Sgoil Àraich an Iochdair



Fiosrachadh airson Pàrantan

HANDBOOK

December 2024





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FÀILTE/WELCOME

Fàilte gu Sgoil Àraich an lochdair, far a bheil foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig aig na tràth ìrean. Tha an leabhar seo airson fiosrachadh a' thoirt dhuibh mu dhiofar nithean co-cheangailte ris an Sgoil Àraich agus mu fhoghlam fo aois sgoile.

Welcome from the Nursery (Sgoil Àraich) Manager, Mrs Joan MacDonald

Fàilte, I would like to welcome you and your child to Sgoil Àraich an Iochdair.

This handbook offers an introduction to our sgoil àraich, it's ethos and practical day to day information to support you. We hope you find it clear and informative. If you have any queries about any of the information in this handbook, or indeed about any aspect of our sgoil àraich, please do not hesitate to contact me.

At Sgoil an Iochdair we take pride in the Gàidhlig language, culture and heritage of our island community. It is our aim to be a school community celebrated for its high quality learning experiences where everyone is valued, respected and included. We hope that your child enjoys their time at Sgoil Àraich an Iochdair. Please visit our school website, facebook page or twitter for further current information and a flavour of what the pupils have been learning.

Leis gach deagh dhùrachd

Mrs Joan MacDonald

Head of School & Manager Sgoil Àraich an Iochdair

Welcome to Sgoil Àraich an lochdair. Our opening hours are 8.30am-3.00pm, Monday - Friday. Here in Sgoil Àraich an lochdair we operate a total immersion policy where each session is run solely through the medium of Gaidhlig. We hope that you and your child, will enjoy the time that you spend here with us at Sgoil Àraich an lochdair.

We understand that starting sgoil àraich is a whole new experience for you and your child. As a result we make every effort to make Sgoil Àraich an Iochdair a warm and welcoming environment for your child. We hope that all the information in this Handbook is interesting and helpful but if you require any additional information – please do not hesitate to contact a member of staff at any time. We look forward to welcoming you and your child.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar is dedicated to promoting and developing the Gàidhlig language which is a vital part of the culture and heritage of the Outer Hebrides. The Comhairle's provision of bilingual education is a key feature in the Comhairle's Gàidhlig Policy. The aims of formal education are to enable children who go through Gàidhlig Medium Education (GME) to become equally literate and fluent in the use of Gàidhlig and English and to make provision for all children to have access to Gàidhlig in the curriculum as a Learner or through GME.

The Comhairle also aims to enhance young people's awareness of the heritage and culture of their community through the formal and informal curriculum aspiring to provide GME as the principal means of tuition in the first two years of primary school whilst maintaining a capacity for English Medium Education on an area basis. This is along with pupils entering early learning and childcare centres in the Western Isles having access to GME actively promoting and supporting availability of GME in every school catchment area, developing it in response to demand.

The aim is to increase the numbers of children entering GME by encouraging more parents to choose Gàidhlig education for their children, raising the importance of the home for acquiring Gàidhlig, ensuring that practical support, resources and advice is available and that links are strengthened for passing Gàidhlig on to children in the home and in Gàidhlig early years' provision.

2 - 3 year olds	1 adult to 5 children
3 - 5 year olds	1 adult to 8 children

The sgoil àraich is registered with the Care Inspectorate, under the Regulation of Care Scotland Act 2002 and meets the National Care Standards. The Care Inspectorate inspects the premises on average every 3 years and the sgoil àraich is subject to a joint HMIE/Care Inspectorate inspection.

The reports are available on the following web sites: https://www.careinspectorate.com/ Inspection Reports

The sgoil àraich works closely with the following documents:

The National Care Standards

How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare?

Curriculum for Excellence

Realising the Ambition

Care Inspectorate Quality Framework

Staffing and Who to Contact

The sgoil àraich is managed by the Head of School, with the day to day running of the sgoil àraich delegated to the Play Leader.

All sgoil àraich workers are required to register with the <u>Scottish Social Services Council</u>. This regulatory body ensures that staff members have appropriate qualifications for their role and continue to update their knowledge and skills. All staff members are required to go through anenhanced Disclosure Scotland check or more recently through the 'Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme' (PVG)

For the general day-to-day running please contact:

Manager/Head of School: Joan MacDonald 01870 604891 Play Leader: Mary Flora MacKinnon 01870 604894

Ms Sarah Jane MacSween, Executive Head Teacher of the Uist Primaries provides a strategic overview for curriculum and quality assurance across the four Uist Primaries.

Any enquiries please contact: Early Years Office Educational Development Centre Stornoway Isle of Lewis HS1OAX

Telephone Number: 01851822655



AMASAN/AIMS

In order to provide you with a good quality of early learning and childcare we have set ourselves the following aims.

Ethos

We aim to

- create a caring climate of mutual respect and confidence encouraging positive relationships among staff, parents and children.
- establish effective partnership with parents where we can join with them in furthering their child's development and learning.
- establish and maintain effective two way communication with parents giving frequent opportunities for the exchange of information including written reports about children's progress.

Support for Children and Families

We aim to

- establish care routines which are flexible and responsive to children's emotional and physical needs, reflecting familiar routines at home.
- be vigilant about health and safety.
- provide high quality early learning and childcare.
- support development and learning through carefully selected, well organised activities appropriate to each child's needs.
- provide information on the benefits of GME.

Development and Learning through Play

We aim to

- create a stimulating and challenging environment providing appropriate opportunities for learning through play in each of the key aspects in children's development and learning to ensure that childcare and learning are effectively integrated to meet children's needs.
- support children to discover new Gàidhlig words and phrases which they can use to express their thoughts and feelings.

Curriculum

We aim to

- provide children with a varied balance of high quality experiences according to their individual needs.
- provide a good balance between activities chosen bychildren and those chosen by adults.
- be responsive to their needs and interests.
- ensure progression in children's learning and development.

Resources and Accommodation

We aim to

- provide a safe, secure, hygienic, pleasant and stimulating environment indoors and outdoors.
- ensure that resources are well matched to the needs and interests of the children, providing appropriate support and challenge.

OBAIR RIANACHD - ADMISSION, ENROLMENT, BOOKING, CONTRACTSAND CHILD FEES

Admission

The Sgoil Àraich aims to ensure that the admission of children is fair and equitable and responsive to the needs of children, their parents and carers. Intakes of children are done throughout the year when space is available.

The Sgoil Àraich is open to children aged 2-5 years and is registered withthe Care Inspectorate to provide a care service to a maximum of 16 children. Children aged 2 years can be enrolled at the group if they meet the requirement for statutory provision or if there is sufficient space. If demand for places outweighs supply priority will be given to children eligible for an early learning and childcare funded place. Children aged 2 years who are not eligible for a statutory place will only be able to attend as long as a space is available.

Application Form, Parent Pack and Care Plan

An Early Learning Centre (ELC) application form will be issued on enquiry for a placement. A Parent Pack will be issued to parents on confirmation of a place at the sgoil àraich. Parents will also be issued with a Care Plan which will be completed along with a member of staff. It is essential that all forms are completed by parent/guardian prior to the child attending the setting.

Enrolment and Eligibility for Early Learning and Childcare

Early Learning and Childcare enrolment usually takes place throughout the year, however there is an official enrolment in January/February on a date notified to parents by local press advertisement. Parents should be encouraged to enroll at this time for a place in the sgoil àraich during the coming year. Children who enroll in the sgoil àraich will be invited to spend an induction session(s) to experience a little of the sgoil àraich atmosphere and to meet the staff.

Criteria:		Eligible From:	
Where a child's3rd	1st March - 31st August August (Autumn Term) ofthat		
birthday fallson or betweenthese dates:	1st September - 31st December	January (Spring Term)following their birthday	
	1st January - last day February	April (Summer Term)following their birthday	
Or where a 2 year old child's parent(s)/carer(s) are receiving out of work benefits or certain tax credits (seeAppendix 1 for full list)		The term following thechild's 2nd birthday (for those already on benefits/tax credits) or theterm following the date when the parent(s) become eligible for out of work benefits/tax credits	
Or where a 2 year old child is Looked After, is in a Kinship Care placement, or lives with an appointed guardian (or has been since their 2nd birthday)		When arrangements area agreed and recorded as part of the Child's Plan. Please contact Early Years Office for more information01851 822655	

An advanced booking system operates to enable staff to make well planned provision for all children using the service.

All 4 year olds and eligible 2 and 3 year olds are entitled to 1140 hours per year. High quality is at the heart of our ELC provision, as is providing the flexibility parents need to work, train or study.

Childcare Fees

Parents who use any wrap-a-round care will be invoiced monthly in arrears. The preferred method of payment is by Direct Debit, or for Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (CnES) employees by payroll – relevant forms are available from the Education and Children's Services Department, Early Years Office. If you have any queries regarding methods of payment you are asked to contact the Early Years Office (01851 822655). Failure to pay can result in the service no longer being available to your child.

Child tax credits

You may be able to claim help with childcare costs through the Childcare Tax Credits - 0845 300 3900.

Tax free childcare

You can get up to £500 every 3 months (£2,000 a year) for each of your children to help with the costs of childcare.

If you get Tax-Free Childcare, the government will pay £2 for every £8 you pay your childcare provider. This is paid via an online childcare account that you set up for your child.

You can get Tax-Free Childcare at the same time as 30 hours free childcare if you're eligible for both.

If you've already registered, you can sign in to your childcare account.

What you can use Tax-Free Childcare for

You can use it to pay for approved childcare, for example:

- Childminders, nurseries and nannies
- After school clubs and play schemes
- Home care agencies

Your childcare provider must be signed up to the scheme before you can pay them and benefit from Tax - Free Childcare. Check with your provider to see if they're signed up.

Bookings and Cancellations

Priority will be given to children who are eligible for early learning and childcare funding. On enrolment parents will be asked to sign a parent contract and to indicate what days and hours are required. It is important that you read this contract carefully prior to signing as it outlines the conditions attached to your early learning and childcare place.

As detailed above, parents will be expected to pay for the days their child is booked in, whether they attend or not. This includes absence through sickness and holidays. The sgoil Àraich does however have the discretion to reduce fees in the event of a child's long term sickness. The sgoil àraich manager will liaise with parents with regard to this.

Please note: Parents must give a 4 weeks' notice in writing when leaving the sgoil àraich or changing their contract. You may continue to be billed for your child's place if you fail to do so.

Late fees

If you collect your child over your contracted hours the sgoil àraich will charge £15.00 over and above the normal fee.

Holidays

For children on Term-time contracts their holidays will follow CNES <u>schools holidays</u> calendar. No fee will be charged on these days.

For children on all-year contracts, holiday entitlement runs from 1st August – 31st July. For full-time and part-time places, parents are entitled to two weeks holiday leave which can be taken as and when required during the year, provided one month's notice is given, childcare fees will not be charged.

Open Days

During the year the Sgoil Àraich will hold events when parents / carers or other family members can come in to visit the Sgoil Àraich and talk to staff. There will also be an induction day in June for those who will be starting in the sgoil àraich the following August.

All year settings are closed for the Christmas/New Year holiday and for all Comhairle public holidays. No fee will be charged for these days.



Fiosrachaidh Feumail / General Information

Absence/Illness

Please contact the Sgoil Áraich or school by phone before 9.30 am if your child is to be absent that day. Your child should not attend the setting if they are unwell. Please refer to the Policy Handbook.

Snack & Lunch

Staff raise awareness of healthy eating by purchasing healthy options for daily snack and promoting the healthy eating policy during lunchtimes. The children are encouraged to help in the preparation and serving of their snack. There will be no charge for snack.

3/4 year olds are entitled to a free lunch. Parents of under 3s should speak to the playleader for uptodate prices and how to pay for school lunches.

• Birthdays

For occasional special celebrations, children may bake and eat what they have made at snack time. Due to food hygiene / allergens, home baking/ food brought in from home to share is not permitted.

• Photographs

We use photographs to record evidence of participation in activities and progress of child's development. We celebrate their learning on social media and in their SeeSaw accounts. In line with Local Authority policy parents will be requested to give permission in writing allowing their child to be photographed.

Nappies

For children in nappies, a supply should be provided; this may be in bulk and left in the sgoil àraich or brought in every day in the child's bag. Parents are asked to supply nappies, baby wipes, cream (if used) and nappy sacks. Parents will be advised by staff when nappies etc. need replenishing.

Clothing

Please ensure that your child attends the sgoil àraich in clothes and shoes suitable for playing indoors and out (with hat, mittens, wellies and spare clothes available). We aim to operate a free flow environment where children have access to the outdoors throughout each session. While every effort will be made to protect clothes there is no guarantee that children's clothes will remain clean. Labelling clothing is a useful habit to start in preparation for school, with a pen, stamp or sticker.

Sgoil Àraich Setting

The sgoil àraich has one main play room within the school. There is a cloakroom area, a dedicated kitchen area and toilets with changing facilities. The children have regular access to the outdoors within the school grounds and also to the school gym hall, library and canteen.

Notice Board

We maintain an information notice board for parents. Please check the notice board regularly and read the sgoil àraich policies which are also on display for your interest and information. We will also inform you through ourwebsite, SeeSaw, group call and social media.

Outings

We occasionally visit places of interest and attend events in the wider community. At such times we may need more adult supervision. Parents are sometimes invited along to enjoy the learning experience and assist.

Security

We are very conscious of security in the sgoil àraich. During our sessions our doors are locked. Visitors must ring the bell before being admitted by a member of staff. Before entering the establishment, a visitor who is unknown to the member of staff must first show proof of identity and then sign in to the visitor's book.

Signing in System

Parents are asked to sign their child in on arrival at sgoil àraich and sign out on departure. Adults, not the children, are required to sign the sheet. Parents must notify sgoil àraich staff if/when another adult is to collect their child. To ensure the sgoil àraich meets the required adult child ratios, please ensure your child does not arrive until the time they are booked in.

Volunteers

The sgoil àraich occasionally needs parent volunteers to help within the sgoil àraich as well as for outings/trips. Where volunteers are used regularly and are left on their own for short periods of time with the children it is necessary for those volunteers to have a PVG check. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer for the sgoil àraich please speak to the play leader. Extra help is always appreciated.

Additional Educational Support Needs

Some children can have short or longer term additional needs and support in the early years could make life easier for the child in school. We welcome any children who might be considered to need any extra support and are more than willing to work alongside any other agencies involved. Such agencies could include, e.g. Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy or Educational Psychology.

Partnership with Parents

Parents are welcome to come in and discuss their child's progress. Please speak to the Play Leader to discuss a mutually convenient time. Parents are the primary educators of their children and have an important role to play in their children's development. Parental contribution is invaluable and greatly appreciated and encouraged at sgoil àraich. We welcome support from parents at all times.

MEASAIDHEAN / ASSESSMENT

Sgoil Àraich staff will assess your child's learning by

- Observing your child play and interact with other
- Listening to your child
- Talking with your child

They will build a record of your child's progress which will include

- Examples of your child's work
- Photographs
- Observations of your child's learning developmental overviews

Personal Care Plans

Prior to your child starting at the Sgoil Àraich parents will be asked to complete the first part of the plan with staff. The plans will be kept in the Sgoil Àraich and parents can have access to their own plan at any time by arrangement. These should be kept up to date with any changes in a child's circumstances.

Developmental Overviews

Developmental overviews highlight where your child is currently at in terms of their development of fine/gross motor, social/interactive skills etc. This record of your child's learning follows your child from the Sgoil àraich to P1. The developmental overviews will be shared with you at a pre-arranged meeting with sgoil àraich staff and then forwarded to thereceiving school.

Children's progress and achievements will be recorded in the overview with the children fully involved in deciding the next steps in their learning. They will be shared with the class teacher during transition meeting with Sgoil Àraich staff before being forwarded to parents at home.

SeeSaw

We use SeeSaw an online platform, to share information with parents about their children's learning. We inform parents of events and changes to routine. We celebrate successes. Parents can also use it to celebrate achievements at home and to communicate with the staff.

Pàrantan / How you can help your Child

You can help your child to learn by playing together at home and;

- Encouraging them to be independent, for example, in getting dressed and washing their hands before
 meals, and to share and join in with other children, encouraging them to develop healthy habits in
 diet, exercise and hygiene.
- Reading to them every day, talking about books with them and reading familiar words to them, for example, the labels on their favourite foods.
- Talking with them and answering questions and playing remembering games and guessing games like "I Spy."
- Helping them to match and sort things, for example, putting together forks and knives or cups and saucers, and pairing up socks, sorting out big tins and little tins, putting packets in order of size.
- Encouraging them to count and use numbers in everyday situations and in nursery rhymes.
- Encouraging them to listen to music, songs, stories and rhymes.
- Encouraging them to express their ideas and feelings, for example, using crayons, pens, pencils, paint, music and play.
- Giving them the chance to use their fingers and hands, for example, building with bricks, cutting out with scissors, helpingwith baking and fastening zips and buttons.
- Being active together, swimming, dancing, walking etc

There are many Gàidhlig books which your child will become familiar with in the sgoil àraich which have been made into audio books. Some ofthese, along with many other resources that you can use to support your child, can be found on the <u>Gaelic4Parents</u>, <u>GoGaelic</u>, <u>Orain na cloinne bige</u>, <u>Gàidhlig nan Òg</u> and <u>Learn Gaelic</u> websites.



CURRICULUM AND PLANNING / PLANADH

Learning through play is the main principle within the sgoil àraich.

Gàidhlig early learning and childcare is a very important stage of GME. All children entering Sgoil Àraich an lochdair will experience the usual activities that children do in a sgoil àraich setting through the principles of immersion. Children learn Gàidhlig by being immersed in the language within the playroom and while outdoors. Our sgoil àraich staff aim to use all available opportunities to develop the children's understanding and acquisition of Gàidhlig through our local context, songs, games, stories and through play. Helpful detailed guidance on total immersion is contained within the <u>Education Scotland Advice on Gaelic Education</u>.

Young children learn very naturally through play and they enjoy learning. In their play they may find out about materials, use and develop language, act out situations, ask questions, look for information in books, make friends, see how their actions affect otherpeople, try out ideas, learn rules or read stories.

Staff plan the learning experiences for the children based on observations and tracking information gathered in the sgoil àraich. Parents and children are consulted regularly and parents have the opportunity to contribute to their children's learning.

Sgoil àraich staff ensure that they make the best use of space to provide play opportunities within the eight curriculum areas indoors and outdoors. Staff ensure that there is a good balance between children's choice and planned group activities. Sgoil àraich staff also encourage all children to become independent and responsible through following daily routines such as assisting at snack. All children also have daily opportunities for active, physical play both indoors and outdoors making use of a variety of equipment e.g. balance bikes, balls etc.

Curriculum for Excellence

The 'How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare?' documentation provides the benchmark of quality in the early years' sector.

The sgoil àraich provides a flexible and stimulating environment to engage children in their learning through well planned and challenging play.

We believe that children learn best when they have scope for active involvement in a wide range of learning experiences. 'Curriculum forExcellence' provides statements of the aims of education in Scotland. By providing structure, support and direction to children's learning, the curriculum should enable all children to become:

Luchd-Ionnsachaidh Soirbheachail		Daoine Misneachail	
	Successful learners	Confident individuals	
Saoranaich Earbsach Responsible citizens		Com-pàirteachean Èifeachdach	
		Effective contributors	

'Curriculum for Excellence' has 8 curricular areas which are all delivered in Gàidhlig. The following summarises some aspects of learning which will take place within each area.

Language/Literacy

Listen with enjoyment and respond to stories, songs, rhymes and poems Listen and talk to children and adults Explore books/texts and understand some of the language, layout Develop an awareness of letter names and sounds

Have fun with language and making stories



Mathematics/Numeracy

Explore numbers; develop understanding of counting, simple additions, order, money, time and measure Collect objects, ask questions to gather information, organise and display, share findings with others Investigate shapes and objects

Health and Wellbeing

Develop confidence, resilience, self-awareness and self-worth
Form positive relationships, take turns and share resources, follow rules
Take part in physical play and activities, develop body control, use equipment safely
Develop awareness of healthy eating and healthy lifestyles, fitness, hygiene, safety

Expressive Arts

Choose and explore ways to create images and objects using a variety of media Explore line, shape, form, colour, tone, pattern and texture

Make music by singing, clapping, playing musical instruments and music technology

Explore role play and drama

Social Studies

Explore the importance of special occasions and important people in our lives

Explore places of interest in local and wider environment and the role of people in it

Develop an understanding of the weather

Make choices and take responsibility in play experiences

Technologies

Play with and explore technologies; communication methods, audio/visual, electronic games Show care for the environment through recycling methods Explore a wide range of resources, materials, software and tools Explore ways of presenting ideas

Sciences

Develop an understanding of sustainable materials, plants, animals, climate and earth, outer space Explore healthy eating and healthy bodies

Develop an understanding of electricity, sound and ways of communicating Develop an awareness and an understanding of the senses

Religious and Moral Education

Explore Christian beliefs
Become familiar with religious beliefs all over the world
Raise an awareness of festivals and celebrations
Develop beliefs and values

Realising the Ambition

Realising the Ambition, guidance issued in February 2020 supports staff to deliver what babies and young children need most, to have the best start in life. The sgoil àraich use this to further develop key information about the characteristics of child development and what we need to provide for babies and young children as they learn and grow. Staff will be looking again at pedagogy and practice and extend the connections to across the whole of the early level of Curriculum for Excellence (CFE). Staff will retain and expand the focus on the learning environment in terms of interactions, experiences and spaces to raise our expectations of what high quality may look like in different settings.



POILEASAIDH & DOIGHEAN OBAIR / POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Policies and Guideline information provides clear advice to staff, students and parents about the procedures and practice at the sgoil àraich. Well written policies ensure that all staff and service users are provided with up to date, relevant information about their respective roles and responsibilities. The Manager, in consultation with staff, review and update policies regularly and these are displayed outside the play room. Further information is available on line on the school website and on the notice board. Paper copies are also available on request. Our complaints policy is detailed below.

Complaints Policy

We believe:

- children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt attention to their needs and wishes.
- most complaints are made constructively and can be sorted out at an early stage.
- in the best interests of the sgoil àraich and parents, concerns should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way that respects confidentiality.

The Comhairle's Complaints Procedure governs the sgoil àraich. This policy is available on line at http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/complaints.asp, paper copies are also available on request. Complaints will be dealt with speedily, within an agreed time limit. We will keep a register of oral and written concerns. The register will be available to HM Inspectorate of Education, the Local Authority and the Care Inspectorate.

If the issue has not been resolved parents may wish to contact the Care Inspectorate.

Should parents or staff wish to make a complaint about the service they can contact the Care Inspectorate at any time.

Contact details as follows.

Email: concerns@careinspectorate.gov.scot

Phone: 03456009527

Address: Compass House, 11 Riverside Drive, Dundee, DD1 4NY



Contact	Title	Contact Details	Role/Responsibility
Joan MacDonald	Manager / Head of School	imrmacdonald1h@gnes.net 01870 604891	Sgoil Àraich Management
Mary Flora MacKinnon	Playleader	mmackinnon1x@gnes .net 01870 604894	Sgoil Àraich core staff
Margaret MacVicar	Nursery Keyworker	mmacvicar1n@gnes.n et01870 604894	Sgoil Àraich core staff
Paula Johnstone	Nursery Keyworker	pjohnson1v@gnes.net 01870 604894	Sgoil Àraich core staff
Katy Beaton	Nursery Keyworker	Kbeaton1b@gnes.net 01870 604894	Sgoil Àraich core staff
Marion MacAulay	Early Years Support Officer Family Support Officer (temporary)	mmacaulary1p@gnes.net 01870604894	Support to Early years settings & families through Uist & Barra
Janice MacKay	Deputy Early Years Services Manager	imackay 1 p@gnes.net 01870604898	Management of Early Years Services in the Western Isles