



Ard-sgoil Phort Rìgh
Portree High School
Viewfield Road
Portree
Isle of Skye

(01478) 614810

Portree.high
@highland.gov.uk

Absences:
Portreehigh.absence
@highland.gov.uk

Striving for Excellence

READY, RESPONSIBLE, RESPECTFUL, RESILIENT

We have had another busy term, with a number of different charity fundraising events taking place, including the Blythswood Christmas Shoebox Appeal, the Money Mile and the Youth Philanthropy Initiative - all looking to support others in the local and wider community. Our young people continue to take responsibility for these initiatives and, as always, support each other in the different challenges they face.

Congratulations go to Eoghann and Alasdair, who won the final of the Gaelic Schools Debating Championship, held this year at the Scottish Parliament.

I want to give special thanks to Iain Ruairidh Finlayson for his continued support of the Isle of Skye Schools Pipe Band; his dedication was rewarded as the band won the MG Alba Pipe Band of the Year Award.

As we move towards Christmas, the term is getting no less busy, with the school dances, YPI Final and annual Ski Trip taking place.

With the Scottish weather, we have had one snow day already this year. We managed to open the other two days when the weather was bad, although I realise that some roads were difficult.

I would ask that parents/carers please phone or email the school as soon as you can to let us know that your child will be absent, whether for a weather-related issue or a medical reason. I have highlighted the basic procedures overleaf.

Our Senior Pupils have already sat some prelims and are getting closer to the main Prelim Diet, which begins on the 20th of January. I had recently shared the range of opportunities our young people have to engage in lunchtime or after school activities. Please do encourage your child to take advantage of these opportunities.

Finally, I would like to wish you a merry Christmas and best wishes for 2025.

T Breen, Head Teacher

Mr T Breen, Head Teacher

- *S6 Senior Prefects*
- *School Closure Procedures*
- *Halloween Disco*
- *Duke of Edinburgh Award*
- *Careers Fayre*
- *An Deasbad Nàiseanta 2024*
- *MG Alba Traditional Music Awards*
- *Attendance Policy*
- *Maths Success*
- *Columba 1400 Academy*
- *Traditional Music Awards*
- *Blythswood Shoeboxes*
- *Engineering Club*
- *Money Mile*

HOUSE

Glamaig:

PUPIL SUPPORT

Miss K MacPhee

Marsco:

Mr N Burrows

Tianavaig:

Mrs D MacLeod

E-MAIL ADDRESS

katie.macphee@highland.gov.uk

neil.burrows@highland.gov.uk

dawn.macleod@highland.gov.uk



Pupil Absences

Unexplained absence of pupils continues to be a problem in Scottish schools, and in Portree High School, this is no exception. I would remind Parents/Carers of their responsibilities and actions (taken from the Highland Council Attendance Policy):

Parents/carers will work in partnership with the school and can be made aware of School Attendance Management Processes and Procedures and Relationships and Behaviour Policy prior to formal enrolment, which include:

- Parents and carers will be responsible for the safety and wellbeing of their children whilst they are not in school
- Parents and carers will be responsible for providing the school with suitable emergency contact numbers and ensure that these numbers are kept up to date (at least termly)
- Parents and carers work in partnership with the school to promote and support positive relationships, attendance, learning and achievement

In discharging these responsibilities, parents and carers agree to the following actions as specified in the School Handbook:

- To inform the establishment of any prearranged absence, e.g. attendance at a hospital appointment or other unavoidable event, prior to the absence taking place
- To inform the establishment of their child's absence by 9.15am on the morning of the first day of absence. For afternoon sessions, parents/carers must inform the establishment no later than half an hour into the session
- To respond promptly to contacts from the school. To provide written confirmation of absence as soon as possible

Parents/carers will note that where contact cannot be established in relation to an unexplained absence, schools may inform other relevant services, e.g. Social Work and/or Police.

Basic Procedures

PARENTS/CARERS SHOULD REPORT ABSENCES TO THE SCHOOL ON THE MORNING OF ABSENCE BY TELEPHONE (01478 614810) OR EMAIL PortreeHigh.Absence@highland.gov.uk

If we have not heard from you and your child is absent, a 'Groupcall' text will be sent out. You cannot reply to this text, however you should call or email the school to let us know the reason for your child's absence or if you feel this has been incorrectly sent.

If there is an ongoing absence and we do not hear from you, one of the members of our staff will try to make contact with you to determine the reason for absence.

School Closures

If the school has to be closed due to adverse weather conditions, we will try to ensure that the information is shared as early as possible. On days where the weather is particularly poor, Senior Leadership Team consult with local transport providers to ascertain the road conditions and whether the companies feel that it is safe to travel.

It is the responsibility of parents or carers to decide if a pupil should attempt to travel to school, by transport or on foot, in adverse weather conditions. The Council encourages full attendance at school but in severe weather conditions the safety of pupils is much more important. Parents and pupils are often concerned that important examinations may be missed, but this should not override good judgement. Schools normally make alternative arrangements for missed examinations.

If the school is closed, we will share this on the Highland Council School Closure Site and our Facebook page. We will also try to send a 'Groupcall' automated text message to the primary carer, as listed on the School Management System.

The Highland Council Website, Facebook and Twitter

Website <http://www.highland.gov.uk/schoolclosures> will be updated with information for individual schools.

Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/highlandcouncil> will show updated posts on the latest news of school closures and weather-related problems.

Winter Weather Guidance

<https://highlandcouncil1.sharepoint.com/sites/SchoolHub/SitePages/Adverse-Weather-Guidelines.aspx>

In the event of the school closing early due to adverse weather conditions, it is really important that we hold up to date records of proposed arrangements for individual pupils. Please notify the school office of any changes to arrangements as soon as possible.

Please contact the school if you require clarification regarding any of the information given.



Halloween Disco



We had a 'Spooktacular Evening' at the Halloween Disco. Well done to all their fab costumes. Big cheer to Ozzy for best dressed with Iona and Poppy as very close runners up!



Duke of Edinburgh Award



Congratulations to five of our pupils who were presented with Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Awards

Engineering Scholarship



In October I had the amazing opportunity to attend a networking event hosted by the RAF in Rugby, England as a result of being chosen to be an Arkwright Scholar. The event was a great success! I met so many people that were able to give me insight into how to move forward with my career. I also had the chance to speak to other scholars my age about the scholarship and how they intend to make the most of it. I'm so thankful the people around me encouraged me to take the chance and go for it. Having been through the entire selection process for the scholarship, I believe anyone with the right interests and mindset should just go for it! It is such an achievement and is the key that unlocks countless doors for your career. Thank you PHS for supporting me!

Theo Scott, 15

Careers Fayre



We held our annual Careers Fayre in November, with a large number of local and national businesses attending. Thank you for making it such a great success. We heard lots of meaningful conversations discussing a variety of career opportunities and pathways for young people with local and national employers.



Money Mile



Our annual Money Mile was also held in November, with 1.49 miles of coins being laid along our corridors! This fun competition was close this year, with G House and M House competing for the longest length. G House won by a whisker! All money raised provides our residential homes with Christmas presents for residents this Christmas time.

An Deasbad Naiseanta 2024



Dh' fhalbh sinn làn dhòchais air turas a Dhùn Èideann airson na h-lar chuirtean dheireannach dhen Deasbad Naiseanta. Bha sinn air adhartas a dhèanamh chun na h-ìre sa as deidh dà chuairt ann an Steornabhagh, far an robh 14 sgiobaidhean uile gu leir an sàs sa ghnòthach an toiseach.

Ged a bha moran thrioblaidean againn a' siubhal, le treana air a chuir dheth is bus a bhris sìos air an rathad ràinig sinn mu dheireadh thall 'Ionad Sgeulachdan na h-Alba' ann am meadhan a bhaile far am bitheamaid a' farpais an aghaidh Sgoil Sheumais Ghilleasbuig.

Bha sinn an aghaidh a' mholaidh 'son na h-oidhche "S ann le mocheirigh a thig soirbheachas". Bha sinn air ar dòigh nuair a bhuannaich sinn as dèidh fìor dheagh dheasbad, le fealla-dhà gu leòr na chois.

Nochd sinn mar sin an ath oidhch' sa Chuairt Dheireannach aig Pàrlamaid na h-Alba, an aghaidh sgioba Àrd-Sgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu. Bha sinn an aghaidh a' mholaidh a-rithist, "'S e 'Al' a shàbhalas a Ghaidhlig". Bha strì ann agus eas-aonta mun fheum a dhèanadh na 'bots' do ar cànan is cultar gun teagamh ach aig a' cheann thall ...bhuannaich sinn is thàinig sinn dhachaigh leis a' chuach!

Chòrd an turas rinn gu mòr. Bha tòrr spòrs againn a' beachdachadh air cusp agus bha e air leth math a' coinneachadh ris an uiread dhaoine bho air Mholamaid gu mòr a dhol an sàs anns an 'Deasbad' ma gheibh thu uair sar a dhèanamh.



GME Reps National Debate

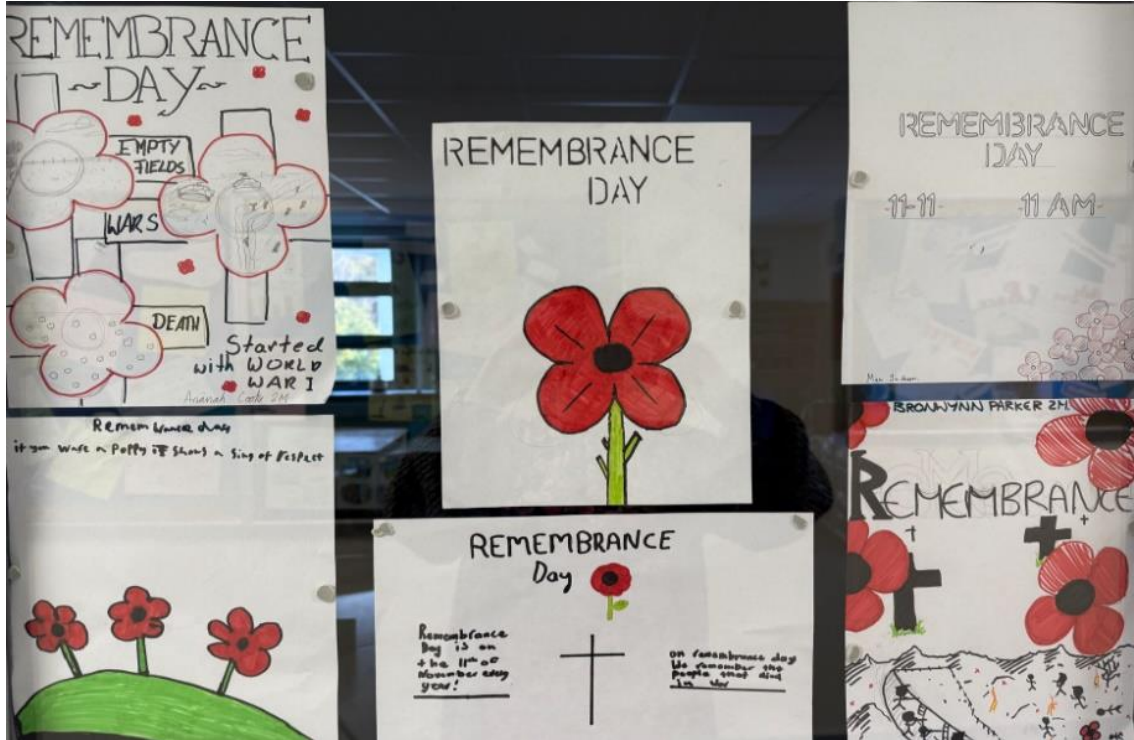
We went to Edinburgh full of hope and confidence for the semi-finals of the Gaelic National Debate. We qualified after two rounds in Stornoway where 14 teams from across the country were competing. Although we had many troubles travelling to Edinburgh, with a cancelled train and a bus that broke down, we eventually reached the 'Scottish Storyline Centre' where we faced James Gillespie's in the debate. The debate of the night was 'Success Comes with Early Rising', and we were debating against this. After a good-humoured and well contested debate, we got through to the final, to be held at the Scottish Parliament, against Glasgow Gaelic School. The final debate was 'AI will save Gaelic'. Again, we were against this, winning the final and returning home with the trophy. We greatly enjoyed the competition; we had lots of fun debating and thinking about some new ideas. We would definitely recommend taking part in the 'Deasbad' should you get the opportunity.

Eoghann Campbell & Alistair Stewart 6G



Striving for Excellence

Remembrance Day



Our school was represented at the Armistice Service in Portree on the 10th of November, with a subsequent Remembrance Assembly taking place on the 11th of November in the school. A number of our young people who were on last year's Battlefields Trip were able to talk about why remembering those who lost their lives is so important.

Our Humanities Faculty hope to run a further Battlefields Trip to Belgium/France in 2025. Please ask your child to collect a form from Mrs Laing if they would be interested in going.



MG Alba Traditional Music Awards



Abair seachdain de hòro is adhbhar gàirdeachais do dh'ASPR
(agus na Sgitheanaich air fad) aig na Trads.

What a week to celebrate for current and former PHS pupils at this year's Trads!

Well done to all the prize winners and to our current pupils who were part of the celebrations. Former pupils Anna Mhàrtainn, Nightworks, Ciorstaidh Pheutan and Emma NicLeòid all collecting some much-earned bling. A big cheer also to our prize-winning Skye Youth Pipe Band - with a number of current and former pupils - so well guided by Iain R Finlayson. 🎉🎉🎉

And let's not forget the fantastic musical performances at the gig itself from Highland Young Musicians: Lela, Seumas, Innes and Finlay all featuring in that group as the next generation of talented musicians to keep track of!

Waw - abair gu bheil sinn moiteil às na Sgitheanaich is an oidean an t-seachdain seo. Moit nach gann bho ASPR!

Excellence in action! PHS is very proud of you all! ✨🌟

Mary Somerville Maths Award



Congratulations to S6 pupil Joshua Turner, who received the Mary Somerville Prize for achieving 100% in the Higher Maths Exam this year. In addition to the certificate, he received a prize from the Institute of Actuarial Science. He is one of a very small number of pupils in Scotland who achieved this feat!

Christmas Fayre



Thank you to all staff, parents and pupils who contributed to the success of the PHS Christmas Fayre. We had over 45 stalls, ranging from home baking to crafts; charity stalls to BRIC-A-BRAC.

The money raised by Parent Council goes towards our annual Activities Days and supports bursaries for those who require it to access school excursions. It also provides us with prizes for Prizegiving and Aim Skye High.



Columba 1400 Leadership Academy

15 of our S3 pupils were selected to attend a week-long residential course at Columba 1400 in Staffin. This course was designed to help pupils discover their leadership potential by focusing on key values and principles.



“I am more than happy to have had the opportunity to visit Columba 1400 in Staffin. It was a brilliant experience and I feel that I have gotten so much out of the week.

Over the course of the week in Staffin, we developed our leadership through fun activities. We also found our own personal values. My favourite part of the week was the Search and Rescue, where we found Franco (the dummy) out on the hill. We also had a lot of fun on the way back to the centre. I don't think there could be better people there to have been looking after us. They all made the experience so pleasant. The catering was amazing, especially the food which we couldn't get enough of.

Again, I have gotten so much out of this residential and it has helped me with many things already and I am sure it will help me with many more to come. I am certain everyone else would have gotten just as much as I from the trip. It has been one of the best trips I have been on with the school so far. I am sure I will be back sooner or later.”

Calum-Alasdair Munro, S2





Free School Meals and Assistance with Clothing

To receive free school meals and assistance with school clothing, your household must be in receipt of any one of the following:

- Income support
- Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance
- Income-based Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Universal Credit, where the monthly earned income is not more than £796
- Child Tax Credit, but not Working Tax Credit, where the income is less than £19,995
- Both Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit where the income is not more than £9,552
- Pension Credit Guaranteed Credit

You can also apply if:

- You are 16 to 18 years old and receive any of these benefits in your own right
- You have no access to public funds, normally due to immigration status
- You are a family awaiting your first monthly Universal Credit Award notice

The School Clothing Grant is £154 for primary school children and £165 for high school children.

Clothing Grants and Free School Meals applications for this session are still open. **It's not too late to apply, especially if your circumstances have changed due to seasonal employment.** Parents/carers need to re-apply each year. https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/899/schools_-_grants_and_benefits/10/free_school_meals_and_assistance_with_clothing

Blythswood Appeal

Thank you to the young people and staff of the school who were able to contribute 75 boxes to the Blythswood Care Shoebox Appeal. Thanks to the S6 and Enhanced Provision Group who organised the boxes and the S5 pupils who helped taking the boxes to BSGP. Finally, a huge thank you to parents who support this initiative to send parcels to those who are in need at Christmas time.



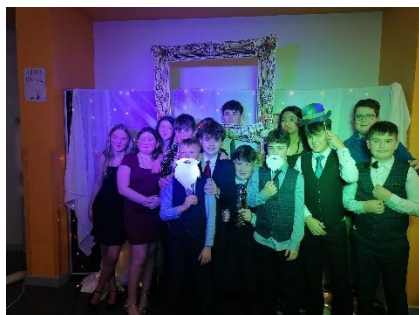
Engineering Club

Every Thursday, straight after school, there is an engineering club in Room 129. So far we have made bridges out of bamboo skewers and plasticine, marble runs out of paper and cardboard towers. Our most recent project was an Egg Drop Challenge. One session was spent designing our eggs' protection then the next week we built them. The eggs were dropped from the balcony overlooking the canteen and most of them survived. Engineering Club also has a bit of friendly competition as most weeks each design gets points depending on different factors - the egg drop was obvious if you succeeded or not! By Caitlin Riley, S1.



School Dances

Our School Christmas Dances took place on the 10th and 11th December with great success. Our young people danced all night! Thank you to our regular band, Ross and Pop, and to the S6 with their great playlists. As always, the floor was packed for 'The Hillbilly Rock'! Thanks also to the staff who volunteered their time to supervise these events and organise the buffet, photobooth and tuck shop.



Youth Philanthropy Initiative



It was the 10-year anniversary of the YPI at Portree High School on the 12th of December. Since 2014, our S3 pupils have raised over £30,000 for local charities, through a competition sponsored by The Wood Foundation.

Each group of pupils researches a local charity and champions the charity at a showcase event amongst their peers. The participants need to talk about the benefits of the charity, links to the charity, their own fundraising efforts and how £3,000 would benefit the charity.

This year, our presentations were creative, detailed and well-rehearsed. Our young people showed passion for the causes they represented and the judges found their job incredibly difficult.

Congratulations to the winning team of Ayla, Emily, Evie, Jodie, Lauren, Mairi and Prayr, who represented Alzheimer Scotland.





The school office receives numerous enquiries about school holidays. The up-to-date calendar and holiday dates are outlined below and can also be viewed on the school website:

<http://www.portreehigh.highland.sch.uk>



The dates can also be accessed on the Highland Council website:

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

HOLIDAY DATES 2024-2025

Opens	Closes
	1:15pm, Friday, 11 th October 2024
Monday, 28 th October 2024	1:15pm, Friday, 20 th December 2024
Monday, 6 th January 2025	1:15pm, Friday, 14 th February 2025
Thursday, 20 th February 2025	1:15pm, Friday, 4 th April 2025
Tuesday, 22 nd April 2025	Lunchtime, Thursday 3 rd July 2025

Note

Additional Holidays: May Day – 5th May; In-Service Day – 2nd June

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

PLEASE LOOK AT OUR WEBSITE for any further updates and information.

<http://www.portreehigh.highland.sch.uk>



Please also 'like' PORTREE HIGH SCHOOL ON FACEBOOK, TO CATCH UP ON NEWS, NOTIFICATIONS OF ANY EVENTS, etc.

www.facebook.com/portreehighschool/