



ALNESS ACADEMY SCHOOL HANDBOOK 2020 - 2021



WELCOME TO ALNESS ACADEMY

Dear Parent/Carer

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

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

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

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

C. Brown

Catherine Brown
Acting Head Teacher

December 2019

TRANSFERRING TO ALNESS ACADEMY

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

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

If students live outwith the school catchment area and their parents wish them to attend Alness Academy, they can contact Ms M McAndrew to arrange a visit. Application must be made to the Care and Learning Manager (Mid), 84 High Street, Dingwall, IV15 9QN, placing request forms can be obtained from:

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/schools/informationforparents/>

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

The postal address is:

ALNESS ACADEMY, ALNESS, ROSS-SHIRE, IV17 0UY

Telephone: 01349 883341

E-mail: alness.academy@highland.gov.uk / Website: www.alnessacademy.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/alnessacademy/ / Twitter: [@alnessacad](https://twitter.com/alnessacad)

The roll of the school in September 2019 was 412.

The Acting Head teacher is Mrs Catherine Brown and the teaching staff numbers 36. The non-teaching staff - office, technician, auxiliary, janitors, numbers 22. The current full staff list is shown in Appendix 1.

OUR LINKS WITH PARENTS

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

Parents' Meetings in Alness Academy are arranged using an on-line appointments system and are held in the School Concourse from 4.30 p.m. until 6.30 p.m.

- **First Year parents** have a Parents' Evening in May.
- **Second Year parents** have an Information Evening in December.
- **Second Year parents** have a Parents' Evening in January.
- **Third Year parents** meet our staff in February and can discuss the S4 curriculum and choices at this time.
- **Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Year parents** meet with staff in December.

Details will be sent to you after the Summer holidays. Please see our website for updates calendar.

Complaints / Concerns / Comments

The school has a strong commitment to self-evaluation and feedback is always welcome. Please feel free to either email the school, or contact the appropriate Depute, or the Head Teacher. The school will always endeavour to resolve issues as soon as possible.

Email Contacts

All parents are asked to provide the school with an email address. Newsletters and other information will be issued via email. We are keen to share good news, so if you have any items/achievements for inclusion in the Newsletter please email or phone at any time.

PLACING REQUESTS - PARENTAL CHOICE

The catchment area for Alness Academy covers five Associated Primaries - Ardross, Bridgend, Coulhill, Kiltarn and Obsdale

Students who live in our catchment area will have priority in being allocated a place. Parents do have the right to specify the school in which they wish to place their child. Applications must be made to the Area Education Manager on 01349 868692. Placing request forms can be obtained from:

http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/11/school_enrolment/2

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

Parents of children with additional support needs, (including those that have Coordinated Support Plans) can make placing requests to any school in Scotland including schools outside of the local authority area they live in. All appeals about placing requests to special schools will be referred to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal.

Chrome Books

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

Data

At the start of each session, parents will be asked to complete a data capture form. It is extremely important that the information provided is accurate. This will include a request for a home email address. The school uses email as an important method of communication with parents, if unable to provide one, could you please let the office know.

Access to Pupil Records

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

Data Protection Legislation

Information on pupils, parent and guardians is stored on a computer system and may be used for teaching, registration, assessment and other administrative duties. The information is protected by data protection legislation and may only be disclosed in accordance with the codes of practice.

Transferring Educational data about pupils

The Scottish Government and its partners collect and use information about pupils through the Pupil Census to help to improve education across Scotland. This note explains why we need this information, how we use it and what we do to protect the information supplied to us. Further information can be obtained from <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/ScotXed>. Data about pupil preferred routes, preferred occupations and anticipated school leaving date is also collected from S3/S4 to support planning for leaving school. This information is shared with Skills Development Scotland. Further information about 16+ Data can be found here: <http://hi-hope.org/directory/listing/16plus-planning>

Data Policy

Information about pupils' education is collected through our statistical surveys in partnership between the Scottish Government and Local Authorities through the ScotXed Programme which aims to help schools and Local Authorities by supporting efficient collection, processing and dissemination of statistical information. The Scottish Government then provides analysis of the data to support research, planning, management and monitoring of education services as well as to produce National Statistics publications.

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

The individual data collected by Scottish Government through the Pupil Census is used for statistical and research purposes only. 21 Information on why we collect data about pupils and who we share this data with can be found in Highland Council's Privacy Notice which is available here:

https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/1095920/enrol_your_child_at_a_school

Why do we need your data?

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

- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of all pupils or plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of specific groups of pupils
- better understand some of the factors which influence pupil attainment and achievement or share good practice
- target resources better
- enhance the quality of research to improve the lives of young people in Scotland

Your data protection rights

The collection, transfer, processing and sharing of ScotXed data is done in accordance with data protection legislation. We also comply with the National Statistics Code of Practice requirements and other legislation related to safeguarding the confidentiality of data. Data protection legislation gives you the right to know how we will use your data. This note can give only a brief description of how we use data. Fuller details of each individual ScotXed survey, including the purpose of each and the published data, can be found on the ScotXed website:

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

Scottish Government works with a range of partners including Education Scotland, Skills Development Scotland and the SQA. On occasion, in order to help meet our aim of improving the life of young people in Scotland, we may make individual data available to partners such as the National Registers of Scotland to carry out research relating to the national population census and also academic institutions and organisations to carry out additional research and statistical analysis to meet their own official responsibilities. Any sharing of data will be done under the strict control of Scottish Government, and will be consistent with our data policy. This will ensure that no individual level data will be made public as a result of the data sharing and that these data will not be used to take any actions in respect of an individual. Decisions on the sharing of data will be taken in consultation with relevant colleagues and individuals within and outwith Scottish Government. At all times pupils' rights under the Data Protection Act and other relevant legislation will be ensured.

Concerns

If you have any concerns about the ScotXed data collections, you can email the Head of Schools Analysis at ScotXed@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to The ScotXed Support Office, Area 2D, Victoria Quay, Leith, EH6 6QQ. Alternative versions of this page are available on request from the ScotXed Support Office in other languages, audio tape, Braille and large print.

ATTENDANCE/ABSENCE - ATTEND TO ACHIEVE

Good attendance is vital if students are to achieve their full potential. But if a pupil is absent from school, a parent or guardian should phone the school on the first day of absence on the school number, 01349 883341 before 8.30 a.m. When returning to school after an absence, the parent or guardian must give written reason for the time absent.

Permission to leave during the school day:

If a pupil needs to leave during the school day for an appointment etc., students need to bring with them a note from parent or guardian. Students must report to the school reception and 'sign out', if returning the same day, they must report again to the reception and sign in. Where at all possible, medical and dental appointments should be made outwith school hours.

If students fall ill during the day, parents are contacted for them to collect their child, therefore it is essential that we have up to date day time contact numbers and emergency contact numbers for all students.

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

When parents are considering whether or not to remove their children from school for a family holiday, they should be aware that such a decision:

- will result in a significant loss in classroom experience;
- will result in a pressure to 'catch up' on missed work by students - student responsibility to catch up;
- could result in students missing assessments with consequential impact on students and teachers;
- will affect school attendance records and efforts to raise standards of attendance (Attend to Achieve);
- under the guidance issued at a national level, most family holidays will be coded as unauthorised absence, only in exceptional cases will the absence be recorded as authorised.

In conclusion, we would ask parents to be aware of these considerations when making decisions on planning holidays during term time. We have enclosed a link to the school term dates on the Highland Council website to aid parents in planning any holidays they may be considering:

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

If parents decide to make holiday arrangements during school term, this should be confirmed in writing to the Head Teacher.

CAREERS ADVICE

During their time at Alness Academy, all students will participate in a planned programme of careers education delivered by a range of people including PSE teachers, school librarian and representatives from Skills Development Scotland. At key stages, such as option choice decision-making, most staff will be involved in making recommendations or giving general advice. We rely on the good links between home and school to ensure that through open dialogue, the most appropriate decisions for individual students are arrived at.

There have recently been significant changes in the operation of Skills Development Scotland in terms of working in schools and the overall emphasis is now on career planning. The strategic aim of Skills Development Scotland is ***to equip individuals with the skills to make well-informed, realistic career decisions throughout their working lives.***

The key Careers Adviser linked to Alness Academy is Mrs Julie MacKay. And she is available to advise on matters relating to career and curricular choice. The Careers Team can also be contacted by parents or students through Mrs Gillian Johnstone, Ms Ruth MacDonald and Miss Mairi Kate MacLellan, Principal Teachers Pupil Support, Alness Academy.

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

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

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

Information about local opportunities is listed on the hi-hope.org website to support 16+ planning: www.hi-hope.org

Alness Academy Vision & Values

‘Through hard work, compassion and aspiration, we are developing leaders of the future’

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



Leadership

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

Aspiration

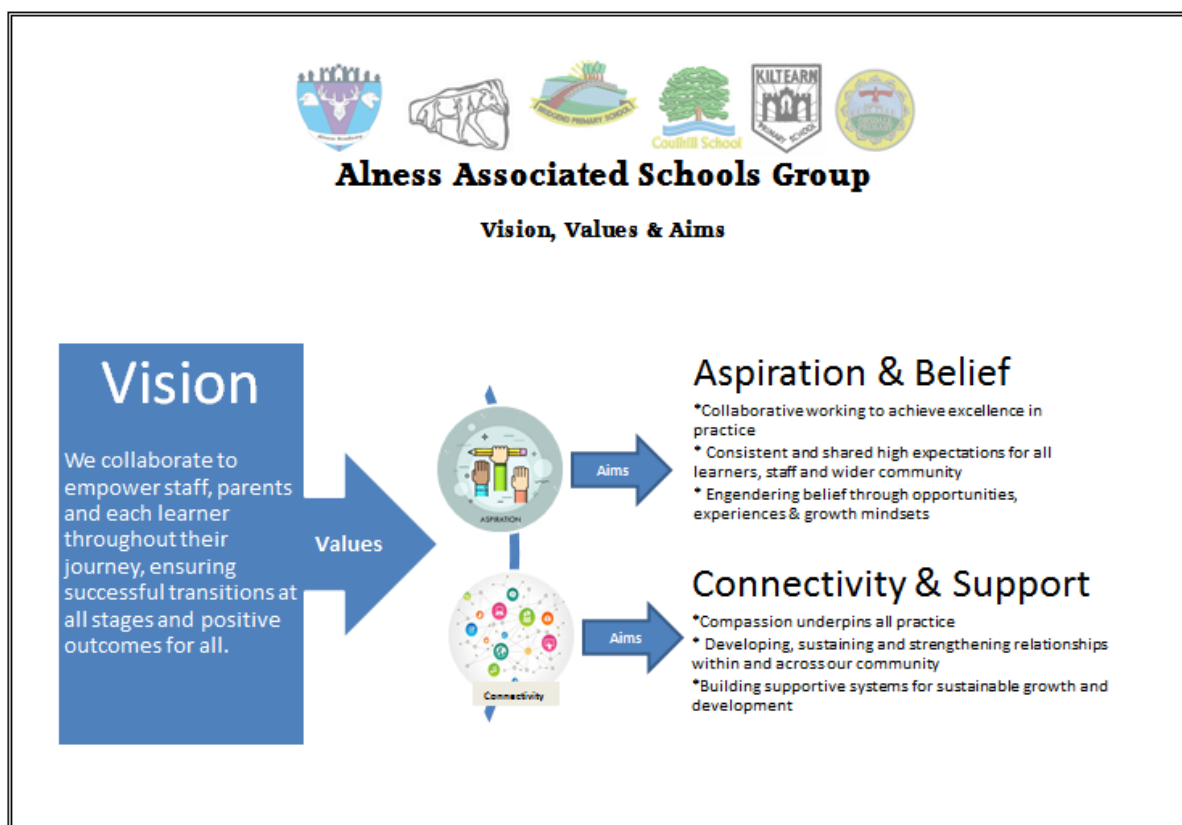
A motivated and aspirational community is key to driving forward a thriving culture of improvement and success. By providing opportunities for all; by engendering an ethos of belief in yourself and in those around you; by equipping all members of our community with skills, knowledge and establishing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

Compassion

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

Vision & Values of our Associated School Group (ASG)

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



SCHOOL UNIFORM

All students are expected to wear School Uniform as outlined.

S1- 3

Black Trousers (no jeans or leggings)

Black Skirt

White Shirt

Navy Blue School Blazer with badge

School Tie

Black Shoes/Black Trainers with no additional colours

S4-6

Black Trousers (no jeans or leggings)

Black Skirt

White Shirt

Navy Blue School Blazer with badge

School Tie

Black Shoes/Black Trainers with no additional colours

Black v-neck jumper may be worn for Winter warmth

All items can be ordered on line from www.myclothing.com

THE COURSES WE OFFER

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

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

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

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

SEXUAL HEALTH & RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION (SHARE) IN ALNESS ACADEMY

The Scottish Government Education Department has produced national advice and guidance on sex education. In Alness Academy, we ensure that our SHARE programme is in line with these guidelines. Sex education is an important aspect of every child's personal and social development. It aims to help young people make informed, responsible and healthy choices about their lives, their relationships and their contribution to society. In developing our programme, we will:

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

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

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION

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

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

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/livinghere/equalopportunities>

OUR SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

PUPIL SUPPORT

The Pupil Support Department consists of four Principal Teachers:

Mrs G Johnstone - Register Classes F	}	with responsibility for Pastoral Care
Ms R MacDonald - Register Classes D		
Miss M K MacLellan - Register Classes A		
Ms C Nixon with responsibility for Support for Learning		

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

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

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

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

INTEGRATED COMMUNITY SCHOOL

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

PERSONAL SUPPORT

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

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

- Health and Well being
- Curricular Issues
- Careers Education

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

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

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

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

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/supportforlearners/generalguidance/planning>

There are also information sheets available at: www.chipplus.org.uk click on Education.

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

- (a) Children in Scotland: Working for Children and Their Families, trading as "Enquire - the Scottish advice and information service for additional support for learning", a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC003527; <http://enquire.org.uk/>
- (b) [Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance](#), a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC033576; and
- (c) [Scottish Child Law Centre](#), a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC012741."

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

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

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING

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

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

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

See Appendix 3: 2009 Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2009

LEARNING TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

Getting it right for every learner

No learner can be fully effective if he or she feels unhappy or troubled or insecure. It is the responsibility of the school community - school staff, students, parents and carers, professionals from partner agencies and others in the local community - to work together to ensure that each learner feels safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. Young people think that the teacher has a central role in this process, working with others in the school community to create the right conditions for effective learning.

At Alness Academy, successful teachers are:

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

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

Key principles

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

Our key principles for all learners are:

Engagement

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

Participation

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

Dialogue

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

Thinking

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

Assessment is for Learning

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

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

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

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

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

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

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

Progress

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

OUR POLICY ON HOMEWORK

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

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

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

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

- S1/S2 - Half-hour per night excluding weekend
- S3/S4 - One hour per night including weekend
- S5/S6 - One and a half hours per night excluding weekend

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

PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Alness Academy promotes positive behaviour through a wide variety of approaches and strategies that praise and reward positive behaviour, effort and achievement. Our Behaviour Policy aims to bring in consistency of approach across the school. Students are expected to meet our school standards and there are a variety of staged interventions for use if students fall short of our school standards e.g. restorative conversations, "time out" from a class depending on individual circumstances. There is early communication with parents if your son or daughter is causing a behaviour concern.

READY, RESPECTFUL, SAFE

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Alness Academy has established a variety of strategies to minimise incidents of bullying. Bullying takes a variety of forms and it escalates if students do not report incidents. Anti-Bullying work is covered through the P7/S1 Transition years and in PSE classes. All S1 students have a Pupil Support Teacher who is the first point of contact for students and parents if there are any concerns. Senior students who are prefects, buddies and bus monitors are asked to be alert for any signs of bullying and to report to staff if appropriate. Please do not hesitate to contact Pupil Support staff or the Senior Management Team if you think that your child is the victim of bullying, either verbal or physical. If bullying is undetected or unreported, there can be real distress and upset for the victims of bullying.

BUDDY SYSTEM

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

PREFECT SYSTEM

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

HEALTH AND SAFETY

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

Corridors	Keep to the left and do not run
Stairs	Keep to the left and do not push as a slip here could lead to a serious injury.
Car parks/cycling	Students cycling must not take short cuts through the car parks or use the school drive. Cyclists must dismount before they come over the footbridge and not cycle in the school grounds.
Buses	Students are expected to wear seat belts at all times and do nothing that will distract the driver. Students who misbehave may lose the right to travel on school transport for a time.
Snowballing	Grit and ice can cause serious injuries and for that reason snowballing is not allowed anywhere near the school footbridge, the car park, drive, building or doorways.
Out of School	Students who are out of school grounds at any time, including lunchtime, must not do anything which puts at risk the health and safety of fellow students or any members of the general public with whom they come in contact.

CHILD PROTECTION

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

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

The Designated Person for Child Protection in the school is the Depute Head Teacher, Miss Morven McAndrew.

Copies of Child Protection Policy Guidelines are available at: www.highland.gov.uk

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

Activities include:

OUTDOOR

Hockey, football, cross-country, rugby, athletics, softball and cricket.

OUTDOOR KIT

A change of:

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

INDOOR

Gymnastics, volleyball, basketball, badminton and social dancing (which is very valuable culturally and socially).

INDOOR KIT

A change of:

Training shoes
T-shirt
Tracksuit bottoms, leggings and/or shorts

SWIMMING

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

SWIMMING KIT

Swimming costume/trunks
Towel

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

MEDICAL CONDITIONS

When a pupil is unwell and cannot participate in PE, then an explanatory note from the parent/carer must accompany the child. On receiving this note the PE teacher will either:

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

ASTHMA

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

VALUABLES AND SECURITY

Students are responsible for their own valuables. In the PE Department large lockers are situated in the swimming pool changing rooms (returnable £1 coins). **Absolutely no valuables of any description should be left unattended in the changing rooms.**

JEWELLERY

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

THE BENEFITS

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

Health Promoting School

As a Health Promoting school we also encourage students, staff and parents to think about healthier lifestyles. S1 students are encouraged to set Health Targets. Healthy living is a regular topic in classes. We have a School Travel Plan which promotes safe and healthy routes to school. Staff take part in health promotion activities. We value all the activities that make up a healthy and happy community.

School Meals

School meals cost £2.55 for a meal deal for students, with better quality food, healthier meals, larger portion sizes and more and better choices. If a pupil has special dietary needs, please inform the school. Free meals can be claimed in certain circumstances, for information and application form please see:

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/schools/schoolmeals/schoolmealsandclothinggrants.htm>

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

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

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/schools/schoolmeals/payingforschoolmeals.htm>

Lunchtime Choices

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

Breakfast Club

Students and staff can have a breakfast from a wide ranging menu at a subsidised rate. Breakfast Club runs each day from 8.00 a.m. - 8.45 a.m.

PERSONAL POSSESSIONS

For your protection - since students' personal possessions are not insured by the Education Authority, parents may wish to consider taking out a suitable policy privately. **The school cannot accept responsibility for the loss of unattended articles.** A number of lockers, however, are available for pupil use. Please contact the school office for further information.

WHAT IF?

Absent (also refer to page 4 of this document)

It is the legal duty of every parent/carer to ensure his/her child's regular and punctual attendance. Parents/Carers should alert the school office by telephone to explain the reason for their child's absence. When students return to school after absence they must bring a note, signed and dated from a parent/carer explaining the absence. Requests for absence should be made in writing as far in advance as possible.

Late

If students are late, they must sign in at Reception. The school expects parents/carers to write a dated letter to the Year Head explaining a known lateness. If a pupil is late more than once in a week detention will be issued. The school will contact parents/carers if late coming is an issue for a pupil.

Appointments

If a pupil has an appointment, he/she must hand in a card/letter from parent/carer to the school office. It is emphasised to students that they must not leave school without signing out at Reception and this is counter-signed by a member of the Senior Management Team.

Ill in School

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

Administration of Medicines

Staff will only administer medication when there is clear written guidance from the parents on: The name of the medicine, the quantity of the medicine to be given, the time it has to be given. Prescriptive medication should be given at home by parents.

Need a Mobile Phone

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

Adverse Weather

A copy of the Highland Council Guidelines for actions to be taken in the event of adverse weather conditions is issued annually before the start of winter. The Guidelines are posted on the school website.

The Guidelines emphasise that pupil safety is paramount and that decisions about whether a pupil should leave for school in adverse weather should be governed by considerations of safety.

Information on a school closure due to adverse weather will be relayed via Moray Firth Radio, Radio Highland, the Highland Council website and the Highland Council telephone message service. The access number is 0800 564 2272 and the school pin number is 04 1360. We would advise parents to organise an emergency address which students can use if they are sent home early but find no one at home. The full list of recommended procedures is available from the school if anyone wishes to see it prior to its issue at the end of October.

TRANSPORT TO SCHOOL

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

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

Information on school transport is available from the school and the Local Transport Officer, Transport Office, Castle Street, Dingwall, IV15 9HU, forms can be obtained from:

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/schools/informationforparents/>

Educational Maintenance Allowances (EMA)

An EMA is a weekly payment worth up to £30 for students who are planning to stay on at school after their leaving age. They must complete a learning agreement at school for a minimum of 21 learning hours per week. The school contact for EMA is Miss M McAndrew, Depute Rector.

In session 2019/2020 students born between 1st March 2000 and 30th September 2003 can receive payments from August 2019. Students born between 1st October 2003 and 28th February 2004 can receive payments from January 2020. Further information on full eligibility criteria and application forms can be obtained from the school:

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/grantsandallowances/ema/>

Employment of Children

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

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourcouncil/committees/committeeinformation/byelaw-employ-child-99.htm>

EXTRAS

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

The Music Department have some new instrumental staff. We welcome Lynsey Bolton - Woodwind: Martin Oparka - drum kit and Roy Hamilton - Pipe Band drumming to the school. If your child is interested in learning an instrument, please see Mrs MacLeod for more details, or visit highlifehighland.com/music

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

Indoor Football	Football
Cardio Fitness	Geo Science Club
Basketball	Inter-house Competitions
Rock Challenge	DVD/Jigsaw/Board Game Club (F26)
Craft Club	Christian Union
Badminton	Circuits
History Club	Chill-out Club (F26 break and Monday/ Wednesday Lunchtime)
Games Club (S12 lunchtime)	Cross Country Running Club
Lego Club	Dance
Netball	Singing Club
Rugby	

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

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

AND FINALLY

Facilities

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

School Funds

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

Alness Academy Parent Council

The current Parent Council Chairperson is Mrs A MacGillivray. The Parent Council meets in the school at 7.00 pm once a term and parents are encouraged to become involved in the work of the Parent Council. Dates of these meetings are published on the school web-site www.alnessacademy.co.uk along with agendas and minutes and any member of the public may attend these meetings. Your representatives will happily deal with any issue or matter you wish to raise with them. The Head Teacher is the Council's professional adviser.

Standards and Quality Report

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

www.alnessacademy.co.uk

HMle Report

The latest HMle Report is available on our website at:

www.alnessacademy.co.uk

Keeping in Touch

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

Please follow us on Twitter or Facebook

Twitter: @alnessacad

Facebook: www.facebook.com/alnessacademy

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

OUR STAFF

Mrs C Brown - Acting Head Teacher

Ms M McAndrew – Depute Head Teacher: Mr D MacRae – Depute Head Teacher (Acting):

Mr L MacKay – Depute Head Teacher (Acting): Mr I Weafer – Depute Head Teacher (Acting)

** Principal Teachers (Faculty Head)

ART & DESIGN	PUPIL SUPPORT	JANITORS
Miss J MacDonald	Mrs G Johnstone **	Mr B Ross
	Ms R MacDonald**	Mr I Gartshore
BUSINESS STUDIES	Mrs M K Taylor **	Mr J Muir
Mr A Corbett		Mr T Regan
	PHYSICAL EDUCATION	
CRAFT DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY	Mr M Brown	PUPIL SUPPORT ASSISTANTS
Mrs T Robertson **	Mr A Dey	Mrs J Anderson (ASN)
Mr B Lockwood	Mr I MacIver	Miss E Beaton (ASN)
		Mrs R Cook (ASN)
ENGLISH	SCIENCES	Mrs S Henderson (ASN)
Vacancy **	Biology/Chemistry/Physics	Mrs J Kennedy (ASN)
Miss L MacCallum	Mr S MacFarlane **	Mrs L Leitch (ASN)
Mr G Robertson	Mr D Eadie	Mrs N Logan (ASN)
	Ms F Lacraz	Mrs A Ross (ASN)
GAELIC	Miss S Smith	Mrs I Ross (ASN)
Ms C Reid	Miss H Smyth	Mrs E Skinner (ASN)
		Mrs C Sinclair (ASN)
GEOGRAPHY/HISTORY	SUPPORT FOR LEARNING	Mrs A Sutherland (ASN)
Mrs C Smith (Geography)**	Ms C Nixon **	Ms P Tawse (ASN)
Mr A Auld (History)	Ms P Brook Carr	Mrs P Vass (ASN)
Miss J McDonald (Geography)	Ms G Houston	
Mr B Savage (History)	Miss M Kelly	TECHNICIANS
		Miss J Beresneva (Science)
MATHEMATICS	CHILDREN'S SERVICE WORKER	Mr J Muir (CDT)
Mrs D Murray **	Miss A M Dineen	
Mrs E P Page		DYW Co-ordinator
Mrs F Philips	ATTENDANCE OFFICER	Mrs M Gill
	Mrs R Shirvani	
MODERN LANGUAGES		SDS Careers Adviser
Mrs A Schnier-MacRae	ADMINISTRATION	Mrs J MacKay
	Mrs S Begg (Admin. Assist.)	
MUSIC	Mrs M Fraser (Clerical Assist.)	HLH Active Schools
Mrs S MacLeod **	Miss J McJimpsey (Clerical Assist.)	Ms K Urquhart
Instrumental Tutors	Mrs F Sutherland (General Aux)	
Ms L Bolton - Woodwind		HLH Youth Development
Mrs R Sutherland - Strings	LIBRARIAN	Mr R Campbell
Mr N Mathieson - Piping	Mrs L Stein	
Mr M Oparka - Drumkit		
Mr R Hamilton - Pipe Band Drumming		

Information about the 2009 Additional Support for Learning Act

Legal information

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

What does this mean for students and parents?

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

Here are some of the main changes:

- Under the 2004 Act 'additional support' means support that is provided in a classroom or a school. The 2009 Act changes this to include support that is given out of school but that helps a child get the most out of their school education. This could include a social worker helping a child who refuses to go to school or a mental health nurse supporting a child to cope with issues affecting their school life.
- Children who are looked after by a local authority will automatically be assumed to have additional support needs. For looked after children who don't need extra help this will have little impact. For those who do need help it will make sure their needs are considered as they move through school or if they change school. Local authorities will also be expected to check whether these children require a Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP) or not.
- The 2009 Act allows parents to ask their local authority for a specific type of assessment at any time. Under the 2004 Act parents had this right only when asking the education authority to identify whether their child had additional support needs or when asking the education authority whether their child required a CSP.
- The duties that local authorities have towards young disabled children have been strengthened. Under the new Act local authorities have a duty to assess disabled children aged between 0 and 3 and provide them with additional support, if required, in agreement with their parents.
- Local authorities will have to publish information on where parents and carers can find help, information and advice, including contact details for Enquire. Local authorities will have to make sure that a summary of this information (including details of dispute resolution and mediation services) is available from all schools (and other sites that provide education). They also need to make sure this information is included in school handbooks and on their website.
- There is a section about placing requests that states that parents of children with additional support needs, (including those that have CSPs) can make placing requests to any school in Scotland including schools outside of the local authority area they live in.
- All appeals about placing requests to special schools (whether the child has a CSP or not) will be referred to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal. Some of the changes made in the 2009 Act deal specifically with children who have, or may require a CSP, and in particular to disagreements between local authorities and parents about the CSP.

- The Act extends the reasons that a parent or young person can make a referral (called a reference) to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal. Parents can make a referral when a local authority decides that a child does not need a CSP but also when local authorities have: failed to provide the additional support set out in the CSP; not responded to a parent's request to find out whether their child needs a CSP within a given time; or, after having said they will consider whether a CSP is required have not made a decision (within a given time) on whether the child needs a CSP or not.
- The Act also gives the Additional Support Needs Tribunal extra powers to force local authorities to provide, or make arrangements providing additional support that is set out in a CSP if they have not done so.
- The new Act includes a duty for the Scottish Government to fund a national independent advocacy service (on request and free of charge) to support parents and young people in Additional Support Needs Tribunal proceedings.

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

If you have any questions about the 2009 Act

Please contact the Enquire Helpline on 0845 123 2303 or by email on: info@enquire.org.uk

THE SCHOOL DAY

8.50 - 9.05	Registration
9.05 - 9.40	First Period
9.40 - 10.30	Second Period
10.30 - 10.45	Morning Interval
10.45 - 11.35	Third Period
11.35 - 12.25	Fourth Period
12.25 - 13.15	Fifth Period
13.15 - 14.00	Lunchtime
14.00 - 14.50	Sixth Period
14.50 - 15.40	Seventh Period

The School day on Friday lasts from 08.50 until 1.30 and is organised thus:

8.50 - 9.05	Registration
9.05 - 9.40	First Period
9.40 - 10.30	Second Period
10.30 - 10.45	Morning Interval
10.45 - 11.35	Third Period
11.35 - 12.25	Fourth Period
12.25 - 13.15	Fifth Period
13.15 - 1.30	Lunchtime

TERM DATES 2020/21

Open

Monday, 17 August 2020 (Staff Only)
 Tuesday, 18 August 2020 (Students)
 Monday, 26 October 2020
 Wednesday, 6 January 2021
 Monday, 19 April 2021

Close

Friday, 9 October 2020
 Tuesday, 22 December 2020
 Thursday, 1 April 2021
 Thursday, 1 July 2021

Casual Holidays

Monday, 15 February 2021
 Tuesday, 16 February 2021

In Service Closures

Monday, 3 May 2021
 Monday, 17 August 2020
 Monday, 14 September 2020
 Tuesday, 15 September 2020
 Wednesday, 19 February 2021
 Thursday, 6 May 2021

PARENTS MEETINGS 2020/21 - all held in the Concourse from 4.30 to 6.30 p.m. These will be decided in August and dates will be sent to all parents.

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



ALNESS ACADEMY, ALNESS, ROSS-SHIRE, IV17 0UY
Telephone: 01349 883341
E-mail: alness.academy@highland.gov.uk
Website: www.alnessacademy.co.uk
Facebook : www.facebook.com/alnessacademy
Twitter : @alnessacad

‘Our School at the heart of our community’