



# **Whinhill Primary School and Nursery Class**

**Bun-sgoil agus Sgoil-àraich  
Chnoc a' Chonaisg**

**School Handbook  
Leabhar-làimhe na Sgoile  
2026**

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Whinhill Primary School  
Drumfrochar Road  
Greenock  
PA15 4EQ

Dear parent a phàrant chòir,

I am very pleased to welcome you and your child to Whinhill Primary School and Nursery class which provides education through both English and Gaelic Medium.

Starting school is now much easier for children since most of them attended nursery but for others it can still be a daunting task, getting used to different people and new routines.

The purpose of this handbook is to give you some idea of what goes on in our school and the wide variety of activities your child will be able to take part in.

Schools have changed in many ways over the past years, being less formal and creating an atmosphere in which children can make great progress. We offer pupils a wide variety of experiences and the highest possible quality of education.

At Whinhill we have very effective partnerships with all our parents and we look forward to you becoming part of our school and nursery family. We strive to keep you up-to-date using **X**, Parent Portal, school website, email and newsletters, but should you require further information, or wish to discuss any matter, we operate an open door policy and would encourage you to contact us should any problems arise. I would encourage you to look at our school website, which contains lots of information about our school and nursery.

The activities and experiences you will find in the handbook will all be happening this year and we look forward to engaging with you and for you to be a valued part of our wider school team.

Yours sincerely, le gach deagh dhùrachd,

*Elizabeth Ruddy*

Mrs Elizabeth Ruddy  
Head Teacher | Ceannard



## **GOALS AND VALUES**

Inverclyde Council core values are Respect, Honesty and Tolerance.

School values – respect, honesty, confidence, responsibility and kindness.

Our vision for the children and young people of Inverclyde is that they should be ambitious for themselves and be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

To achieve our ambition of building Inverclyde through excellence, ambition and regeneration our children must be:

SAFE: protected from abuse, neglect and harm by others at home, school and in the community.

HEALTHY: enjoy the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, with access to healthy lifestyles.

ACHIEVING: have access to positive learning environments and opportunities to develop their skills, confidence and self-esteem to the fullest potential.

ACTIVE: active with opportunities and encouragement to participate in play and recreation including sport.

RESPECTED AND RESPONSIBLE: involved in decisions that affect them, have their voices heard and be encouraged to play an active and responsible role in their communities.

INCLUDED: have access to high quality services when required and should be assisted to overcome the social, educational, physical, environmental and economic barriers that create inequality.

NURTURED: educated within a supportive setting.



## SCHOOL INFORMATION

Whinhill Primary School  
Drumfrochar Road  
GREENOCK  
PA15 4EQ

Tel: 01475 715749

### PRESENT ROLL:

School – English	216
School – Gaelic	32
Nursery – English	39
Nursery – Gaelic	11

**DENOMINATIONAL STATUS:** Whinhill is a non-denominational, co-educational school offering both English Medium and Gaelic Medium education for pupils with ages ranging from 3 years to 12 years.

Website: <http://whinhill.inverclyde.sch.uk>

X: @WhinhillPS

Email: office@whinhill.inverclyde.sch.uk

## SCHOOL HOURS

09.00am	School opens
10.30 – 10.45	Interval
12.15 – 1.00pm	Lunch break
3.00pm	School closes



## EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE

### Entitlement

All eligible 2-year-old and 3 -4 year-old children, in Scotland have a statutory entitlement of up to 1140 hours of funded early learning and childcare the term following their 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday in a year.

Eligible 2-year-old and 3 -4 year-old intake	
Birthday Month	Intake Term
1 March – 31 March	August Term
1 April – 30 April	
1 May – 31 May	
1 June – 30 June	
1 July – 31 July	
1 August – 31 August	
1 September – 30 September	January Term
1 October – 31 October	
1 November – 30 November	
1 December – 31 December	
1 January – 31 January	April Term
1 February – last day of February	

### Eligible 2-year-old places

If you are the parent of a two-year-old child and currently receive certain benefits, you may be eligible for Funded Early Learning and Childcare for your child the term following their second birthday. To find out if you qualify, please refer to the criteria on the Inverclyde Council website. The website also provides detailed information on the application process, when you can apply, and the evidence required to apply.

### 3 – 4-year-old places

All children aged 3 – 4 years are eligible for an ELC place, the term following their third birthday. There is a set application windows to apply. This will always open on the first day of the new term in January of each year. You cannot apply for a place until the application window opens.

Application forms are available at any Inverclyde Council establishment, an approved funded provider Childminder or private voluntary or independent (PVI) nursery. You must complete the application form fully and all supporting evidence must be submitted at the time of your application.

For up-to-date information on application windows, timelines, and the release of allocated ELC places, visit the **Inverclyde Council website**.

### Deciding priorities for admission

All ELC applications follow Inverclyde Council's ELC Admissions Policy. While Inverclyde Council aims to allocate preferred choices, there is no guarantee that your preferred choice will be available. If the preferred establishment is full, an alternative place may be offered.

Every effort will be made to offer a suitable place within the Early Learning and Childcare defined area, but this is also not guaranteed.

## TEACHING STAFF

HEAD TEACHER	Mrs Elizabeth Ruddy
DEPUTE HEAD TEACHER	Mrs Andrea Hunter
PRINCIPAL TEACHER (PEF)	Mrs Carrie Alexander
PRINCIPAL TEACHER (PEF)	Miss Ilona Dickson
GAELOC PRINCIPAL TEACHER	Mr Alasdair MacPhee

<u>CLASS</u>	<u>TEACHER</u>
Primary 2/1	Miss Ilona Dickson
Primary 2	Mrs Alison Smith
Primary 3A	Miss Sophie Spencer
Primary 3B	Miss Caitlin Calder
Primary 4	Mrs Caroline Homer
Primary 5/4	Mrs Donna Thorburn
Primary 5	Mr Scott Trench
Primary 6	Mrs Katie Ellis
Primary 7/6	Mrs Jenna Valerio/Mrs Jaclyn Cooke
Primary 7	Mrs Carrie Alexander

Gaelic P1-3	Mr Alasdair MacPhee/Mrs Christine MacIsaac
Vacancy	1.1 Gaelic teacher
Gaelic P4-7	Mrs Beth Sharp
Gaelic Support	Mrs Kate Bannerman
Support for Learning	Miss Paula Kinnon
RCCT	Mrs Sharon Tucker/Mrs Jaclyn Cooke/ Mrs Nicola Reid
Nurture Teacher	Mrs Jaqueline Duff

Mr David Hutchinson (Peripatetic)	Brass tuition
Mrs Giulia Bizzi (Peripatetic)	Violin
Miss Jane Howie (Mat leave cover)	Singing
Mr Andrew MacPherson	Chanter

Teaching compliment 14.8 Full Time Equivalent – English Medium  
Teaching compliment 3.7 Full Time Equivalent – Gaelic Medium

## **SUPPORT STAFF**

### **Office Staff**

Mrs Arlene McCafferty  
Mrs Judy McElwee  
Miss Eilidh Lang (Mat Leave)  
Miss Carol Willitts  
Mrs Lesley Dalgleish

### **P.S.A. Pupil Support Assistants**

Mrs Sheena McArthur	Miss Tracey Downie
Mrs Linda Mitchell	Mrs Pamela McWatt
Mrs Anne Robertson	Mrs Kimberly Boyd
Mrs Cheryl Gray	
Mrs Lorraine Keogh	

### **EYECO (Nursery)**

Mrs Susan McElwee (Depute)  
Miss Chloe Roberts (Senior)  
Mrs Siobhan O'Donnell  
Mrs Jennifer Mullan  
Mrs Jenna Anderson  
Mrs Winnie Kinniburgh  
Mrs Stephanie Munro  
Mrs Margaret Watt (Gaelic)  
Mrs Tracy Harrison (Gaelic)

### **Nursery Support Staff**

Mrs Lesley Cameron  
Mrs Dawn Piggot  
Miss Ashleigh McDiarmid

### **EAL TEAM**

Mr Eric Lindsay (Principal Teacher)  
Mr Telmo Gomes (Teacher)  
Mr Fraser McPhie (Teacher)

### **JANITOR**

Mrs Gary Grana

### **Support Staff**

Mrs Maha Eljamala  
Miss Marta Kapuscinska  
Mrs Lorna Martin  
Mrs Margaret Bryce

Mrs Claire Howe  
Mr Ben Ward  
Ms Halyna Dziuba  
Mrs Yanina Rudenko

## Inverclyde Council ~ Education Services

### 2025-2026 School Calendar

August 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

September 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

December 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

January 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

June 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

July 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	



School Closed/ Holidays



Teacher in-Service Day (no school for students)



School Open

In-service days – 5

Teacher days – 195

Pupil days – 190

## **Whinhill Nursery Class** **Sgoil-àraich Chnoc a' Chonaisg**

Whinhill Primary Nursery Class offers pre-school education through both English and Gaelic medium.

### **Gaelic Medium**

Whinhill is the only provider of Gaelic Medium education in Inverclyde. Therefore, your child may attend the nursery and then go into P1 Gaelic. If you live in Inverclyde you do not have to complete a placing request. It is not necessary for parents to be Gaelic speakers for their child to go into a Gaelic medium nursery or primary school. If you live outside the existing catchment area for Whinhill, but still reside in Inverclyde, transport is provided.

If you wish to discuss Gaelic medium education please telephone the school and make an appointment with the Head Teacher.



### **Curriculum in the nursery**

The nursery class follows the early level of Curriculum for Excellence in English or Gaelic. The eight key aspects of the curriculum are literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing, technologies, social studies, expressive arts, religious and moral education and sciences.

### **Assessment and Reporting in the Nursery**

Every child has a pupil profile which is a comprehensive record of their progress during their time in nursery. These are discussed with parents regularly and information recorded is as a result of observations made by staff. Parents and children have access to these records which are sent home at the end of the child's pre-school experience.

A record of achievement is compiled when the child completes his/her pre-school education. The information is then passed on to the school that the child will be transferring to.

### **Attendance**

It is important that absences are kept to a minimum as education is a continuous process and children benefit from regular attendance. We ask that parents contact the school before 9.30am if a child will be absent from the nursery.

### **Home Links**

Our nursery has an open door policy and parents are encouraged to speak with staff to discuss any concerns. Newsletters are regularly sent home from both English and Gaelic medium detailing nursery events and activities.

## **Clothing**

Children should not wear “good clothes” to nursery. Children are involved in many types of activities from baking to painting and although they are provided with an apron, accidents do happen. Please make sure your child has plimsolls or soft shoes with their name on them.

## **Snacks**

Whinhill nursery is a health promoting establishment with a healthy eating policy based on the guidelines ‘Setting the Table’.

The children are provided with a healthy snack such as fruit, crackers, toast and milk and water. A voluntary weekly donation is greatly appreciated to pay for snacks and perishable items.

### **We are an allergy aware nursery**

## **Collecting Children**

If an alternative arrangement for collection is to be made the staff in the nursery must be informed in advance.

## **Transition**

The key to positive transition is effective communication between early years’ establishments, the school and parents. The transition process is on-going with strong links between our own nursery and P1 and with other nurseries in our community.

## **Transfer to Primary School**

Children are normally transferred between the ages of 4½ and 5½ years, although this may be negotiated in exceptional circumstances.



## **Care Inspectorate**

Care Inspectorate is the Scottish Commission for Regulation of Care. This organisation inspects the service provided for the children who attend the nursery on a regular basis. Inspections can be planned or unannounced and are carried out by one Care Inspectorate Officer. During the inspection the Officer speaks with the Head Teacher, staff, children and parents. He/she also looks at the range of policies, procedures and records.

CARE INSPECTORATE - Paisley

Renfrewshire House

Cotton Street

Paisley

PA1 1BF

Tel: [0345 600 9527](tel:03456009527)



## Whinhill Learner Participation

In Whinhill we believe that children need to be active participants in their own education and to feel that their opinions will be heard within our school and the wider community. We seek ways to listen to the views of our pupils and involve them in decision-making, so that they are engaged as partners in the life of the school. The opportunity for our pupils to share their opinions is a part of Whinhill school life and can happen in lots of ways. Learner Participation is embedded throughout the curriculum and by the use of a variety of pupil committees. We believe that our committees will enhance and develop positive pupil leadership skills and encourage a greater sense of responsibility throughout the school. Here is a snapshot of the types of activities our pupils have been involved in within their committees.

### Eco Committee

#### Comataidh Eco

We are responsible for working on keeping Whinhill environmentally friendly! We help keep the school clean by promoting recycling around the school and area with our litter pickers. Looking after our environment is very important to us! We make sure everyone is always trying to save energy by turning off lights and smartboards when not using them. We also organise our Halloween and Christmas clothing pop-up shops to encourage everyone to re-use waste. All these things have helped us achieve our **Eco green flag!**



### Fairtrade Committee

#### Comataidh Malairt-chothromach

We are responsible for educating the school about Fairtrade and where products come from. Promoting Fairtrade helps the fight against forced child labour supporting children's rights. We also host a Fairtrade café after every class assembly. You have a Fairtrade coffee or tea and a Fairtrade product. We look forward to continuing our work with Fairtrade and helping change the lives of others with our choices.



### Rights Respecting Schools Committee

#### Còraichean Chloinne

We are responsible for making sure that pupils in the school are respecting each other's rights. We have meetings to discuss how to raise awareness of children's rights in the school. We have created a playtime and lunchtime charter. We worked together and picked rights that pupils should be aware of when they are playing outside and having lunch in the canteen. All classes also have a class charter and a 'right of the month' which we decide together. We are proud to be a RRS Gold Award school!



### Whinhill Pupil Leadership Team

#### Sgioba Ceannardais nan Sgoilear

We are responsible for gathering views about how pupils feel about our school. It is important that we have a say in how well our school is doing and how it can be improved! Self-evaluation is how schools decide what is going well and what could be better. As pupils, we can help our school identify the actions we need to take to keep Whinhill improving. Our contribution to this is very important!





**Literacy Committee**  
**Comataidh Litearrachd**

In the Literacy committee we are in charge of organising and thinking of ideas for whole school literacy events such as World Book Day, Book Week Scotland and National Storytelling week. For Book Week Scotland we organised a library visit, a parent workshop and a whole school book swap event. We help our whole school maintain a 'reading culture' by promoting DEAR time, visits to the library, buddy reading and book swap boxes. We have worked towards our silver reading schools award and next we are going for gold!

**Junior Road Safety Officers**  
**Oifigearan Sàbhailteachd Rathaid**

We try to get everyone to walk to school because...

- it's a safe way to travel
- it's healthy because you are exercising
- it cuts down pollution from cars and buses
- you can walk with your friends!

We organise and lead 'Walk to School Week' to encourage everyone to make healthy choices. We attend JRSO meetings to discuss any issues with Road Safety Officers and the Police. We also think about events we can plan to encourage everyone to walk to school.



**Digital Leaders**  
**Sgioba Digiteach**

Digital Leaders help organise and develop ICT activities across the school. They are instrumental in helping bring digital technologies to the forefront of learning at Whinhill and have been working to ensure pupils have an understanding of staying safe online. They worked together to update the pupil version of our Acceptable Use Policy and shared this with classes. We plan to develop our work on Digital Leaders further, giving support to staff, parents and pupils across the school! We recently received our cyber resilience and digital wellbeing award.



## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Our parents, carers and families are very important in supporting our children through their educational experience. We recognise that parents and families have skills to contribute to, and support our school, and this is achieved in many different ways. Parents are invited to workshops throughout the school year which focus on the curriculum. We also encourage our parents to become further involved through parent/child homework tasks. This year, an ASN parent group has been established where parents can meet to discuss effective interventions used to support their child. They meet in 'The Bothy' and all are welcome.

We encourage our parents to voice their suggestions and opinions through parent focus groups, responses to newsletters, questionnaires, and telephone calls. Our school operates an 'open door' policy and we will endeavour to be available to parents when needed. If you have any concerns or worries, please contact the school right away and we will endeavour to resolve these for you.

There is also a formal complaints procedure in line with Inverclyde Council Policy. Stage 1 complaints are dealt with at school level.

<https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/complaint>



## **PARENT GROUPS**

At Whinhill it is felt that the school should be part of the community.

Whinhill has an active Parent Council who takes a keen interest in the improvement agenda of the school.

The Fundraising Committee (part of the Parent Council) plays a large part in many aspects of the school life. The Fundraising Committee works hard arranging fund-raising events throughout the school year.

All parents and teachers are deemed to be members of the Parent Council without payment of any fee. Various activities help to foster the very happy relationship that exists between the school and the community. The Parent Council has been most generous to the school, not only financially but also assisting at parties, discos, coffee mornings etc.

We also have a 'Comann Nam Parant' group which supports our children in Gaelic Medium and promotes Gaelic to our wider community. This group is part of the Parent Council. In addition there is a Gaelic advisory group where representatives from our group meet online with Inverclyde Council staff, school and secondary school staff to discuss Gaelic development.



## **PARENT FORUM and PARENT COUNCIL**

Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 led to the establishment of Parent Councils in primary, secondary and special schools. The Act recognises the vital role that parents play in supporting their children's learning. It places a duty on authorities to promote the involvement of parents in children's education and the wider life of the school. It aims to help parents to be:-

- Involved with their child's education and learning
- Welcomed as an active participant in the life of the school
- Encouraged to express their views on school education generally.

Information must be provided on whether or not a Parent Council has been established and the reason(s) given for the non-establishment or disestablishment of a board.

Information should be given about the members of the council. Details of where/how the Parent Forum can access minutes of meetings and constitution should be given.

Procedures for electing parent representatives should be set out.

The Parent Council, as a statutory body, has the right to information and advice on matters which affect children's education.

Parents who are involved on a regular basis in schools should undertake an enhanced disclosure through the PVG scheme.

All parents who have a child attending the school are automatically members of the Parent Forum for our school. Membership of the forum allows parents to have a say in the local arrangements to enable their standards of education at the school and other matters of interest to parents. These views can be represented, as appropriate, to the head teacher of the school, the Council and HMIE.

Parent Council Chair (Lynsey Jamieson)

The Parent Council is established when the parent members are elected.

## **PARENTZONE SCOTLAND**

[Parentzone](#) Scotland is a unique website for parents and carers in Scotland, from early years to beyond school. The website provides up-to-date information about learning in Scotland, and practical advice and ideas to support children's learning at home in literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and science. Information is also available on Parentzone Scotland regarding additional support needs, how parents can get involved in their child's school and education. Parentzone Scotland also has details about schools, including performance data for school leavers from S4-S6 and links to the national, local authority and school level data on the achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels.

## **SCHOOL ETHOS**

Whinhill Primary School and Nursery Class was established in August 2012 after the closure and amalgamation of two local primary schools. All stakeholders including pupils, parents, school staff and the wider community have been consulted on the core values which have been adopted by our school. These are **Honesty, Confidence, Responsibility, Kindness and Respect**. We also support the goals and values identified by Inverclyde Council which are listed at the beginning of the handbook. We celebrate the achievements of our children both in and out of school in many different ways. We have a celebrations assembly each month and children receive certificates for being a rights respecting citizen and demonstrating our visible learning learner dispositions. We are often represented in the local press and we make good use of newsletters, our school website and X to recognise the achievements of our children.

At Whinhill we value partnerships with local schools and businesses. We have twinned with our local denominational school St Patrick's and share opportunities for religious observance and citizenship activities. We have very strong links with our active school co-ordinator who supports our children in a wide variety of sports. We work with a variety of organisations that support creative arts and sports.

We have achieved three green eco flags and promote sustainability at all times. We are a Gold level accredited Rights Respecting School, we are an accredited School of Sanctuary which means we are a welcoming place to anyone seeking safety and sanctuary, attained our Digital Schools' Award, Digital Wellbeing award, Reading School Silver award, Gold Sports Scotland award and have Fairtrade status.

Local senior citizens in the area have joined us at our Harvest Thanksgiving Service, when pupils have not only provided gifts, but have been able to listen to and talk to the older generation. Pupils have enjoyed the hospitality of Merino Court and Larkfield View care homes and Inverclyde Carers Gateway in return for carol singing. Our younger and more senior children have enjoyed sessions where they played board games and with the residents at Merino.

We have good links with businesses e.g. Diodes and have had visits from police, fire, ambulance and many other health professionals as part of our health week. We have a strong link with the Royal Horticultural Society and Inverclyde Shed who support us in developing our outdoor spaces. We have had great success in many gardening competitions.

In these and other ways the school becomes identified with the community, and the community with the school.

## **PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR**

Our children are encouraged to be active and discover the world around them. If children are engaged and happy, it is our belief that behaviour issues are kept to a minimum. We strive at all times to promote positive behaviour across the school. Certain standards of behaviour are necessary for a pleasant and safe environment in which our children may be educated and prepared for their future lives. We, therefore, expect our children to follow our school charters and adhere to the standards of behaviour that are necessary to promote this pleasant and safe environment.

In encouraging our children to show respect for others, and to respect the rights of others, we feel that we are laying the very basis of these standards of behaviour. To this end, school charters are made in the interest of and for the well-being and safety of your children and other children. Please encourage your child to follow these expectations.

Our school advocates 'restorative approaches' to address behaviour issues and resolve conflict. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and support one another in moving forward with respect and friendship. We aim to seek solutions to behaviour difficulties which arise. Our school follows Inverclyde's Positive Relationship Policy.

Instances of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with in line with school policy and parents are kept fully informed.

## **CHILD PROTECTION**

Inverclyde Council Education Services has Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures which all schools and establishments are required to follow. Education Services work very closely with other agencies namely Police Scotland, Health and Social Care Partnership, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and the Children's Reporter to support children. Common responsibilities of all staff are to protect children from abuse and exploitation, to respond appropriately when abuse is identified, and to ensure whenever possible that all children are able to exercise their right to be raised in a warm, stimulating and safe environment with the support of staff, their families and carers.

The Child Protection and Prevent Co-ordinator for Whinhill is: **Mrs Liz Ruddy**

The Depute Child Protection and Prevent Co-ordinator is: **Mrs Andrea Hunter**

## **EQUALITIES**

The Equality Statement for Inverclyde Establishments

'Inverclyde Education Service is committed to ensuring that no children or members of staff or service users receive less favourable treatment on any ground including gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief. We have a moral, social and legal obligation to mainstream and put equality at the heart of everything we do. We aim to promote a culture in which equality of opportunity exists for all. We are opposed to all forms of discrimination, direct or indirect, and aim to eliminate all discriminatory practices. We will ensure that, in our schools and other educational establishments, equality permeates the curriculum and underpins all our policies and practices in terms of access to education. We must ensure that all our children achieve their full potential to develop physically, emotionally and academically. Finally, we believe that equality and inclusion should be a given right, where everyone is valued and treated with respect.'



## **GAEIC MEDIUM EDUCATION**

Gaelic medium education is a form of education in Scotland that allows pupils to be taught primarily through the medium of Scottish Gaelic, with English taught as the secondary language.

Within the establishment of Whinhill Primary School and Nursery Class, is the Gaelic Medium for Inverclyde. Gaelic medium education is mainly provided by Gaelic medium classes within English-speaking schools. Our Gaelic nursery is for children age 3 years to 5 years and our primary school is for children age 4 ½ years to 12½ years.

Learning Gaelic as an additional language contributes to learners' wider education and life experiences. Language lies at the centre of our thinking and learning. The interconnected nature of language learning lies at the heart of the Gaelic experiences and outcomes in Curriculum for Excellence.

"When they begin to learn another language, children and young people need to make connections with the skills and knowledge they have already developed in their own language. To help this, teachers can make use of the diversity of languages which children and young people may bring to school."

### **Building the Curriculum 1**

Gaelic -medium education, like all education provision in Scotland, is determined by demand for the service balanced with the educational and economic viability of each educational unit.

If you would like to visit our school or find out more, please contact the Head Teacher to arrange an appointment.



Gaelic P1-3

## **ASSESSMENT and ARRANGEMENTS for REPORTING to PARENTS**

### **CURRICULUM**

At Whinhill Primary we operate a broad curriculum which offers opportunities for learning in all general areas. Various methods of teaching are carried out so that pupils are able to display their strengths and develop their full potential across the curriculum.

The curriculum framework for all Scottish educational establishments 3 – 18, called Curriculum for Excellence, will offer better educational outcomes for all young people and will provide more choices and more chances for those young people who need them.

The aims of Curriculum for Excellence are that every child and young person should:

- Know they are valued and will be supported to become a successful learner, an effective contributor, a confident individual and a responsible citizen;
- Experience a traditionally broad Scottish curriculum that develops skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work, with a sustained focus on literacy and numeracy that encourages an active, healthy and environmentally sustainable lifestyle and builds an appreciation of Scotland and its place in the world.

The experiences and outcomes under Curriculum for Excellence are written at five levels, with progression to qualifications described under the senior phase.

Early Level – the pre-school years and P1 later for some

First level – to the end of P4, but earlier for some

Second level – to the end of P7, but earlier for some

Third and Fourth – S1 to S3, but earlier for some

Senior phase – S4 – S6 and college or other means of study



### **ATTAINMENT CHALLENGE**

Inverclyde is an attainment challenge authority in line with Government expectations. Whinhill is an attainment challenge school. Intensive support has been given to P1-3 to support the teaching of literacy and numeracy and we now focus on Active Literacy and SEAL (stages of early arithmetical learning) for numeracy and these strategies and teaching styles will move through the whole school.

## **LITERACY**

Language is at the core of thinking. We reflect, communicate and develop our ideas through language. Literacy offers an essential passport to learning, helping children and young people to achieve to the full and be ready for active involvement in society and work. Literature opens up new horizons, and a love of reading can be an important starting point for lifelong learning. Up to date reading materials give the pupils opportunities to develop reading and language skills at a pace suitable to each individual child. An annual book fair is also available to encourage children to read and enjoy books. Our school leads on Talking and listening strategies, known as dialogic teaching, which are now highly developed across all stages in the school and are used in every curricular area. Colleagues from other schools regularly visit to see this in action. The teaching of writing takes place within the area of language but also in many other curricular areas.

The teaching of a primary modern language takes place from Primary 1-7 and develops as children move through the school. French is delivered from P1-7 and Gaelic from P4-7. Gaelic pupils receive French from P4-7. Spanish is introduced through cultural learning.

## **NUMERACY**

Putting mathematical knowledge and understanding to constructive use has been one of the decisive factors in shaping societies. Engineering, science, technology and business rely upon mathematics and continue to find new applications for mathematics. Cultural development and artistic endeavour are influenced by mathematics. Each of us uses mathematical skills and concepts in everyday life. To face the challenges of the 21st century, each young person needs to have confidence in using mathematical skills, and Scotland needs both specialist mathematicians and a highly numerate population. We teach mathematics in such a way that children understand through activity. The workbooks and textbooks provide practical, relevant examples incorporating real life situations as well as allowing pupils to progress at their own level. Continuous assessment is also carried out.

## **SCIENCES**

The most important goal for science education is to stimulate, nurture and sustain the curiosity, wonder and questioning of children. Young children have a natural sense of wonder and curiosity and are active and eager learners who endeavour to make sense of the world. They develop ideas through play, investigation, first-hand experience and discussion. As they grow older children ask searching questions based on their everyday observations and experiences of living things, the environment and the materials, objects and devices they interact with. Young people are fascinated by new discoveries and technologies and become increasingly aware of, and passionate about, the impact of science on their own health and wellbeing, the health of society and of the environment.



## **EXPRESSIVE ARTS**

The expressive arts include experiences and outcomes in art and design, drama, dance and music.

Through the expressive arts, children and young people can have rich opportunities to be creative and imaginative and to experience inspiration and enjoyment. They can come to understand the important roles of the arts in describing and changing society. The arts have a growing significance in the life and prosperity of Scotland. Through their experience of the expressive arts, children and young people can appreciate the contributions of the arts in the lives of individuals and communities.

Our school takes part in many expressive arts activities out with the core curriculum including the Inverclyde Music Festival, McLean museum activities, and drama and music experiences as they occur.

At present senior pupils have the opportunity of brass, voice, chanter and violin tuition from visiting instructors.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

Social studies include experiences and outcomes in historical, geographical, social, political, economic and business contexts.

It is important for children and young people to understand the place where they live and the heritage of their family and community. Through social studies, children and young people develop their understanding of the world by learning about other people and their values, in different times, places and circumstances, and how their environment has been shaped.

They learn about human achievements and to make sense of changes in society, conflicts and environmental issues. With greater understanding comes the opportunity to influence events by exercising informed and responsible citizenship. This area of the curriculum is supported by day visits to linked experiences where appropriate.

## **TECHNOLOGIES**

This curriculum area includes creative, practical and work-related experiences and outcomes in craft, design, engineering, graphics, food, textile, and information technologies.

To participate fully in modern life, children and young people need to be skilled and knowledgeable users of technologies and be ready to embrace further developments in the future. The technologies consider how knowledge can be applied for practical purposes. They provide exciting opportunities to develop children's creativity and the enterprising attitudes which Scotland needs, not least to compete in a global economy. Technologies are developing at an unprecedented rate. Such dramatic change brings risks as well as benefits, and children and young people need to be able to assess the impact of technologies so that they can take action in an informed way.



## **HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

Health and wellbeing includes experiences and outcomes for personal and social development, understanding of health, physical education and physical activity, and contributions from home economics. It also includes approaches and activities such as physical activity and nutrition, planned by pre-school settings, schools or colleges to promote the health and wellbeing of their learners and the wider community.

Children and young people need to experience what it feels like to develop, enjoy and live a healthy lifestyle. They also need to learn ways of dealing with the many new and challenging situations they will experience throughout their lives. A healthy lifestyle supports physical, social and emotional wellbeing, and underpins successful learning. Concerns about the health, diet and activity levels of Scotland's children and young people, social inclusion and inequalities in health emphasize the importance of a focus on health and wellbeing throughout education, starting in the early years.

**Information about sensitive areas of learning such as relationships, sexual health, parenthood and drug awareness, is available on our website. We are happy to discuss this further with parents on request.**

Our school is a Health Promoting School and our health curriculum is further enhanced by many health specialists who visit our school. The school also runs a Breakfast Club three mornings a week.

## **RELIGIOUS AND MORAL EDUCATION**

Religious and moral education includes learning about Christianity and other world religions, and supports the development of beliefs and values. It also includes aspects of philosophical enquiry.

Scotland is now a nation which reflects a wide range of beliefs, values and traditions. Religious and moral education enables children and young people to explore the world's major religions and approaches to living which are independent of religious belief, and be challenged by these different beliefs and values. It supports children and young people in developing responsible attitudes to other people, their values and their capacity for moral judgement. The study of Christianity, which has shaped the history and traditions of Scotland and continues to exert an influence on national life, is an essential feature of religious and moral education for all children and young people.

Useful Website - <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/>



## Play at Whinhill

At Whinhill we believe that all children should have the opportunity to play every day. Research shows that play is important for the early stages of brain development and develops skills for learning, life and work. Play Pedagogy is a way of including children's play experiences with the curriculum, giving pupils the opportunity to develop their problem solving skills and supports the development of social skills and collaboration. It engages children in meaningful activities, learning about themselves and others, and encourages independence and motivation to learn.

*"We know how children learn best. They learn best in an environment of quality interactions, interesting spaces and when the experiences on offer are set in meaningful contexts. They learn best in environments that inspire them to be curious and creative."*

***Realising the Ambition, Education Scotland***

During play at Whinhill, children follow their own ideas and interests. It is important that children have the freedom to choose how and when they play. Play can happen indoors and outdoors in natural spaces. There are many benefits to play including enhanced wellbeing, building resilience, developed problem solving skills and improved relationships with others. Play experiences also develop children's imagination and creativity, increase language skills and improve concentration.

*"In school, play pedagogies should be planned to meet the diverse range of children's needs, acknowledging that most children start school as competent learners, while still needing opportunities to discover, to investigate and to be creative learners through play."*

***Realising the Ambition, Education Scotland***

As a Rights Respecting School, we ensure our children and young people have a right to play as stated in Article 31. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that every child should have:

*"The right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts."*

For more information about Scotland's National Play Strategy, please follow this link:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/play-strategy-scotland-vision/pages/3/>



## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Sustainable development education is about ensuring pupils not only acquire knowledge and understanding of the principles of sustainable development but also acquire the skills and values needed to do something about them. The three key features of sustainable development education are:

- A joined-up approach where the links between sustainable development issues, other subject areas, the pupils' own lives and locally relevant issues are clearly articulated and obvious.
- A participative approach where all members of the school community, including pupils, are involved in decision making and planning changes to improve sustainability.
- A reflective approach where time is set aside to look at what has been achieved.

In Whinhill we are fully committed to these principles and develop them through our Eco work. We have achieved three green flags. We have identified opportunities for sustainable development at all stages through all areas of the curriculum.

## **ASSESSMENT**

The class teachers carry out continuous assessment in all subjects. Most assessment takes place through formative assessment where the pupil is fully involved in the educational process.

Children are assessed using the SNSA / (MCNG Gaelic) national assessment in literacy and numeracy at P1, P4 and P7 to identify progress made from their preceding years. A diagnostic reading test and SWST spelling assessments are used twice per year and allow us to track progress. In addition to this, key learning experiences are tracked in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing for every child to allow us to clearly identify that progress is being made.

A variety of other diagnostic tools are used to determine and support difficulties or challenges that arise for children at specific times in their education.

Children have a good understanding of their learning pathways. This helps children to understand where they are in their learning, what they need to work on next, and how to get there. By regularly reviewing their pathways, pupils can celebrate achievements, identify challenges and develop a positive proactive attitude toward learning.

Merit prizes are given at Whinhill. Effort is rewarded in curricular areas with trophies and certificates. Different children have different aptitudes and abilities and our aim is to encourage all pupils to make progress consistent with their ability. The Parent/Teacher Association provides a book for each child in P1 and P7, while a few special prizes have also been donated by well-wishers and are given to P7 pupils.



## **REPORTING TO PARENTS AND CARERS**

Formal Parent's evenings are held on two occasions during the school year. The first meeting is generally in October and the second in late March. Pupils are encouraged to attend their interviews along with their parents. A parent is welcome to request an interview with the head teacher at any time to discuss any matter concerning a child's welfare or progress.

Last year we changed our reporting system. Following consultation with parents, targets will now be based in school and will be discussed at parents' evenings. An interim report on progress is then sent out to parents and carers at the end of term 2, and a full report in term 4.

## **TRANSITIONS**

An effective transitions framework is essential to ensure that children move from nursery to primary school and from primary school to secondary school with confidence. Visits are made to local nurseries and we invite children from these nurseries to spend time in primary 1. During the month of May or June children who have enrolled for Whinhill will be invited to participate in an induction week where they will experience the school environment and where parents will be given valuable information.

Children in primary 7 will receive visits from secondary staff to deliver aspects of the curriculum. They will be invited to participate in 3 induction days, one during November/December and two in June. In all cases appropriate information will be shared with receiving schools. Enhanced transition is also available for those children who require additional support in the transition process. This can include additional visits from secondary school staff and additional visits to the secondary school environment. Visits are also offered to children in P5 and P6 to ensure the transition journey begins early.

Pupils are normally transferred between the ages of 11½ and 12½, so that they will have the opportunity to complete at least 4 years of secondary education. Parents will be informed of the arrangements no later than December of the year preceding the date of transfer at the start of the new session. Our pupils transfer to Inverclyde Academy, Cumberland Road, Greenock, PA16 0FB (01475 715100). If Parents wish their child to transfer to this school, they must live within the catchment area otherwise a placing request must be submitted.



## **SUPPORT FOR PUPILS**

All children and young people need support to help them learn. Inverclyde Council operates within the GIRFEC agenda (Getting it Right for Every Child). The main sources of support in early years and in schools are the staff who, through their normal practice, are able to meet a diverse range of needs. With good quality teaching and learning and an appropriate curriculum most children and young people are able to benefit appropriately from education without the need for additional support.

The definition of additional support is a wide one and it is not possible to provide an exhaustive list of all possible forms of additional support. More information is available by contacting the school. If a parent considers that his or her child has additional support needs and wishes to make enquiries on this, they should contact Mrs Ruddy, Head Teacher or Mrs Hunter, Depute Head Teacher.

At Whinhill Primary School, we are committed to providing an inclusive and supportive environment for all children, including those with Additional Support Needs (ASN) to provide every child with the support they need to learn effectively. Our approach is based on Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), trauma-informed approaches and inclusive practice.

We aim to:

- Remove barriers to learning, ensuring that all children have the support they need to work towards achieving their full potential
- Recognise that children may need support in a wide variety of circumstances, identify and respond to issues quickly and efficiently
- Plan, deliver and evaluate effective learning experiences for children with Additional Support Needs
- Work in partnership with parents, pupils and other agencies where required.
- 

As outlined in the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, a child has Additional Support Needs (ASN) if they require extra help to access education. This can be due to a variety of reasons, including:

- Learning environment suitability
- Disabilities or health conditions
- Family circumstances (e.g., care experienced, young carers, armed forces families, asylum seekers)
- Social and emotional factors (e.g., mental health issues, adverse childhood experiences)
- Specific learning difficulties like dyslexia

Whinhill Primary School supports children with a wide range of ASN, including:

- Literacy and Numeracy difficulties
- Specific learning difficulties such as Dyslexia and Dyscalculia
- Neurodevelopmental conditions, including Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Physical or sensory disabilities
- Social and emotional needs
- Health needs
- Environmental factors such as trauma or poverty
- Language barriers, including English as an Additional Language (EAL)

At Whinhill, we value parents as partners in supporting children's learning. Parents know their child best. If they think their child may have an Additional Support Need (ASN), we encourage them to speak to us as soon as possible so that we can work together to identify any support required.

In addition to the information shown above further information specified by the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009 includes:

**(a) Inverclyde Council policy in relation to provision for additional support needs.**

A child or young person's needs are identified at the earliest possible stage and can be met in a number of ways, for example by adaptations to the curriculum or learning environment, as well as input from the Support for Learning Teacher and on occasion support from visiting specialists. The

appropriateness of the support is determined through a process of assessment, planning and monitoring, working jointly with parents and carers, and is regularly reviewed.

**(b) Arrangements made by the Inverclyde Council in making appropriate arrangement for keeping under consideration the additional support needs of each such child and young person and the particular additional support needs of the children and young persons so identified.**

Learning outcomes for children and young people with additional support needs are set out in a plan and all educational establishments hold regular review meetings with parents and carers to determine needs and the most appropriate supports. Everyone's views are equally important in order to consider what is currently working and how to determine next steps

**c) the other opportunities available under this Act for the identification of children and young persons who -**

**a) have additional support needs,**

Children and young person's needs are identified in a number of ways, and the process of assessment is an ongoing, shared process with partnerships with parents and carers at the forefront. On some occasions health service staff or other partner agencies make children known to Education Services. Other additional support needs may be notified to Education Services by parents themselves or identified by one of a range of staff working closely with the child.

**b) require, or would require, a co-ordinated support plan,**

Some children and young people will have additional support needs arising from complex or multiple factors which require a high degree of co-ordination of support from both education and other agencies in order that their needs can be met. In these cases, the school will hold a meeting to decide whether the child or young person meets the criteria for a co-ordinated support plan. The coordinated support plan is a statutory document which ensures regular monitoring and review for those children and young people who have one.

**c) the role of parents, children and young persons in the arrangements referred to in paragraph (b).**

You have the right to ask the education authority to establish whether your child needs a coordinated support plan. Your child can make this request themselves, if they are aged 16 or over. You and your child, if they want to, will attend a meeting with staff at their school. Other professionals from different agencies who may be involved in providing support for your child will also attend. If your child does not want to attend meetings or feels unable to, their views must still be sought and considered.

**d) the mediation services provided**

Inverclyde's mediation service can be accessed by contacting Michael Roach, Head of Education at the address below.

**e)** The officer or officers of the authority from whom parents of children having additional support needs, and young persons having such needs, can obtain advice and further information about provision for such needs. For further advice please telephone 01475 712850

Or write to; Education Services  
Wallace Place  
GREENOCK  
PA15 1JB

### **Useful websites:**

[www.enquire.org.uk](http://www.enquire.org.uk) - Children in Scotland, registration number SC003527

[www.siaa.org.uk](http://www.siaa.org.uk) - Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance, registration number SC0033576

[www.sclc.org.uk/](http://www.sclc.org.uk/) - Scottish Child Law Centre, registration number SCO12741

### **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

Securing effective school improvement is achieved through hard work in all areas of school life. The role of each individual stakeholder is crucial when working together to ensure our school provides education of the highest quality. The views of pupils, parents, staff and the wider community are sought which allows us to be responsive to their needs.

An improvement plan is in place to take our school forward and this is available on the school website. Our main focus for improvement is within Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing. In August 2016 we became an attainment challenge school which affords us access to high quality CPD to allow us to deliver the key strategies which will raise attainment.

Here is a summary of our targets for Session 2025/26:

1. Improvements in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
2. Close the gap between the most and least disadvantaged children
3. Improvements in children and young people's health and wellbeing
4. Improvement in employability skills and sustained positive school leaver destinations for all young people

Details of our main achievements in the last year can be found in the school's Standard & Quality report, which is also available on the website. This document also contains attainment information June '25 for all year groups

In addition to this our **X** feed (@WhinhillPS) gives detailed daily examples of our successes and achievements.



## **SCHOOL POLICIES AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION**

Core school and local authority policies can be found on the school website. Curricular policies are available within the school.

### **COMPOSITE CLASSES**

Composite classes are formed based on Guidelines issued by Inverclyde Council. There will be a maximum of 25 children in a composite class and are formed largely on the basis of English Language groups. The decision to form a composite class is taken by the Head Teacher based on the total number of pupils in the school and the available staff, resources and accommodation.

### **HOMEWORK**

At Whinhill we believe homework is valuable for creating partnership between home and school. Most children will have reading and possibly spelling or related language work on at least two or three nights per week, although some of the homework given may involve research or topic work.

Completion of homework should take no more than around thirty minutes and should not be an arduous task for the child. Children will be issued with a homework diary and we encourage parents to regularly read and sign this.

### **CLOTHING – UNIFORM**

Given that there is substantial parental and public approval of uniform, schools in Inverclyde are free to encourage the wearing of school uniform. In encouraging the wearing of uniform account is taken in any proposals to prevent any direct or indirect discrimination on the grounds of race or gender. Any proposals will be the subject of widespread consultation with the parents and the pupils. Against this background it should be noted that it is the policy of the Education & Lifelong Learning Committee not to insist on pupils wearing uniform or having specialist items of clothing as a prerequisite of their attending and engaging in all of the activities of the curriculum.

The traditional uniform is however available and most pupils do wear it. Smiths in Greenock stock most items of the school uniform. Children are required to wear plimsolls in the hall and in the classrooms.

There are forms of dress which are unacceptable in school such as items of clothing which:

- potentially, encourage faction (such as football colours);
- could cause offence (such as anti-religious symbolism or political slogans);
- could cause health and safety difficulties, such as loose fitting clothing, or clothing made from flammable material, for example shell suits in practical classes;
- could cause damage to flooring;
- carry advertising, particularly for alcohol or tobacco;
- could be used to inflict damage on other pupils or be used by others to do so.

The council is concerned at the level of claims being received regarding the loss of children's clothing and/or personal belongings. Parents are asked to assist in this area by ensuring that valuable items and unnecessarily expensive items of clothing are not brought to the establishment. Parents should note that the authority does not carry insurance to cover the loss of such items and any claims submitted are likely to be met only where the authority can be shown to have been negligent.

Parents should note that the activities the children may become involved in may be restricted because health and safety requirements state that jewellery of any kind must not be worn where children are undertaking physical activities. This includes jewellery worn as a result of body piercing.

## **CLOTHING GRANT & FREE SCHOOL MEALS**

From August 2024, all children in P1 – P7 have automatically qualified for free school meals. To apply for a clothing grant/free school meals your child or children must attend an Inverclyde school and you are currently in receipt of:

- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance (JSA);
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA);
- Universal Credit, where your take home pay does not exceed £1,244;
- Or - you are seeking asylum and, receiving support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Or - you look after a child/children as part of a formal Kinship Care agreement, registered by Social Work Services

## **CHILDREN ABSENT from SCHOOL through ILL HEALTH**

Young people of school age may be unable to attend school for a wide range of reasons including illness, accidents or long term medical conditions. In general there will be an automatic referral by the school for education outwith school after 15 days of continuous or 20 working days of intermittent absence, within a single session, for verifiable medical reasons.

## **ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL (i)**

Parents should inform the school by telephone on the first morning of an absence, and provide a reason for the pupil's absence. The school will contact the pupil's family and thereafter other emergency contacts if no explanation is given for the pupil's absence. This contact will be made before 10 am on the first morning of an absence and early after the restart after lunch in the case of an afternoon absence.

Other agencies may be contacted if no contact with the pupil's family can be achieved and if there are continuing or emerging concerns about a pupil's safety or wellbeing.

On return to school parents should provide a note/email explaining the reasons for absence.

Parents should keep the school informed of any changes of address or telephone numbers, both their own and those of the emergency contacts

Section 30 of the 1980 Education Act lays a duty on every parent of a child of 'school age' to ensure that their child attends school regularly. Attendance must be recorded twice a day, morning and afternoon.

The Scottish Government has provided guidance on the management of attendance and absence in Scottish schools in its publication Included, Engaged and Involved – part 1: Attendance in Scottish Schools. Every effort should be made to avoid family holidays during term time as this both disrupts the child's education and reduces learning time. It has been clarified that family holidays should not be recorded as authorised absence, except in exceptional domestic circumstances, where a family needs time together to recover from distress, or where a parent's employment is of a nature where school-holiday leave cannot be accommodated (e.g. armed services or emergency services). It is for local authorities and schools to judge when these circumstances apply and authorise absence, accordingly.

The categorisation of most term-time holidays as unauthorised absence has been a contentious issue for some families, many of whom are concerned at the higher cost of holidays during school holiday periods. The Scottish Government has no control over the pricing decisions of holiday companies or flight operators. Our main focus is to encourage parents and pupils to recognise the value of learning and the pitfalls of disrupting learning for the pupil, the rest of the class and the teacher.

Clearly where an absence occurs with no explanation from the parent, the absence is unauthorised. Schools investigate unexplained absence, and Education Services has the power to write to, interview or prosecute parents, or to refer pupils to the Children's Reporter, if necessary.

When children need to be away from school, e.g. to keep dental appointments, parents are asked to consult the Head Teacher in advance. Requests for leave of absence for whatever reason should always be made in writing well in advance.

## **SPIRITUAL, SOCIAL, MORAL AND CULTURAL VALUES**

It is our hope that the moral and spiritual development of our pupils is not neglected. Indeed, a school that catered only for the education, in the narrow sense of the word, of its pupils would be failing in its task. Religious education, both of Christian and other world religions, is taught at all stages in the school, and every child is encouraged to develop awareness and sympathetic understanding of the different cultures within our society. Preparing pupils to be responsible citizens, the principles of give and take, fair dealing and looking after our environment are all part of our programme. Our school chaplains hold regular school assemblies. At the end of each term, parents are invited to join us in the school for special services.

It is, of course, the right of any parent to withdraw their child from religious education if they wish. This matter may be discussed with the Head Teacher and other arrangements for the child will be made. (These policies are in accordance with national advice set out in SOED Circular 6/91 and the Education (Scotland) Act 1980).

Parents from ethnic minority religious communities may request that their children be permitted to be absent from school in order to celebrate recognised religious events. Only written requests detailing the proposed arrangements will be considered. Appropriate requests will be granted on not more than three occasions in any one school session and the pupil noted as an authorised absentee in the register.

Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood education is an integral part of the school's health education programme. It focuses on the physical, emotional, moral and spiritual development of all children. Teachers are central to the delivery of Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood education from P1 – P7 and work in partnership with parents/carers and appropriate health professionals. Parents/carers should be fully informed and consulted on the content and purpose of sex and relationship education in schools, and have the opportunity to raise concerns with school staff. On an occasion where a parent/carer wishes to exercise the right to withdraw his/her child from sex and relationship education they should discuss their concerns and alternative arrangements with school staff (as per Inverclyde Council's policy "Sexual Health and Relationship Education").

## **INCLUSION AND EQUALITY**

Inverclyde Council Education Service aims to:

- Offer education of the highest quality to all young people within a developing culture of inclusion
- Endorse the principles of inclusion, entitlement and equality of opportunity in the development of best practice
- Value the diversity of interests, qualities and abilities of every learner
- Believe that every child and young person is entitled to educational opportunities which enable the achievement of success and further development of the individual's learning potential within the least restrictive environment
- Affirm the right of all young people to have access to the highest quality of educational provision which is appropriate to learning needs, is supportive of the young person and is delivered in partnership with young people and the wider community
- In meeting the needs of all our pupils we will demonstrate no discrimination on the basis of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief. This encompasses curricular, extra-curricular and classroom activities and is foremost in the attitudes which we develop in our pupils.



## **SUPERVISION of PLAYGROUNDS**

An adult presence is provided in playgrounds at break times in terms of the School (Safety and Supervision of Pupils) (Scotland) Regulations 1990.

The janitor and support staff supervise the playground at lunchtime and during the intervals.

## **MEALS**

It is the policy of Education Services and the school to encourage healthy eating as part of a healthy lifestyle, pupils are encouraged to make healthy choices in regard to diet and exercise in an effort to achieve a “Health Promoting School”.

All food in Whinhill is cooked at the school. A three-week menu system is in operation providing a healthy choice of food. Any pupil who requires a special diet because of some medical problems can be catered for. Where possible all children eat in the canteen. The stage area is set out for pupils who bring their own packed lunch if they prefer.

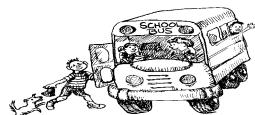
All children in from nursery to P7 are entitled to a free school meal. The school uses the **Parent Pay** system. Information is available on the school website, through emails and at the school office.

Information and application forms for free school meals may be obtained from school and Education Services at Wallace Place, Greenock, PA15 1JB. This is also available on Inverclyde council website

## **PLEASE NOTE – OUR SCHOOL IS ALLERGY AWARE**

## **TRANSPORT**

The Council has a policy of providing free transport to all primary pupils who live more than one mile from their local school by the recognised shortest walking route. This policy is more generous than the law requires. This means that the provision of transport could be reviewed at any time. Parents who consider they are eligible should obtain an application form from the school or Education Services, Wallace Place, Greenock, PA15 1JB. These forms should be completed and returned at the earliest opportunity. Children attending Gaelic medium provision are provided with transport if they live more than 1 mile away from the school.



## **Pick-up Points**

Where free transport is provided it may be necessary for pupils to walk a certain distance to the vehicle pick-up point. Walking distance in total including the distance from home to the pick-up point and from the drop-off point to the school in any one direction will not exceed the authority's limits (see above paragraph). It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that their child arrives at the pick-up point in time. It is also the parent's responsibility to ensure the child behaves in a safe and acceptable manner while boarding, travelling in and alighting from the vehicle. If these expectations are not adhered to, this could result in a child losing the right to free transport.

## **Placing Requests**

Education Services does not provide transport for those pupils in receipt of a placing request.

## **EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

The activities that can be offered in a school depend to a large extent on the interests of staff at any given time. Therefore, an activity that is offered one session may not be available the next. At the moment football, basketball, netball, football and athletics are played. Throughout the year, clubs e.g. gardening club, coding, country dancing, chess, cross country, athletics, football and choir are also available where staffing allows.

There is also provision, through Inverclyde Council Music Services, for violin, voice, chanter and brass including trumpet and trombone.

Whinhill has 2 gyms, an outdoor netball court and the football pitch in front of the school.

Parents should also note that because of health and safety requirements, jewellery of any kind must not be worn when pupils are taking part in games or physical activities. This includes jewellery worn as a result of body piercing. Physical activities include activities undertaken within physical education (P.E.) classes.



## **PUPIL REPRESENTATION** – please refer to Learner Participation

A variety of committees are available within Whinhill and pupils take pride in representing both their classmates and their school. Committees this year include the Literacy Committee, Eco Committee, Health & Sports Committee/JRSO, Fairtrade Committee, Rights Respecting School/Global Citizenship Committee, Matheletes, Digital Leaders, Learner Action Group and the Pupil Leadership Team.

## **MEDICAL and HEALTH CARE**

Staff from the School Health Service visit the school regularly and carry out routine inspections. In addition, school health staff see all children shortly after they enter P1 and also before they leave P7. Parents are always invited to accompany the children when school health staff are visiting the school. Various inoculations and immunisations are offered at different stages but of course these are given only with the permission of parents.

Regular routine dental inspections are also carried out in the school and when a child is in need of dental treatment this can be done at the school clinic.

If a child requires prescribed medication during the school day, it is essential for the parent to inform the school and complete the Administration of Medicines form. Even if a pupil is expected to self-administer medicine, for example use an inhaler, a form must be completed by a parent. All medicine will be given by the appointed school first aider or SMT and not by a teacher.

In the case of minor accidents and illness children receive attention from non-teaching staff. Accidents or illnesses necessitating hospital treatment are dealt with in the most appropriate way. It is important that parents inform the school of any special medical attention required in the event of an accident, should the child be taken to hospital by car or ambulance.

In all cases, however, every effort is made to contact parents as it is felt that the parent is the best person to offer support and comfort to an injured child. We try to show the same concern for our pupils that a caring parent would. For example, children are not allowed out of classrooms in inclement weather during intervals and lunchtimes.

If children are being dismissed early parents are always notified in advance, except in a situation where we have to close because of snow, fog, heating failure etc. In such cases we dismiss only those children when their parents have been contacted.

## **INFORMATION IN EMERGENCIES**

We make every effort to maintain a full educational service, but on some occasions circumstances arise which lead to disruption. Schools may be affected by, for example, severe weather, temporary interruption of transport, power failures or difficulties of fuel supply. In such cases we shall do all we can to let you know about the details of closure or re-opening. We shall keep you in touch by using emails, letters, texts, notices in local shops and community centres and announcements in the press and on local radio.

Parents are also encouraged to inform the school of any change of address, telephone number or emergency contact that may arise during the school year so that contact can be made in case of an emergency.

## **READ, WRITE, COUNT**

Read, Write, Count with the First Minister is a national gifting programme, aiming to build parents' confidence and encourage families to included easy and fun reading, writing and counting activities in their everyday lives. Every Primary 2 and Primary 3 child in Scotland will receive a free bag with books, educational games and writing materials to be gifted during Bookweek Scotland, in November. Resources for schools and extra activities for families to use at home can be found [here](#).

## **BOOKBUG**

**Bookbug** is Scotland's universal early years' book gifting programme which supports families to read, sing, and play with their little ones from birth and give them their best start in life. Starting school is an exciting and challenging time for your child and your support at home makes a real difference to their learning. Look out for your Bookbug Primary 1 Family Bag, a free bag of books and activities your child will receive at school in November from Bookbug, to help support their reading, writing and counting skills. Gaelic Bookbug Bags are also available.

The **Bookbug Explorer Bag** is gifted to all 3 year olds at their childcare setting. It includes three lovely books, an activity book, pencils, and postcards to encourage mark making.

## **IMPORTANT ADDRESSES**

Corporate Director: Education, Communities & Organisational Development  
Mrs Ruth Binks

Municipal Buildings  
CLYDE SQUARE  
GREENOCK  
PA15 1LX

Convener of Education and  
Communities Committee  
Mr Jim Clocherty  
Municipal Buildings  
Greenock

Skills Development Scotland  
112 West Blackhall Street  
Greenock  
PA15 1XR

## **GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS AND DATA PROTECTION ACT 2018**

Information on children, parents and carer is stored on a computer system and may be used for teaching, registration, assessment and other administrative duties. In processing personal information, Inverclyde Council must comply with General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018.

For further information please refer to: <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/site-basis/privacy>  
Or click on the following: Privacy page link

**Although this information is correct at time of presenting, there could be changes affecting any of the matters dealt with in the document –**

- a) Before the commencement or during the course of the school year in question**
- b) In relation to subsequent years**

**Website: [whinhill.inverclyde.sch.uk](http://whinhill.inverclyde.sch.uk)**

**X: @WhinhillPS**

**Email: [office@whinhill.inverclyde.sch.uk](mailto:office@whinhill.inverclyde.sch.uk)**