes	Nursery Support Teacher



SCHOOL OPENINGS

SCHOOL OPENS TO PUPILS	LAST DAY OF SCHOOL
Monday 9th January 2017	Friday 17th February 2017
Thursday 23rd February 2017	Wednesday 5th April 2017
Monday 24th April 2017	Friday 30th June 2017
Tuesday 15th August 2017	Wednesday 20th September 2017
Monday 25th September 2017	Friday 6th October 2017
Monday 23rd October 2017	Friday 22nd December 2017
Monday 8th January 2018	Friday 16th February 2018
Thursday 22nd February 2018	Wednesday 28th March 2017
Monday 16th April 2018	Friday 4th May 2018
Tuesday 8th May 2018	Friday 1st June 2018
Tuesday 5th June 2018	Friday 29th June 2018

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Good Friday - 14th April 2017
May Day - Monday 1st May 2017
Easter Monday - 2nd April 2018

Easter Monday - 17th April 2017
Good Friday - 30th March 2018
May Day - Monday 7th May 2018

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Staff meet regularly throughout the year at Curricular Development Meetings both within the nursery and with the whole school staff. These sessions are organised to allow staff to take forward the developments in the School Improvement Plan. In addition to these meetings and to enable staff to take part in more intensive training sessions dates are set aside for In-service training either in school or in other venues throughout the Highland Area. The following are the In-Service dates to the end of June 2017; the school will be open to **staff only** on these dates.

- Wednesday 22nd February 2017
- Monday 5th June 2017
- Monday 14th August 2017
- Thursday 21st and Friday 22nd September 2017
- Wednesday 21st September 2018
- Monday 5th June 2018

NURSERY TIMES

The nursery operates five days a week during the school term-time openings.

9.00 am to 12.10 pm



ENROLMENT AND FUNDING

Croileagan Nursery is commissioned by the Highland Council to provide pre-school education, therefore funded places are available. The funding is paid directly to the pre-school centre for your child's registered number of sessions so there is no payment to or from parents. The nursery is licensed by the Care Inspectorate to accommodate 30 children per session.

Enrolment normally takes place in February of each year for entry in August, January and April and is in response to an advertisement placed in the local press by the Area Education, Culture and Sports Manager, Jacquelyn Jennett. **Children for entry in August, January and April should enrol at this time to secure a place.** Children entitled to a fully funded place during the session 2017/2018 must be born within the eligible birth dates:

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

- Those born on or between 1 March 2013 - 28 February 2014 are eligible for a funded place from August 2017

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

- Those born on or between 1 March 2014 - 31 August 2014 will be eligible for a funded place from August 2017
- Those born on or between 1 September 2014 - 31 December 2014 will be eligible for a funded place from January 2018
- Those born between 1 January 2015 - 28 February 2015 will be eligible for a funded place from April 2018

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

Due to the increased entitlement to pre-school education as contained in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill (2013) we will now deliver 600 hours of pre-education per annum. This will be arranged as 5 sessions of 3hours 10minutes for 38 weeks of the school year. The sessions will run from 9:00 am to 12:10 pm and will be mixed for 3 and 4 year olds.



SNACK

Croileagan Nursery operates a Healthy Eating policy in line with Highland Council Guidelines. A healthy snack is provided mid-session each day. We aim to offer a wide range of tastes and textures to sample - fruit, vegetables, dairy products and other healthy options. Highland Council schools with a nursery provision do not charge for snack, however nursery providers in Highland receive funding from NHS Highland's health improvement programme, currently marketed as "Fun with Fruit and Vegetables."

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

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

CLOTHING

Children are encouraged to wear Croileagan tops whilst attending nursery. Overalls are provided for the messier activities at playgroup but accidents do happen so please bring a change of clothes to leave in a bag on the pegs. Please provide a pair of soft indoor shoes for your child to change into for wearing in the playgroup building.

We have Croileagan t-shirts, poloshirts and jumpers available to purchase and we can order different sizes 3-4 or 5-6 years old. We also have a supply of second hand nursery tops which can be given to parents. As we aim to participate in outdoor play on a daily basis children are also required to have appropriate outdoor clothing and footwear.

It would also be useful for parents to check children's pockets for any foreign objects such as peanuts or coins which should not be brought into the playroom in case of any choking or nut allergies.

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



COMING TO NURSERY

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

If bringing or collecting children by car, parents are requested to use the car parking facilities in Castle Terrace and cross Castletown Road at the crossing patrol area, which may not always be manned due to the nursery starting and finishing times. Parents are requested **not** to use the staff and visitors car park at the front of the school - this area is extremely busy due to staff parking, daily lorry deliveries and disabled access vehicles.

The building is locked and secured at all times. You will only be allowed access to the Croileagan by ringing the front door bell at 8.50am and a member of staff only will let you in where you can get your child's shoes changed. A member of staff will then open the playroom door at 9.00am for you to sign your child in. The session begins at 9.00am prompt to enable the children to access as much free play as possible. This is an important part of the day where children are allocated 'jobs' e.g. setting snack tables, first in the line and changing the days of the week. If children are arriving late they miss these opportunities and it can be several weeks before they get their turn.

The door will only be opened at pick up time and not before then and you will have to sign your child out. This is for insurance and safety reasons.

Settling in is an important stage in the transition between home and the outside world. We follow our settling in policy (see policies section). The group encourages adults to stay with their child as long as is necessary for the child to be reassured that this new place and its people are as safe as home. In our welcome corridor there are photos on the door showing the staff members. We also operate an open door policy where parents/carers can come in at anytime to discuss any matters regarding their child/children. We make every effort to involve all parents and help with any social problems within families



CURRICULUM

A Curriculum for Excellence is the new Scottish 3-18 Curriculum and the subjects are grouped as follows:

- Numeracy and Mathematics
- Literacy and English
- Health and Wellbeing
- Expressive Arts
- Sciences
- Social Studies
- Religious and Moral Education
- Technologies

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

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

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

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

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

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

For more information please visit: www.curriculumforexcellencescotland.gov.uk



BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

All adults try to offer themselves as positive role models to the children with regard to friendliness, care and courtesy. All adults will praise and reward positive behaviour displayed by any child. Children who misbehave will not be labelled naughty or humiliated; instead they will be helped to understand why their behaviour is not acceptable and be rewarded with attention when they behave well. Where persistent behaviour difficulties arise the staff will work together with the child and his/her parents to overcome such difficulties.

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

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

The nursery also follows the school's set of Golden Rules which are:

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| Do be gentle | Do not hurt anybody |
| Do be kind and helpful | Do not hurt people's feelings |
| Do work hard | Do not waste your or other people's time |
| Do look after property | Do not waste or damage things |
| Do listen to people | Do not interrupt |
| Do be honest | Do not cover up the truth |

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

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

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

MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Any medical condition or allergies likely to affect your child's learning or well-being must be notified to the nursery. Our First Aiders are trained to deal with various medical conditions.



ABSENCES

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

FIRST AID

Minor incidents such as grazed knees, etc are dealt with by the staff trained in first aid. Usually incidents like these only require a plaster or an ice pack. In the event of a serious accident every effort is made to contact parents and if necessary a child will be transported to the nearest Health centre or Hospital. Parents will be contacted at the earliest opportunity.

ILLNESS

If your child is ill PLEASE consider what is best for your child and others. Sickness and colds spread rapidly within the nursery. If your child has an infectious illness please keep them away from the nursery until the infectious period is over. If your child is suffering from a bout of vomiting and/or diarrhoea then you are requested not to return your child to nursery until 48 hours after vomiting and diarrhoea has stopped.

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

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

HEALTH VISITOR

Our nursery link Health Visitor is based in Wick and can be contacted on 01955 605040. The Health Visitor is the named person for all children attending nursery, although each child will have their own Health Visitor who will be known by their parents/carers.



MEDICATION/INHALERS

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

It is essential that children who require inhalers have them in nursery every day. Arrangements are in place for inhalers to be stored in the classroom for nursery pupils for easy access during the session. **Parents are responsible for ensuring their child has an inhaler for out of school activities such as school trips.**

Parents should take note of the expiry date of any medication to be kept in nursery for a period of time to ensure it does not go out of date.

HIGHLAND COUNCIL CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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

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

FIRE SAFETY

Regular fire drills are held in school and nursery to ensure all pupils and staff are familiar with the school's evacuation procedures.



ADVERSE WEATHER/SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCEDURES

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

Three methods of informing parents of school closures are:

- By visiting the Highland Council winter weather website:
<http://www.highland.gov.uk/schoolclosures>
- Tuning into Moray Firth Radio (97.4, 96.6, 96.7, 102.5, 102.8FM) who regularly provide updates of school closures.
- Phoning the Schools Information Line **0800 564 2272** and entering the school's pin number **04 2640**.
Select "Severe Weather"



The decision as to whether a pupil should attempt to travel to school in adverse weather conditions, whether by transport or by foot, lies with the parent. You are encouraged to read the Education Authority policy guidelines on travelling to school in adverse weather conditions. This policy can be found by visiting www.highland.gov.uk

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

PARENT COUNCIL

Parent Councils play an active role in supporting parental involvement in the work and life of the school and nursery, while also providing opportunities for parents to express their views on children's education and learning. At Mount Pleasant Primary we are extremely fortunate to have an active and supportive Parent Council. The Parent Council is a group of parents selected by members of the Parent Forum to represent all the parents of children at the school and nursery. Teachers and other Highland Council staff may also attend these meetings. The Parent Council also has Office Bearers who are elected at the AGM, which is held in October.

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



NURSERY POLICIES

We have a range of policies covering all aspects of the nursery environment. We encourage parents/carers to be familiar with these. They are available for anyone to view and read and are situated in a marked box file in the welcome corridor. These policies are constantly updated.

DATA PROTECTION

Any information you have supplied/any information gathered from or about pupils will be used only for the purpose for which it was provided and any relevant procedures following from this. This data will be maintained in accordance with the Act and will not be passed on to any other organisation without your prior approval unless this is a legal requirement.

ACCESS TO PERSONAL RECORDS

Parents will have ready access to the files and records of their own children, but will not have access to information about any other child.

TRANSITION TO PRIMARY 1

We are very fortunate in that our nursery is located within the school grounds and during their time in nursery children frequently visit different areas in the school and meet with other children and staff. We work closely with the staff and children of the Gaelic Medium Class within the school and the Gaelic Medium teacher also visits the nursery on a regular basis so that they become a familiar and trusted person.

Towards the end of the nursery year these opportunities are increased and the children will attend school break times, sports day and other special events.

Croileagan is a natural feeder to the Gaelic Medium Primary 1 - children moving on to this class will be invited by the to attend several sessions in the Gaelic classroom to ease their transition. If your child is not moving into the Gaelic Medium Primary 1 they will be invited to attend several sessions in the mainstream Primary 1 class of their local primary school.

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



COMMENTS/COMPLAINTS

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

Parents/carers are also able to contact the Care Inspectorate directly with a complaint, if they so wish. The leaflet displayed on the parents' information board entitled 'Unhappy about a care service' explains the process. The local address and telephone number is:

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Place
DUNDEE
DD1 4NY

Telephone: 0845 603 0891