



MLG (Education)

June 2021 Newsletter. Issue 10

Focus: Education Transitions Highland's Armed Forces Community

Armed Forces Community



3 SCOTS Welfare Staff will continue to support all families of those deployed to Afghanistan on Operation TORAL. The Welfare Staff are now carrying out face to face family activity/events held within the 3SCOTS Community Centre this is aimed at all ages, under the current COVID-19 government guidelines.



7 SCOTS

After a few years absence, 7 SCOTS have re-established a location in Caithness. Making use of the ACF hut in Castleton its great to have a focal point for our soldiers in the area.



Highlanders Reopen Their Doors

Army Cadets have once again reopened their doors after over four months in lockdown. 1st Battalion The Highlanders' have returned to training over the past few weeks as Scotland has moved back into the Tier System.

For the past year Army Cadets up and down the country have moved their training online to ensure that the cadets were not falling behind in their cadet progression and also trying to help improve people's Mental Health by staying connected during lockdown. Throughout latest lockdown the Battalion have been engaging with the Battalion's Online Programme, as well the National Army Cadet Training team organising talks and lectures from guest speakers such as Channel 4's SAS: Who Dares Wins' Mark Billingham.



Since the start of May the Battalion's 34 Detachments, which covers the Highlands, Moray, Western Isles, Orkney and Shetland have slowly started to welcome cadets, both old and new, back to face to face training.

For more information about the 1st Battalion The Highlanders Army Cadet Force [Click Here](#) or search <https://armycadets.com/county/1st-battalion-the-highlanders-acf/>

School Enrolment Let your school know if your child is from a Serving, Reservist or Veteran family. If we know—we have a greater understanding of your child and how best to ensure their time at school is the best it can be. [Click Here](#) for info



New Connections

The ways and means of communication continue to change and develop, and to help the Armed Forces community connect online in order to work, study, apply for benefits, contact family and friends, and engage with the network of support available, Poppyscotland is offering a new 'Digital Access Grant'. This can be used for the provision of devices, PAYG internet connection, and training.

For more information about eligibility and the referral process, please call 0131 550 1557 or email: gethelp@poppyscotland.org.uk

For more information:

Tel: [01463 710300](tel:01463710300)

Email: inverness@poppyscotland.org.uk

Poppyscotland
The MacRobert Centre
Strother's Lane
Inverness
IV1 1LR



Transitions in Education

CYP from Armed Forces Families

MLG is developing and working in partnership to co-produce resources with Schools, families and, most importantly, Children and Young People

Transitions in Partnership

My Journey, My Voice

We look forward to sharing these resources with you in the future

26TH JUNE 2021

A great opportunity to get involved [Click Here](#) for information and resources



Highland Council's Armed Forces Website is packed with information for Educators, Practitioners, families & young people. [Click here](#) or visit www.highland.gov.uk search "Armed Forces"

My Journey, My Voice

Children & Young People from Armed Forces Families

School Transitions

Children and Young People tell us what it feels like to move school.

Oh no I don't want to study the Romans again !!

I've never been taught about "Time "and now I have missed it again.

I'm excited to meet my new teachers and other pupils but it's also a bit scary.

I hope they have a POD (Parents on Deployment Group).



I hope at least one of my teachers understands what it's like to come from an Armed Forces family.

Will I get the chance to speak to someone who will listen to me?

Here we go again – I'll have to meet new people and try to make new friends – again!!



Tip for Young People

Don't be afraid to tell your school how you are feeling and what you need to support you.



Tip for Parents / Carers

Keep in touch with your child's school and let them know what's going on re deployment so that they can provide the right support for your child. Also let the school know as soon as possible when you know that you might be moving to another school and give them as much information as you can.



Tip for schools

Listen to what these young people are saying and reflect on what you are doing to help make things better for them.

Early Years Nursery/School Transitions



James McTaggart, Early Years Educational Psychologist,
Highland Council

Starting School this August?

This has been such a strange year or so and many of us are longing for things to get back to normal.

Our children have been through the experience of a lifetime, with some bad things and some good ones.

It would be natural if families were worried whether their young children are really ready to start school this August.

The good news is that guidance from Education Scotland makes it quite clear that children do not have to be "ready". Instead, schools have to get ready for the children. They will allow lots of time for children and teachers to play and learn together so everyone is settled and learning at the pace that is right for them.

In Scotland, the curriculum is actually a single stage covering both nursery and Primary 1, so children will meet some new people, in a new place, but they shouldn't notice too many other differences in how they learn.

So if your child is not quite where you might expect or hope in their development, then they are like many other children. Just let your school know any worries you have and they will prepare to welcome your child.

So don't buy handwriting sheets, phonics kits, spend ages learning nursery rhymes, or panic if your little one still has "accidents". If you'd like some ideas for how you can help your child prepare through play and fun over the summer, head to www.bumps2bairns.com for some ideas! There is also a short film explaining the approach to starting P1 this year.

TOP TIPS

SCHOOL TRANSITIONS



**Bernadette Cairns, Principal Educational Psychologist
Highland Council Psychological Service**

- It is understandable that you will be anxious at this time.
- All human beings have psychological and emotional needs for safety, routine and opportunities to make connections with others.
- How beginnings and endings are managed is important for our wellbeing and our sense of belonging. Together we will support your children through their transition.
- We can reduce their anxiety by fostering a calm sense of security at home and at school.
- You might want to create a social story about the transition to help them prepare for the changes they are going to face.
- Reflect on their current placement. Focus on and reinforce the strengths and skills they have already developed.
- Recognise the changes but focus on the excitement of a new start.
- Continue to look after your own emotional needs – you will be supporting the emotional and psychological safety of your child.



For further information about Transitions you could visit <https://hi-hope.org/directory/listing/transition> where there is a lot of useful information about transitions at various stages. Hi-hope is an online resource which lists what is out there for young people leaving school in the Highlands. It is aimed at the 14 to 24 age group. It will also be of relevance to anyone who supports young people at this stage in their life. It is split into four sections: Directory, Learning Choices, Skills Spotlight and the Noticeboard.

The [Noticeboard](#) is updated on a daily basis and offers information about jobs for young people, volunteering opportunities, events, updates, courses and news items.

The [top ten tips guides for parents](#) created by Parenting across Scotland tend to be popular, with one for starting primary school, and another for secondary.

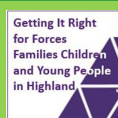
Another relevant source of information relating to transition is the [Principles of Good Transition 3](#) created by The Scottish Transitions Forum. The Principles of Good Transitions 3 provides a framework to inform, structure and encourage the continual improvement of support for young people with additional needs between the ages of 14 and 25 who are making the transition to young adult life.

MLG
Education




Supporting Service Families

© MLG Education 2018 copyright



News and information From MLG (Education) Partners Supporting Highland's Children & Young People



RCET and ADES recently hosted two short conferences to launch the **SCiP Alliance Thriving Lives Toolkit** in Scotland. Underpinned by rigorous research and thoroughly tested in school, the Thriving Lives Toolkit provides schools with a [framework of 7 principles](#) through which to reflect on their practice and a 3 tier set of CPD resources. The resources in this toolkit have been developed in collaboration with a range of partners across the UK, and consist of:

- an introductory animation;
- a detailed resource introducing the evidence base, what schools can do to support their Service children and who can help and;
- school case studies.

Principle 4 of the Toolkit focuses on **Effective Transitions**.

The Toolkit can be downloaded from www.scipalliance.org



www.armedforcesmorayandhighland.co.uk

Information, guidance, advice and help for the Armed Forces community in Highland and Moray. We welcome suggestions to improve information please email

dot.ferguson@highland.gov.uk

Highland Armed Forces Community Covenant

We agree to work and act together to honour the Armed Forces Community Covenant.

The Community Covenant Partnership, along with other partners in the wider Highland community, will work together to fulfil the principles and aims of the Community Covenant for Highland.

EXTRACT :

“SECTION 4: Measures Children and Young People

- We will work with the Armed Forces and their families and support access to universal service provision and improve outcomes for children and young people of Armed Forces families and veterans.
- We will support and engage with specialist staff in the Armed Forces, to assist any children and families with additional needs. “

Click here to view MLG's leaflet—providing an overview of how the group supports Highlands Armed Forces Community



As Covid 19 restrictions ease, Community Support have returned to Face to face delivery and are working with our military communities who are adjusting to the new 'normal'

Our summer programme will run throughout July and promote health & wellbeing, reconnecting with people and just enjoying life after the restrictions of lockdown.


This work couldn't happen without the support of partner agencies and we are very grateful for their support, especially when I have 3 staff vacancies. Its encouraging to know there are so many people helping the Military communities in Highland.

Supporting children with challenging behaviour, new mums and those who are feeling overwhelmed are our focus at present, not forgetting our families of those who are currently on deployment.

There's not enough room to tell you about all that goes on (and a lot of it behind the scenes) but feel free to get in touch if you have any questions or worries.

I am looking forward to getting to see everyone in person and hear what's been happening in their lives.

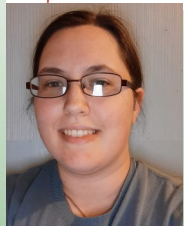
Contact me on 07855 077305 or Email Helen.martin773@mod.gov.uk



Introducing your new Highland Youth Convener Anja Johnston!

Anja from Thurso recently took up the 12 month bursary role.

The 24-year-old, has previously worked as an Assistant Youth Worker, delivering the YOJO digital youth project with High Life Highland. Anja is actively involved in volunteering with the Scouts Scotland, having held various roles across multiple levels looking specifically at youth involvement and ensuring that scouting is "youth shaped" at all levels.



As Youth Convener, Anja provides a consistent link for Elected Members and senior officials in The Highland Council, representing young people's views and will act as a sounding board for youth issues in the Highlands. Anja will attend Council and Community Planning Partner meetings and has full voting rights on the Education Committee with speaking rights at all other Council Committees.

The Youth Convener works closely with young people across the Highlands through Highland Youth Parliament, Area Youth Forums and Pupil Councils in Secondary Schools.

Anja's contact details:
youth.convener@highlifehighland.com



FAMILY FEDERATIONS NEWS

Supporting

Highland's Tri-Service Community

MLG (Education) Partners

Update for Key Stakeholders (Apr'21)



**Naval Families
FEDERATION**
Speaking up for Naval Service families

WELLBEING

- Ongoing pilot project with RN FPS - Headspace app for non-serving family members
- Ongoing partnership working with RNFMAC over Strengthening Families and mental health provision
- Engaged with Royal College of General Practitioners and Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance to raise awareness of the health issues affecting serving families
- Partnership working with Service Families Health Working Group to consider the health recommendations in the Living In Our Shoes report
- Create Project - Time, On My Watch. Delivered online creative workshops with families. Moved to second phase of project to create an exhibition of the submitted images

EMPLOYMENT

- Forces Families Jobs continues to grow and now has 840 employers and 4500 candidates registered on the site with c.5000 jobs currently live
- Continue to explore opportunities to run bespoke spousal employment courses and insight days with large businesses
- Developing a business plan to support the development of a special employment pathway

RELATIONSHIPS

- Evidence to the Defence Committee on Women in the Armed Forces
- Contributing to the Service Families Working Group (MOC)
- Input to ongoing review of ZEP P13 on Domestic Abuse
- Contribution to Forces in Mind Trust Research Centre Conference
- Presented oral and written evidence to the Select Committee on the Armed Forces Bill, with a focus on the Armed Forces Covenant Legislation

OVERSEAS ASSIGNMENTS

- Designed a website page with links to in-country information and support providers, plus examples from families of their "used experience"
- Joint working with RN FPS to provide a closed Facebook group for the Overseas RN Community
- Provided information/contacts to those families researching a future assignment

LEAVING THE SERVICE

- Working closely with the RNFMAC in the development of their new transition support service
- Recently presented at the FMT research conference focused on families and transition

ACCOMMODATION

- Working to support families in the delivery of Project Speed (upgrade of SFA)
- Gained certificates from National Homelessness Advice Service after attending online courses to aid awareness of housing rights for all
- Stress testing scenarios for FDIS contract
- Continued engagement with DfD and Army and local CoC on SFA projects

EDUCATION

- Input to MOD Schools SEND offer guidance
- Publication of Childcare Report
- Working with Service Children in State Schools (SCISS) on response to the Voice of Schools report
- Input to Armed Forces Families and Safeguarding (MOD) and Department for Education guidance for schools on supporting CPSP
- Partnership work with Service Children's Progression Alliance developing new structure for longevity and expanding impact, and responding to the Living In Our Shoes report

UK VISAS & CITIZENSHIP

- Provided Immigration Advice to New UK and Commonwealth SP and families in 100+ cases since May 2020
- Opportunity to represent Minimum Income Threshold (MIT) issue to Michael Gove and Johnny Mercer at Ministerial Government and Veterans Board External Partnership Group

FINANCE

- Informal families of the changes to general allowances as a result of COVID-19
- Updates provided on the future changes to the Local Overseas Allowance
- Membered Covenant into Law Joint Working Group to inform design of statutory guidance
- Feb 2020 - March 2021 have seen 1080 SP at DCS briefs and approx. 640 at Pre-Deployment training

COMMUNICATIONS

- Partnering with RNFMAC to market the Strengthening Families programme (including the Kings Active Families pack) to the RN community
- Promotion of Thriving Lives Toolkit (self-assessment for schools) and staff CPD to schools

For information on Education and Childcare, have a look on the AFF website:

<https://aff.org.uk/advice/education-childcare/>



You will find a lot of information including:

- Accessing gov schemes to help with childcare costs
- Info for service children 16+ who want to carry on studying
- Information on how to access and make use of the Service Pupil Premium
- Funding available to support your child at their independent school



Is separation and deployment a challenge for your young people? Many children and schools tell researchers that they would like to see support available when someone in the family is deployed or living away for spells of time. Our article outlines some the research undertaken and help and advice available. <https://bit.ly/3wcDes8> @RAF HIVE #ServiceChildren

Living a high mobility lifestyle, as many Armed Forces families do, means that children and young people have to cope with many more transitions than their civilian peers. A young person from an Armed Forces family may on average experience five different schools but some experience many more than that.

Some of the main issues associated with high mobility for children and young people can be:

- Changing schools
- Interruptions to and dealing with different ways of learning.
- Repeating topics or missing out on key areas of learning.
- Chosen subjects not being available at new school.
- Not being able to get places in clubs and organisations.
- Saying goodbye to friends and having to make new ones.
- Always feeling as if they are the “new kid in town”.
- Being far away from extended family.

In Highland, all schools are made aware of these challenges and they make every effort to ensure the transition into and out of Highland is as smooth and supportive as possible.

The Armed Forces Covenant

Highland, like all other Local Authorities in Scotland, have signed the Armed Forces Covenant which means that they have an obligation to ensure that the appropriate supports are in place to avoid any possible disadvantage which could arise from being part of an Armed Forces family.

An Appeal to Parents/Carers

If you identify as being part of an Armed Forces family then the school can, if needed, provide the right targeted support at the right time for your child. Please be aware however that just because you have identified in a previous school that does not mean that the new school will receive that information so PLEASE make sure to tell the new school as

Useful information can be found at the National Parent Forum Scotland:

https://www.npfs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/NPFS_armedforces_nutshell_1904_E.pdf?dm_t=0,0,0,0&dm_i=LQE,6AAAY7,A1SQSC,OT58R,1

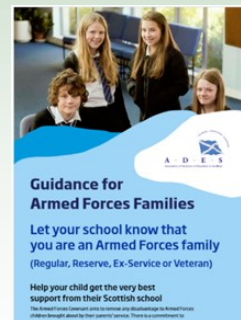
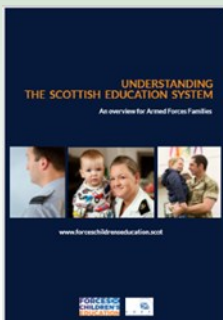


Advice and Support Education Transitions

Carolyn MacLeod, National Transitions Officer, ADES

Getting it Right for Forces Families – Transitions & Scotland

There are many resources available on the **Forces Children's Education website** for families and educators. Videos, guides, charts, and booklets provide information and suggestions to help armed forces families and their children. Understand more about the Scottish education system, locate schools, learn why it helps to let your child's school (or early learning & childcare centre) know that you are an armed forces family. Who can you speak with? Educators, find out more about life experiences of armed forces children and young people and how you can support them to be successful. There are lots of links to partnership groups and other resources too.



Click on an image
for further information



Contact the National Transitions Officer at
info@forceschildrenseducation.org.uk
www.forceschildrenseducation.org.uk

[Forces Children's Education | Facebook](#)
[Forces Children's Education \(@ForcesChildren\) / Twitter](#)
[Forces Children's Education | LinkedIn](#)

Vital support for young people

Skills
Development
Scotland

Skills Development Scotland's Armed Forces Veterans Champion Alistair Ferrier and colleagues across the country support people of all ages from Service families.

That support from Scotland's national career service is vital for young people.

Alistair, who is a veteran, said: "There are just over 11,000 young people from Service families in Scotland, around 900 are in the Highland area and those figures don't capture those young people who are from veterans' families.

"SDS's work often begins with careers advisers working alongside young people in school, helping them develop the career management skills they need to explore their options and make decisions."



Lorraine McGarry is a SDS careers adviser based in Inverness' Millburn Academy, which has a large number of pupils from Service families. Helping young people make the transition from school is a crucial part of her work.

"It is about helping each person identify their interests, strengths and ambitions, consider different options and how to make the move on to a positive destination that is just right for them. That could be going to college or university, an apprenticeship, training or a job.

"We make sure our support doesn't stop when a young person is making the transition from school should they need this, so they are introduced to a post-school adviser a few months before they leave. That adviser will continue to support them as they move forward with their plans and next steps."



To find out more, please contact SDS at one of our [centres](#), call our national Helpline on 0800 917 8000 or visit [My World of Work](#).



Extra Bits Of Interest and help...

NEW SCHOOL? **apprehension**
excitement **making new friends**
leaving friends behind **new house?**
TRANSITION **bigger school**



How can Reading Force help?

- Sharing stories and chatting about books/doing a scrapbook helps to mitigate the effects of disruption by supporting good communication; helps to nurture family closeness and continuity during challenging times by offering common ground for conversations; is fun and soothing
- Reading for pleasure helps to strengthen children's self-confidence, resilience and sense of belonging;
- Sharing stories/doing a scrapbook can be a way of keeping in touch with friends from a previous school/provide common ground when making new friends
- Schools/youth groups can give scrapbooks to children arriving/departing; we can provide books/scrapbooks for Military Kids Clubs to help to support them during difficult times
- **For more information contact Fiona Maxwell: fiona@readingforce.org.uk**
- **Our website is [here](#) ALL OUR BOOKS AND SCRAPBOOKS ARE FREE!**

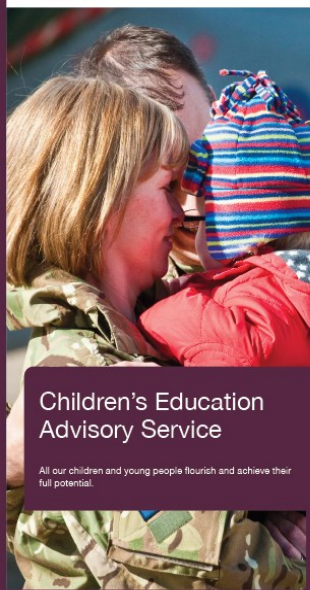


How do you contact CEAS?

Email: DCYP-CEAS-Enquiries@mod.gov.uk

Telephone: +44 (0)1980 618244 / 94344 8244

Address: CEAS
Trentham Lines
Upson
Widmore
SN9 6BE
UK



Children's Education Advisory Service

All our children and young people flourish and achieve their full potential.

Who are CEAS?

Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) is part of the MOD's Defence Children Services (DCS).

We are a tri-service organisation which supports operational effectiveness through the provision of support to Service families trying to secure appropriate educational provision for their children and young people. Our priority is the educational well-being of the children and young people whose families we advise and guide. All advice we give is child-centred and focuses on the best interests of the individual.

The CEAS team is comprised of qualified teachers and experienced case advisors who can answer queries predominantly via email.

What can CEAS help with?

CEAS provides advice to Service families on a wide range of educational issues including:

- Supporting families through transition— departure & arrival
- Parental rights and responsibilities
- Children/ young person's rights and responsibilities
- Special Educational Needs and/or Disability
- School admissions and appeals
- Overseas education in non-MOD school areas
- Retention of Service Families Accommodation for educational purposes
- Continuity of Education Allowance and the Special Educational Needs Addition

DCYP-CEAS-Enquiries@mod.gov.uk



Accessing support for children with special educational needs and/or a disability can take time and effort. Army life may further complicate matters but help is available.

When a posting is looming, there are numerous forms to fill in to move house, change schools and transfer healthcare. If you have a child with special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND), relocating can be much more challenging.

When Emily's family moved in 2020, their Service Family Accommodation (SFA) had to undergo adaptations to meet her daughter's additional needs. Her son, who has autism, waited months for a suitable school place.

She says: "I had to constantly chase the local authority otherwise I wouldn't hear from them. They provided a tutor for a limited time each week, but it wasn't enough."

Struggles

Parents of children with SEND often contact AFF because they have battled for some time without getting anywhere.

Health & additional needs specialist Karen Ross says: "There is a sense of fatigue, frustration, anger and at times pure desperation." Time pressure is often a factor as the assessment process can stretch over many months. Karen explains: "Parents are reporting that once healthcare professionals know they are moving they will often not refer them into the system."

They should still refer because the Armed Forces Covenant commitment states that any time accrued on an NHS waiting list should be transferred and the relative position retained. When registering with a new GP, parents should ensure their child is referred for continuing treatment or assessment and not as a new referral."

It's important for your soldier to be aware of army policy AGAI 108 and to inform the chain of command of your family's circumstances.

Impact on families

Two of Emma Holcroft's sons were diagnosed with autism. She says: "Although the army is very supportive, they couldn't always guarantee my husband days off for appointments and when he was deployed to Iraq, I felt scared and alone."

Buying their own house has given the family more stability. Both children now have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan and attend a special school. Emma explains: "I've got an amazing support network and the boys are settled and won't be uprooted."

Dedicated service

If you have any educational concerns about your child, you are encouraged to contact the Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS). Team Leader Sue Smyth says: "The CEAS team is made up of experienced advisers and educational officers who are qualified teachers. "We know how stressful life may be and can offer support to service parents and liaise with schools and local authorities if needed." The current SEND Code of Practice requires CEAS to contribute to any statutory assessment leading to an EHC plan for a service child and they may be able to support a family's request to retain their quarter until the process is finalised. CEAS can also explain relevant jargon and how terminology and procedures may vary in the devolved nations or overseas.

This article was originally published in the Army & You magazine, Spring 2021 edition. [Click the front cover here](#) to access the magazine and explore other helpful information and features.



MLG
Education



Supporting Service Families

© MLG Education 2018. All rights reserved.

MLG (Education) Newsletter

A great place for sharing Information and Resources



“Adding value through facilitating collaboration.”

Supporting remote learning and teaching across the Northern Alliance. Click the logo and find out more.



[bumps to bairns](#)

Early help for Highland children



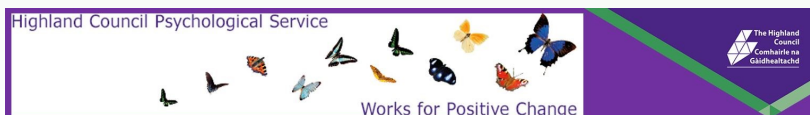
Follow us:

Twitter @HLHYouthWork

Instagram @HLHYouthWork

Or

Email Nigel, Youth Work Manager



Highland Council's Psychological Service have made a selection of resources and training materials available on the [Highland Council Psychological Service Blog \(external link\)](#).

JUST ASK

Do you have a question about the development or wellbeing of a child or young person in

Call us:

Tuesdays or Thursdays, 1–4pm

A health or educational professional will call you back within a few days

[Click Here](#) to view poster



[Click Here](#) for further information

07514 120288

info@thrivingfamilies.org.uk



Our goal is to become the 'go to' organisation, known for improving the lives of families living in the Highlands, by giving you confidence, empowering you to know your rights, know what questions to ask and have your voices heard.

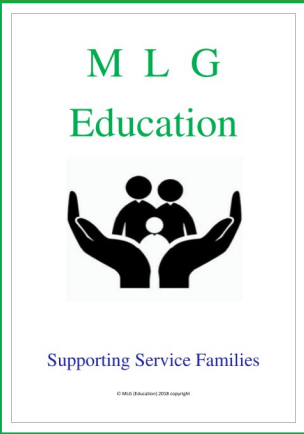


Improving the lives of families in the Highlands



Thriving Families

Improving the lives of families in the Highlands



MLG (Education) Newsletter

Share your Voice

Information and Resources



**Getting It Right for Forces
Children In Highland**
[Click Here](#) for website

**Get Involved.
Have Your Say.
Make a Difference.**



Email: louise.kinnear2@highland.gov.uk

If you require an alternative format to suit individual needs please get in touch